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# Summertime!

Welcome to the July edition...

While lots of events have had to be cancelled, there are still exciting new opportunities to do things, although maybe slightly further afield. Have a look on page 6 for some ideas if you're keen to get out and about.

It's more important than ever to support your local community and local businesses, many of whom have taken a hit over the last few months. They're willing and ready to get back to work and so please do get in touch and see how they can help you.

I hope the sun shines for us all over the next month so we can be out and about as much as possible – safely and at a distance of course!

Until next month,



**Zoe Reece**

**Tel: 07557 220585**

**Email: [zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com)**

**[www.solihullindex.com](http://www.solihullindex.com)**



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# socially distanced events

Here's a selection of socially distanced events that are still taking place throughout the West Midlands and Warwickshire this Summer.

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stand-up comics! Pull up, pop the handbrake on and enjoy the show from the safety and comfort of your own car all whilst tucking into a tasty dish from an exclusive menu curated by Michelin-starred Chef Tom Kerridge.  
[www.driveanddinetheatre.com](http://www.driveanddinetheatre.com)

This means that even in these unusual times you can still laugh out loud at a stand-up gig, belt out karaoke tracks or get swept up in a theatrical production with your family and friends - all from the comfort of your own car.



## Drive & Dine Theatre

**21st – 26th July  
Warwick**

Drive & Dine Theatre will be screening the very best classic and award-winning movies. Think 80's flicks, all-out action epics and family favourites! They will also host Mark Watson's Carpool Comedy Club, which will tour the Theatres with an eclectic collection of popular



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# Classroom Challenges

Coming out of lockdown presents particular challenges for families with kids who will have been in school all along; some will have had a good lockdown experience; some will have struggled for many reasons, and some will not be going back at all this side of the summer break. This is a challenging time for families as they readjust while still dealing with anxieties and worries about the pandemic, jobs, relatives, and finances. Your child may be excited about the return to school and reuniting with their friends, or they may be worried and anxious. Talk to them about what they are looking forward to and what concerns they may have about going back to school. Try to act as a sounding board, listening without

immediately offering advice. Sometimes just talking something through can help children come up with solutions of their own. Take your child's concerns seriously. Academic and social pressure is daunting enough without the additional stress of returning after a lockdown. Share some of your feelings and experiences in an age-appropriate manner. Also share your own healthy coping mechanisms. Try to keep communication channels open so they will talk honestly with you. Discuss important issues but also make time for silly stories about your day or theirs. Make it a priority to motivate their learning. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Let teachers know if you're worried about anything in particular, or if you feel your child could benefit from extra help in making the transition back from home to school.

## Handy Songs for Clean Hands!

As lockdown eases, we should be even more vigilant about handwashing. You can't catch coronavirus through your skin but if contaminated hands touch your face then all the belated social distancing in the world won't help you. I don't know about you, but I am sick to death of the Happy Birthday song. I will never sing it again when this is over... we were surely due a new celebratory melody after almost 130 years anyway. But you still need to scrub with soap for 20 seconds to remove those pathogens and twenty seconds is a long time when you're standing at a sink, so here are a few alternative 20-second tunes...which will probably give you an earworm for a week. The chorus to Dolly Parton's hit single

**Jolene:** Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, I'm begging of you please don't take my man. Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene. Please don't take him just because you can. As a teen I was in love with Morten Harket from A-Ha so I was delighted to find that the chorus of Take On Me is 20 seconds providing you hold the last note properly...and who wouldn't? **Take on me** (take on me), Take me on (take on me), I'll be gone, In a day or two. My favourite though was overhearing my friend's unbearably cute curly-headed three-year-old singing, "Twinkle, twinkle little star, look how clean my two hands are. Round my wrists and round my thumbs, link my fingers, almost done. Twinkle, twinkle little star, look how clean my two hands are!"

**Stay safe everyone.**

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*HeatherK-47*

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# Mindbenders

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# Summer is back on!

