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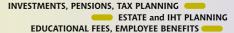
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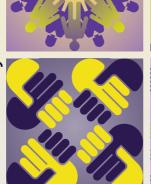






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Marvellous May!

May's one of the best months of the year - we're firmly in the Spring, and have all the anticipation of a lovely Summer ahead. Fingers crossed! It's also a great time for getting your garden looking lovely and for selling your home. We've got a great range of local, reliable businesses in here who can help you get your garden ready and update any aspect of your home, from your roof to your kitchen, your bathroom to your décor, whether you're getting it ready to sell or just want to update it for your own benefit.

Wishing you a great month ahead. Until next month,



Zoe Reece Tel: 07557 220585

Email: zoe@dorridgedirectory.com

www.solihullindex.com



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community events



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Tickets are £15 each - price includes a gift and picnic.
Limited spaces are available.
To book please visit Customer Support on the first floor.

Merrie England

Saturday 1st June 7.30pm Knowle Village Hall The Strolling Players are presenting a performance of Edward German's operetta 'Merrie England' which tells the story of the love affair between Bessie Throckmorton and Sir Walter Raleigh - of which Good Queen Bess heartily disapproves. The show features some lovely and well-known songs. Tickets £8 from 01564 772071.

Tap & Tandoor Beer Festival

Thursday 13th - Sunday 17th June Tap & Tandoor, Warwick Road, Solihull

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Open to everyone, from 6 years old to 106 and beyond... including gents for the first time! Remember: you can walk it, run it, wheel it! For more info please call 0121 704 1557 or email SolihullShop@cancer.org.uk

Solihull Summer Fest

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This 2-day festival in the heart of Solihull returns for the 4th year running and features a diverse mix of music genres. Each day runs from 12 midday until 10.30pm with live music, street food vendors, bars, entertainment and an exclusive VIP area.



THE CORE LIBRARY

- 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.



Keep Calm & Cope

s exam season is upon us, this week I am sharing my 7 stress reducing solutions for your scholars! Be it SATs or A levels, these simple and FREE tips will be sure to help. And for all the parents out there...these may be useful for you too!

1 - Eat 2-3 kiwis per day.

This dense fruit is full of nutrients to help keep germs away and stay in good shape for exam days and revision. Compared to an orange, the Kiwi has almost double the amount of vitamin C! Also a great source of iron and vitamin B9 which is perfect to fight against exhaustion.

2 - Get a pet!

Stroking an animal reduces stress. Fact. When we pet an animal we release the stress reducing hormone oxytocin and there is a decrease in the stress hormone cortisol. If you don't have a pet..borrow one! Our dog Jessie is a favourite with my pupils and loves fuss so feel free to arrange an appointment with her!

3 - Breathe in a box!

Box breathing -also known as square breathing is a technique used to lower heart beat, improve performance and concentration and also reduce stress...what's not to love?

Simply breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, breathe out for 4 seconds and hold for 4 seconds and repeat.

4 - Don't be a night owl.

Nocturnal students suffer during exam time. Stick to your school timetable during revision period so that your sleep pattern is

not disturbed and that you are wide awake and alert when you turn those papers over.

5 - Count to 5

In times of heightened stress, use a simple mindfulness technique to reduce stress. Bringing yourself into the present stops us panicking about the future or ruminating about the past. Notice the now by finding 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things touching you, 2 things you can smell and 1 thing you can taste.

6 - Water it down

Studies have shown that dehydration leads to higher cortisol levels (the stress hormone). Stay hydrated to be better equipped for this challenging period and to be able to think more clearly.

7 - Stop the stories

Thoughts are not facts. If you find yourself feeling low because of a thought ask yourself is it true? Really? 100%? If the thought is not 100% true and makes you feel lousy then flip it around and look for reasons that the alternative positive thought could be as true or truer than your negative one. A balanced belief is better than a self-limiting one.



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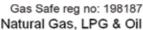


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Bank Holiday Bonanza

By Sarah Davey

t's that time of year when there seems to be a bank holiday bonanza. We've just had Easter Monday, and now we have two bank holidays in May. So here is my Brits guide to Bank Holidays...

We ask everyone else what they're doing, kind of like Christmas! As a nation we get excited about the prospect of a longer than usual weekend.

We make vague plans about weekends away but we always leave it too late, or won't agree on a destination, or discover every hotel has suddenly doubled its prices, so we never actually go.

At least one friend will remind you that they are a nurse / barperson / taxi driver (delete as applicable) and they will be working while you are relaxing. Sympathise with them as without them the country would grind to a halt.

Every teacher friend you possess will make a huge deal about them not actually having a holiday weekend, because they will be marking...again! Teachers do this every holiday though, because they suspect we secretly think they are all part-timers.

We buy paint in anticipation of giving a room a facelift. Bank Holidays were absolutely designed for repainting the sitting room!

We buy bedding plants, compost and 'garden features', because Bank Holidays were absolutely designed for prettying our little plot of land. We tentatively suggest a barbecue to family and friends because as well as being obsessed by weather we are also eternal optimists. And if it rains, we still barbecue because that's what you do on a Bank Holiday in May, and well...it gives the guests something to talk about.

We plan a film night. When we finally face the reality that there isn't going to be a heatwave, we hit Netflix or Sky Movies and dial a pizza - because Bank Holidays and carbs were made for each other.

Finally, we have the Sunday blues on a Monday night!



Choose the **Perfect Sunglasses**

By Sarah Davey

t's that time of year when we traditionally invest in a new pair of sunglasses but how do you whittle the choices down to the perfect pair? First choose the right colour frame. Warm browns and tortoiseshell suit warmer colouring. Cool greys, blues and blacks suit cool skin colouring or grey hair.

Next pick a pair that flatters your features.

Rounder faces often lack definition and benefit from strong lines. Long thin faces might need a softer, rounder style with an upswept edge.

Try on as many as you can. Take selfies and compare. Add length to a short nose with a high bridge or shorten an overly long nose with a low (butterfly shape) bridge. A strong jaw can be balanced with a heavier top bar.

Sun-specs are all about protecting your eyes from UV so make sure that any pair you buy has a CE kite mark, and that sunglasses are marked UV400. Choose larger frames for protection but bear in mind that deeper the frame the shorter your face will look, so if you have a long face, choose a deep frame. A shorter face needs a frame that's less deep. Take your eyebrows into account! If your brows stick out of the top of the frame at an odd angle, you'll look permanently surprised!



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National Smile Month

Between 13th May and 13th June 2019, National Smile Month will promote positive messages to engage people with maintaining a healthy mouth. For the best oral hygiene:

f

Brush your teeth - At least two minutes twice a day using fluoride toothpaste. It's particularly important to clean them at night as your mouth doesn't have the same salivary protection during the night.

Floss - Each tooth has five sides; a toothbrush only cleans three and the other two sides are where most decay and odours originate. To clean between the teeth requires dental floss or tiny inter-dental brushes.

Clean your tongue - This works wonders with stale, smelly breath. You can use a tongue scraper or a toothbrush.

Stop smoking - Smoking dries the mouth, depleting the protective saliva. It also exposes your gums, soft palate and

By Louise Addison

tongue to harmful and cancer-causing toxins, and it makes your breath smell.

Use a mouthwash - This freshens breath and coats the teeth with a protective layer, helping to prevent plaque build-up.

Cut out sugary foods and drinks

 These feed the bacteria in your mouth which ultimately break down your enamel and cause decay.

Visit your dentist regularly! http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org/



Sustainable Travel

David Attenborough has once again pointed out how important it is for us to be aware of the impact we have on the environment in his latest documentary, Our Planet. This doesn't mean we shouldn't travel, we just need to be mindful that the parts of the world that are still untouched are at risk of being destroyed if we don't start changing the way we travel. So, here are a few simple steps to becoming a more sustainable traveller.

Use the most sustainable transport

Sometimes flying's unavoidable but you can still make a small improvement to the environment by opting for the fastest route (as direct flights rather than will reduce your carbon footprint) and by choosing economy which is more efficient as it allows for more passengers. Once at your destination opt to walk or cycle around – it's better for the environment and also lets you take in more of the local area.

Pack light

A plane's carbon emissions are greater the more weight it's carrying, so packing light saves on fuel, and also makes it easier to get around on



foot/by bicycle too. If you're going away for a while, take a few essentials and buy anything else you need from local stores, which will also support the local community. To reduce your carbon footprint pack a reusable water bottle and an e-reader.

Choose ethical wildlife tours

Tours that allow you to spot wildlife in their natural habitat without disturbing them are far more rewarding. Be sure not to step on coral in the ocean and use a 'Reef Safe' sun cream to avoid polluting the ocean.

Eat, drink and discover local

Live like a local to support the local community – try local cafes and restaurants for a whole new world of delicious cuisine and inspiration.

Just always remember to drink bottled water and avoid salad and ice cubes.