## My friend's experience of Heathrow and BA flight to Ibiza on 6th July.

- ♥ Heathrow is a dream. It's exciting to see things moving again and the crew getting back to what they love doing. There are shops open and the staff are really friendly wanting to be helpful and no queues at check-in or security.
- ♥ Between 11.30 - 18.30, 22 flights departing.
- ♥ Everyone is in masks and social distancing and there are hand sanitizer stations.
- ♥ There's not much open before security, just a Cafe Nero shop.
- ♥ Once through departures, most of the shops are open, including duty free, just no perfume testers!
- ♥ You can get food at Pret

a Manger and W H Smiths. The main restaurants aren't open yet.

- ♥ The toilets are open and are immaculate.
- ♥ most of all, it's peaceful, quiet, well organised and lots of happy people all looking forward to flying.

## On board the BA flight to Ibiza.

- ♥ All passengers are given a pack on boarding that has hand sanitizer and anti-bacterial wipes.
- ♥ Passengers and crew wear masks at all times.
- ♥ Pre-packed plastic picnic bag is given out to all passengers with crisps, biscuits and water. This is served to all customers free of charge.
- ♥ The crew will assist with families and heat



food for babies.

- ♥ Everyone is advised to stay in their seats and no queueing in the isles for the galley or toilets. There is no need to push the call button or put your hand up to go to the toilet. Just check the toilet signs show green or vacant before you leave your seat.
- ♥ here are various polite PA's to announce safety distancing measures on board.
- ♥ You can consume food and drinks that you bought in the airport on board. There is no bar on board to purchase alcoholic drinks.
- ♥ Landing cards are given out to all passengers to complete before landing.

The whole flight was beautifully done and felt very normal, so had a wonderful flight and now going to be in Ibiza!! I've detailed this account to help put your minds at ease that you can go on holiday and be safe.

## Sabina Clay

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# Walking Back to Happiness

What walking can do for your health **By Jo Turner**

**D**uring lockdown I was furloughed, and my husband John had to work from home. We decided to use the time it usually took us to commute (an hour each way) to walk. We'd never really walked as a form of exercise before... we'd never really taken any form of exercise before, so this was something new.

We worked out a route and as we were used to getting up at 6am to travel to our respective jobs and we decided that staying in that routine seemed sensible so we wouldn't be too out of sync on our return to work. The mornings were gradually becoming lighter at the start of lockdown so although we were heading out early it wasn't dark. We have walked for just over an hour every day for ten weeks and this is what we've discovered.

**Walking trims your waistline** - Both John and I had the start of middle age spread. Over ten weeks I've dropped a dress size and John has discovered he's wearing the trousers that prior to lockdown he'd been considering donating to charity.

**Walking relieves arthritis pain** - After four weeks John noticed that his arthritis pain seemed less. This seemed counterintuitive so I consulted the arthritis society website and discovered that walking is recommended because it does indeed help reduce inflammation and stiffness in your joints. The important thing to remember is to walk 'correctly'. Hold your head up; keep your neck, shoulders and back relaxed; swing your arms naturally, with a slightly bent elbow; tighten your stomach muscles a little to give yourself a supported core, and breathe deeply as you walk.

Walking improves your mental wellbeing - At the start of lockdown I think we both felt really anxious about all the uncertainty. As the weeks

progressed, while we walked we discussed our worries and thrashed out solutions to some of the problems we faced or might face. I certainly began to feel in a better place mentally and as though I could cope better with life in general. Being outside, breathing in the fresh air and enjoying the sunshine definitely helped to clear some headspace each day.

**Walking reduces blood pressure** - Johns blood pressure had been sneaking upwards and just before lockdown our GP had been monitoring it with a view to him starting blood pressure medication. When it became clear that he wasn't going to be examined by a doctor for some time I was concerned enough to buy a home blood pressure monitor online. We tested it out to make sure the readings matched those of the clinic then forgot about it! After six weeks (on the date he was supposed to have been returning the GP) we tried it and discovered his blood pressure was just within normal range. By week ten it was well within the normal range. Mine too has dropped significantly.

Crucially throughout this period neither of us has felt like we were 'exercising'. Walking felt natural and easy. I know this article is anecdotal and personal but there is plenty of research to support exercise being almost as important as diet in controlling type-2 diabetes; that it helps with balance and co-ordination and so helps to prevent falls in older people, meaning they are more likely to stay out of hospital, which at the moment is even more important than usual, and finally that it helps boost the immune system which is important for obvious reasons right now.

We will definitely continue to fit walking into our day even when life returns to a more normal pattern.

# Paddling Pool Safety

By Tracey Anderson

With more of us staying at home this summer many of us will be tempted to buy paddling pools and bathing pools (if we're lucky

enough to have a large enough space). Most parents are hypervigilant when near a hotel or campsite pool, but it's easy to become more complacent when we're at home in our 'safe' environment.

It's possible for a young child to drown in just a few inches of water. That's why it's important not to overfill your paddling pool:

5-10cm of water is enough for lots of splashy toddler fun.

Just as you'd supervise a child while playing in a hotel pool or on the beach so it's important to supervise them while they are playing in a paddling pool. If you need

to step away for a moment to answer the phone, switch the kettle on or check on dinner – be sure to take the kids out of the pool while you're away. It might be a bit of a faff but so much better to be safe not sorry.

I'm betting you check that baths are not too hot when you run them. How many of us check our pools are not too cold? Water from outdoor taps tends to be very chilly. Adding a kettle or two of boiling water to the pool to take the chill off before the kids use it is kinder to tiny bodies.

The area around your paddling pool tends to become very slippery very quickly. A

couple of old towels for them to stand on as they climb out helps to prevent accidents.

If you're re-using a pool from previous years make sure you give it a thorough clean to get rid of cobwebs, bird and mouse droppings and general muck before filling it with water. Children ingest a surprising amount of paddling pool water and you really don't want any nasty tummy bugs. A tablespoon of bleach when cleaning and rinsing it AFTER use will help keep it spotless and safe.

Gardens are full of sharps things, like twigs and stones. To avoid puncturing the pool, or

inflicting any nasty cuts and grazes, check it for sharp objects before filling and keep an eye out for new debris whilst the kids are leaping in and out. If you do spot a puncture, tear, or rip, you'll need to fix it before letting your kids play in it. Once filled with water a damaged pool can collapse or deflate



depositing water and bathers all over the lawn!

The bright colours and sparkly water in paddling pools means they are a magnet for insects! You may need to fish a few out of the pool now and then. A small net, or an old sieve is great. It might also be a good idea to apply plenty of insect-repellent to your children to help ward off things that bite and sting!

Sun protection is important. Beachwear with a high SPF is perfect paddling pool attire. And don't forget to slather on lashings of high SPF waterproof sunscreen and keep reapplying throughout the day.

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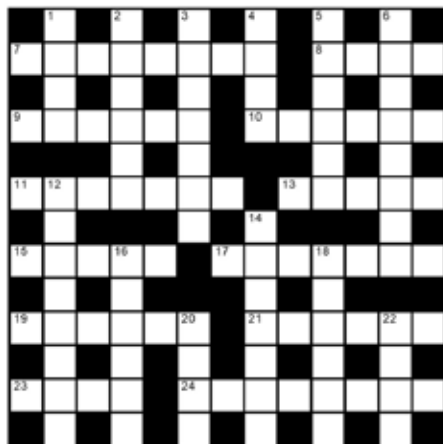
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## crossword



### Across

- 7 Transport of goods by sea (8)
- 8 Repetition of sound (4)
- 9 Eat hungrily or greedily (6)
- 10 Arranged, group (6)
- 11 Smoker's accessory (7)
- 13 Make a formal request (5)
- 15 Striped cat (5)
- 17 Keyboard musician (7)
- 19 Type of word that ends in 'ly' (6)
- 21 Tiny, small (6)
- 23 Clean, untainted (4)
- 24 Convenience meal (8)