Stay in accommodation dedicated to sustainable living

Large resorts are the biggest culprits when it comes to carbon emissions so ask your Personal Travel Expert to find the most energy efficient accommodation available. Smaller places run by locals will mean less energy consumption and more support for the local economy. Eco-friendly hotels and holidays are a big trend in 2019.

By just doing a few things differently on a regular basis we can help keep travelling sustainable for generations to come.

Sabina Clay

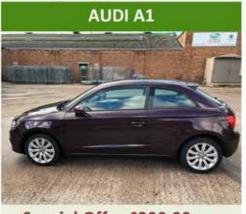
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Claire Price, Solihull

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Hire a Handyman! Or Handywoman!

Do you have lots of household DIY tasks mounting up? Are you starting to feel a little overwhelmed?

Hire a handyman!

A good handyman will have right tools, and know-how to get the job done efficiently. Hiring someone who knows what they are doing will eliminate a lot of stress. Also, they will almost certainly save you money, especially if you would have to buy the right tools before you start or make a mistake which has to be put right!

When hiring:

Be Specific - Give an idea of the scale and scope of the job or jobs. For example, 'Rehang garden gate, repaint gate and 17 metres of 2m high garden fence.' Measurement are

important as it gives idea of the scope of the task. Send photos if you can - In the example above send photos of the gate and the fence. A picture will save a lot of words and help the handyman provide an accurate auotation Remember cheapest isn't necessarily the best. Check an online price guide. There is lots of guidance available, but you should definitely bear in mind the total hours required.

The handyman should be insured and have his own tools. Check all insurance documents carefully. Take your time, be pleasant and ask questions. Get a quote in writing to make sure you know exactly what you're getting.

Then sit back and relax while someone else takes care of your household jobs!

By Tom Hancock



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National **Vegetarian Week**

By Sarah Davey

May 13th - 19th

This month plays host to National Vegetarian Week.

ore of us are turning to vegetarianism thanks to an abundance of scientific research that demonstrates both the health and environmental benefits of a plant-based diet. An estimated 70 percent of all diseases, including one-third of all cancers, are related to diet. A vegetarian diet reduces the risk of chronic degenerative diseases such as obesity, coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and certain types of cancer.

A vegetarian diet tends to increase bone strenath. When there isn't enough calcium in the bloodstream, our bodies leach it from existing bone which results in our skeletons gradually losing strength. You can take supplements but it's better to get calcium from your diet as this will supply other nutrients necessary for the body to absorb calcium.

Even if you avoid dairy, calciumrich foods include beans, tofu, dark green vegetables and plant-based milks like soy, oat, rice or almond.

Vegetarians tend to have more energy.

Whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables are high in complex carbohydrates, so they supply the body with plenty of energizing fuel.

Vegetarians also suffer less with constipation, haemorrhoids and diverticulitis! Eating a lot of vegetables means consuming more fibre, which absorbs water and bulks

up, helping your stools stay soft, so waste can be easily pushed out of the body.

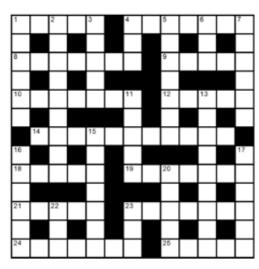
A vegetarian diet is more environmentally friendly. Much of the grain we grow is fed to animals raised for slaughter. As a rough guide it takes 2,500 gallons of water, 12lbs of grain, nearly 35lbs of topsoil and the energy equivalent of 1 gallon of petrol, to produce one pound of beef! A vegetarian diet can sustain many more people, so is a more efficient use of resources.

Finally, a vegetarian diet is cheaper and can cut individual food bills by an average of £500 per year.

If you are thinking about becoming vegetarian, or even just incorporating more vegetarian meals into your normal diet, there is lots of information and some great recipes on the website www.nationalvegetarianweek.org



crossword



clues

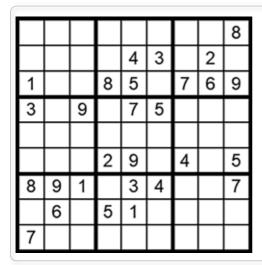
- 1 Noise a frog makes (5)
- 4 Devoted, obedient (7)
- 8 Left on a plate (food) (7)
- 9 More timid (5)
- 10 Trust, have faith in (7)
- 12 Momentary slip (5)
- 14 Beset, over-burdened (4-7)
- 18 Artist's stand (5)
- 19 Crowe, actor (7)
- 21 Android, cyborg (5)
- 23 Vacation (7)
- 24 Defamation, smear (7)
- 25 Amendment, clause (5)

Down

- 1 Plump, porky (6)
- 2 Inundates, floods (9)
- 3 ____ Hopkins, rightwing columnist (5)
- 4 Burrow, hideaway (3)
- 5 Brawls, skirmishes (7)

- 6 Take wing (3)
- Pantry, food cupboard
 (6)
- 11 Mistake (5)
- 13 Imagined, made-up (9)
- 15 Watered down (7)

- 16 Detritus, rubble (6)
- 17 Actor, performer (6)
- 20 Pertaining to the sun (5)
- 22 Feathery scarf (3)
- 23 Female pronoun (3)



how to play SUCOKU

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.



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Fit at **Fifty**

And Beyond

ttention over-fifties! When was the last time you visited a aym? You kind of know you should be making an effort, right? But do excuses such as 'too expensive'; 'lack of time', and 'no motivation', sound familiar?

As an over-fifty myself (quite a lot over if I'm honest) I overcame my own gym-phobia and have been reaping the rewards since.

Motivation This is the key. You need a specific goal. I wanted to achieve a healthier lifestyle with improved cardiovascular fitness.

Time Look in your diary and you will find a spare hour at least once, or better still, two or three times a week.

Cost Can be as expensive or affordable as you want. A ladies-only gym with a personal trainer can be expensive, but a mixed, off-peak gym membership brings the cost down and you can still get advice from an on-site trainer.

Clothing Clothes must be comfortable. including your undergarments! It's not a fashion parade and chafed tender bits will put you off exercise forever!

If you're feeling hesitant repeat to vourself, "I can do this; I want a healthier and fitter me: I have the time to do this". Say it often enough and you will start to believe it. Mix with positive people who will encourage



you and improve your self-esteem.

Metabolism slows down as you get older and this can lead to weight gain, but exercise helps keep weight down by building lean muscle. You also improve your immune system and cardiovascular system; reduce bad cholesterol and boost brain-power.

Good instructors are enthusiastic

and well-trained and will arrange a set of exercises to suit to vou. Before vou know it, vou'll have a good routine and it will only take a few sessions before you improve and begin to compete with yourself. You'll notice the benefits of improved posture; glowing skin; improved breathing, zest and vitality almost immediately.

By Sharon Clement

Scaling the Wall - Clematis

hat do you think of if I say 'clematis'? I think most of us would think of the large, purpleflowered, "Jackmanii" or the rampant, bronze-leafed, pink-flowered montana rubens. They are both terrific plants, but I think they are a little over-used. My husband teases me that I tend to give my 'clematis lecture' when visiting friends' houses and see one scrambling over a trellis. For your benefit I've written it down here. Clematis is known as the 'Queen of Climbers'. It can be utterly spectacular and should definitely not be relegated to trellis. It can used for covering fences and arbours, old tree stumps, sheds and even in beds and borders. Choose wisely and you can have flowers from early spring until late autumn.

For beds and borders you don't want anything as vigorous as montana, which will smother everything it touches. Instead choose a daintier one such as a variety of texensis or viticella. The flowers of the texensis hybrids look like finely cut bells. "Etoile Rose" is a beautiful dark pink edged with paler pink and "Princess of Wales" is a beautiful rosy red. Both of these will scramble through shrubs and flower all summer. They die back in winter so can be tidied up then. Viticella hybrids produce flowers which look like little pixie hats as they open. "Minuet" has purple and white flowers suspended on fine stems while "Purpurea Plena Elegans" produces double blooms which open into little purple rosettes.

One of the most difficult sites to find climbers for is an east or north facing site. My absolute favourite clematis thrives in this situation and flowers in early spring. Clematis alpina



"Pink Flamingo" produces nodding, semi-double, creamy flowers veined with deep pink, It has the added bonus of producing beautiful fluffy seed heads after the flowers fade.

Clematis prefers its feet in the shade

and its head in the sun. Make sure the plant's roots are shaded: pieces of broken flaastone are ideal, or an old cracked upside-down terracotta pot with the bottom knocked out. When clematis is happy it will flower prolifically Largeflowered clematis tend to produce a second flush in the autumn, but others like tanautica and orientalis wait to flower until then. Both of these are very vigorous and are great for covering unsightly sheds or old trees. Finally, if you have a sheltered spot against a wall try cirrhosa balearica. This is a beautiful, winter-flowering variety with ferny foliage and pale-green flowers spotted with crimson. So, there it is... my clematis lecture. Hopefully you took notes and are ready to branch out into a whole new world of climbers.