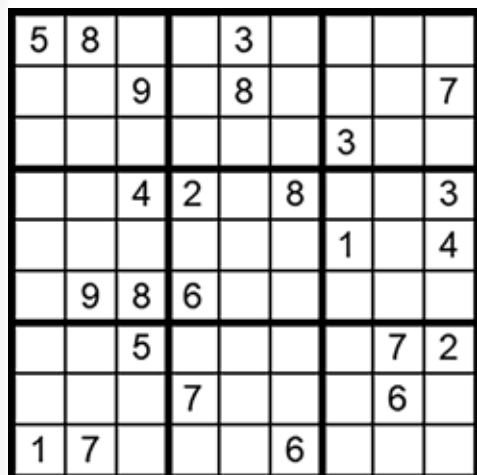
### Down

- 1 Footwear item (4)
- 2 Christmas vegetable! (6)
- 3 Interpret mouth movements (3-4)
- 4 Grows older (4)
- 5 Rip to shreds (4,2)
- 6 Persuades by persistent flattery (8)
- 12 Attract attention (5,3)
- 14 Feel hostility towards (7)
- 16 Ale or beer-producer (6)
- 18 Sort of ok (3,3)
- 20 Tub for taking a wash (4)
- 22 Fertile soil (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.



# Perfect Coconut Ice Cream

## Ingredients

1 x 400ml can coconut milk  
150ml double cream  
1 x 160g can coconut cream  
50g golden caster sugar  
4 large egg yolks  
25g desiccated coconut, toasted

## Method

Whisk the sugar and the egg yolks in a bowl until thick and creamy. Pour the coconut milk, double cream and coconut cream in a saucepan and heat until it almost reaches boiling point. Pour this coconut milk mixture in a slow stream over the egg yolks and sugar, whisking constantly. Rinse out the saucepan (important to stop any burning and tainting of the ice cream) and return to a low heat. Pour in the custard mixture and stir in the desiccated coconut.

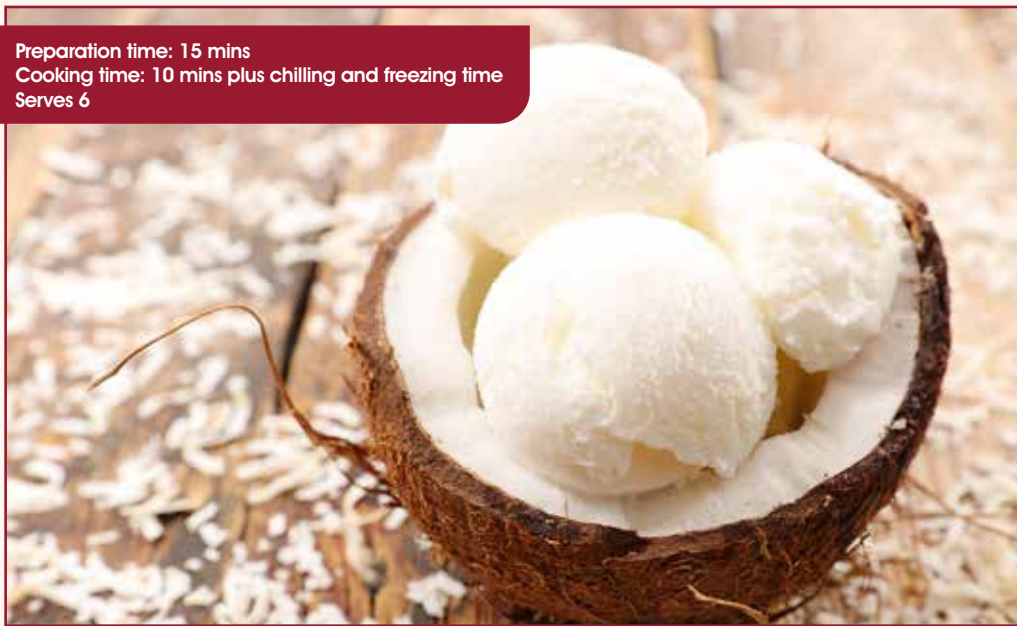
Continue to stir constantly for 5-10 mins until the custard thickens slightly and you can trace a line through it with a wooden spoon. Pour into a bowl and cover the surface of the custard with cling film...to prevent a skin forming), allow to cool, then chill for 30 mins. At this point you can use your ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions.

If you don't have an ice cream maker transfer the chilled custard to a small freezer-safe container with a lid and freeze for 1 hr, then use a fork or electric whisk to really churn through the ice cream to break up the ice crystals so that the mixture is the same consistency all the way through. Pop it back into the freezer for another 2-3 hrs, whisking it about every half hour, then cover the surface with a sheet of cling film and freeze with the lid on until as firm as ice cream. Take out of the freezer 10 mins before serving so it's easy to scoop.

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 10 mins plus chilling and freezing time

Serves 6







# Lockdown musings

By Rachael Leverton

**B**ack in May garden centres became some of the first businesses allowed to reopen to the public. For gardeners stuck at home (even though we understood and supported the lockdown), it's been a frustrating time. We've been unable to plant during one of the best springs I can ever remember.

And for many of the UK's growers it has been devastating. Millions of lost plants nurtured to be at their best by Easter were lost. The scale of the issue was mind-boggling. Garden centres and nurseries usually make the bulk of their income during the early growing season as people prepare their plots for the summer but instead they've been forced to compost or recycle millions of plants, leaving one in three growers in serious financial difficulties, with little possibility of recouping their losses later in the year.

I was glad to see nurseries and garden centres reopening and in spite of my own apprehension about venturing out, I decided to go to my local garden centre reasoning that the open outdoor spaces meant transmission of coronavirus was less likely and it would be easier to maintain social distancing.

There were staff in the car park and the queue markings were 2m apart. The trolleys were cleaned before being handed to the customers and social distancing was observed throughout the one-way system. There were fewer plants on display which puzzled me for a second until I realised that growers couldn't take the risk of planting a few weeks before when they had no idea whether they would have to destroy those plants too. Such a heart-breaking decision for them to have to make.



My own garden has been a source of solace throughout lockdown, but what has been particularly nice is the number of people who have discovered gardening during this period. There is a lot of psychological research which concludes that nurturing plants and flowers diverts our attention away from stresses and anxieties in our lives and goodness knows there's been way too much stress and anxiety recently.

So, as we hit July is there anything easy which you can still plant, and which will still grow? The good news is yes.

Nasturtiums can be sown throughout this month. They are known for their brightly coloured flowers and attractive foliage. There

are trailing, climbing, and dwarf varieties. The showy flowers can be single or double and come in fiery shades of reds, oranges, and yellows. Leaves are pale green and umbrella-shaped with long stems. They are the perfect flowers for beginner gardeners so if the kids have been dying to

have a go at gardening these are your go-to plant. Sow the seeds and within 7-10 days, you should see sprouting. They are drought tolerant and ideal for hanging baskets and containers. Even better, you can add the flowers, buds and young leaves to salads, and they have the most wonderful peppery taste.

Love-in-the-mist are easy to grow and have distinctive seed heads. These can be sown until early July and also again in September so they will get a head start for next year.

And of course, you can still plant sunflowers. Who doesn't love a sunflower? Plant one for each member of the family and see whose grows the most. You could give prizes for the tallest, the prettiest or the largest flower.

Happy gardening.



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# 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

## Utilities

Electricity power cut 0800 6783 105  
 Gas leak 0800 111 9999  
 Severn Trent Water 024 7771 5000  
 Severn Trent Water (emergencies) 0800 783 4444

## Travel

National Rail Enquiries 03457 48 49 50  
 Network West Midlands (buses) 0345 303 6760

## LOCAL COUNCILLORS

### SOLIHULL / SILHILL

#### Mike Gough

Tel: 07480 253181  
 Michael.gough@solihull.gov.uk

#### Peter Hogarth MBE

Tel: 0121 705 5455  
 phogarth@solihull.gov.uk

#### Wazma Qais

Tel: 0121 709 3404  
 wazma.qais@solihull.gov.uk

### ST ALPHEGE

#### Stuart Davis

Tel: 01564 776293  
 sdavis@solihull.gov.uk

#### Joe Tildesley

Tel: 0121 705 3086  
 joetildesley@solihull.gov.uk

#### Kate Wild

Tel: 07917 550 644  
 kawild@solihull.gov.uk

**Councillor surgeries** these are face-to-face meetings held by councillors for local people to raise issues in their area. Held at The Core Library, Solihull on the first and last Saturday of the month, 10am – 12 noon.

## local police contact for Solihull

Solihull police station

Telephone: 0845 113 5000





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

**Sudoku Solution**

from page 22

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

**crossword Solution**

from page 22

**Solution to Mind benders**

1. Three musketeers
2. Big show off
3. Change of plans

**mindbenders**

from page 16

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