Happy gardening,

By Rachael Leverton

a taster of what's coming up...

CINEMA

The Secret Life of Pets 2

from 24th May

This film will follow summer 2016's blockbuster about the lives our pets lead after we leave for work or school each day.



Rocketman

. . . .

from 24th May

Based on a true fantasy, this is an epic musical fantasy about the incredible human story of

Elton John's breakthrough years. The film follows the fantastical journey of transformation from shv



piano prodigy Reginald Dwight into international superstar Elton John.

Godzilla: Kina of **Monsters**

from 29th May

• • • • •

This follows the heroic efforts of the crypto-zoological agency Monarch as its members face a battery of god-sized monsters, including the mighty Godzilla. When these ancient super-species rise again, they all vie for supremacy, leaving humanity's existence hanging in the balance.



To book please visit www. cineworld.co.uk

THEATRE

The Core Theatre, Solihull (formerly Solihull Arts Complex)

Whitney, Queen of the Niaht

25th May

A stunning celebration of the music and life of one of the greatest singers of our time. This award-winning production features a sensational line-up of musicians and artistes, and together with a powerhouse and breath-taking performance in the spirit of Whitney, deliver a show that exceeds expectation on every level.



Swan Lake

31st May

Swan Lake remains as one of the most enduring, moving and irreplaceable classical ballets due to its fantastical plot filled with romance, sorcery, and betraval, Join Ballet Theatre UK with their spectacular new production of this timeless classic.



The Kilkennys

7th June

Renowned for their musicianship and vocal abilities. The Kilkennys have gained a reputation for revitalising traditional Irish music and adding their own touch of passion and youthful energy.



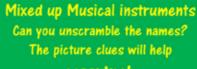
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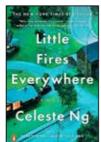
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UKULELE Word Grid Solution

a good read reviews Bv Willow Cobv

Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

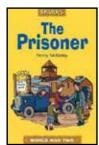
A perfect family, living in a perfect house, in a perfect little American town called Shaker Heights. The Richardsons, led by matriarch Elena are pillars of their community. A community where everything is carefully planned, from the road layout to



the colour of the houses, and everyone knows their role in life. Elena has one simple guiding principle: you play by the rules. As this intriguing novel begins there is a fire at the Richardson's house. The three older children, all in high school, are discussing the cause. Their conclusion is unanimous; their younger sister Izzy is responsible. We then flashback to a year before and we are introduced to Mia Warren and her teenage daughter Pearl. Mia is a photographer from San Francisco: she and Pearl live an almost nomadic lifestyle. But when they rent a home from the Richardsons their plan is to settle down. But plans can change. As the stories unfold these two families are drawn together by the teenagers, and tensions arise when friends of the Richardsons try to adopt a Chinese-American baby. Elena and Mia find themselves on opposite sides of a divided community in a conflict that will have far-reaching effects for both families. This is an engrossing novel which will have you questioning the secrets you hold in your own lives, wondering if there are indeed times when it would be so much better if we just burn everything down and start again.

The Prisoner by Penny McKinlay

Nearly two decades into the 21st century the days of the Second World War seem as remote as ancient history. For the vounger generation today, with their phones, TV on demand, and Netflix, even the experiences of their own parents as children seem



distant from today. This is why books like The Prisoner are so welcome. One of a series of 'Historical Adventures' this exciting story gives an insight into what life was really like during World War Two. Ten-year-old Bob and his friend Jack have had enough of the war. It has been going on for five years. Five years of rationing (Bob doesn't know how much more cabbage he can face) and more importantly five years of no sweets. His Dad has been gone for a long time - a prisoner of war on the continent. Blackout blinds and 'digging for victory' are such a part of life that Bob cannot remember a time without them. But one day Bob and Jack meet an Italian prisoner of war working in a nearby field. Naturally Bob is scared - this is the enemy. But as he gets to know him his feelings change. Bob starts to feel sorry for him and wants him to stay with them rather than in the prison camp. But ultimately the prisoner is an enemy. Can he really be trusted, or does he have another reason for seeming so nice? Designed to complement the Key Stage 2 History curriculum, this short novel combines facts and suspense in a story to keep every voung reader on the edge of their seats. Sometimes lost amona more modern 21st century books, perhaps now is the time to introduce this loveable young heroine to your children?

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Stuart Davis

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Joe Tildesley

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Suduko Solution

from page 27



Crossword Solution

from page 27



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