



Festival competition winners

There were two competitions on The Archer stall at the East Finchley Community Festival. The £5 prize for the children's Word Search naming places in East Finchley was won by Jake Taylor of Granville Road, N12.

Julie Murphy of Southern Road, N2 successfully identified the five local landmarks in disguise, for which she received £10. Julie told The Archer she was particularly delighted, as she had never won anything before.

The answers to the picture competition were: 1) Viceroy Close, behind Budgens; 2) Tony's Continental; 3) Islington and St Pancras Cemetery;

4) Lazy Sally Café, Cherry Tree Wood; 5) Phoenix Cinema.

Thank you to everyone who entered.



Two loos low trek

By Sippy Azizollah

As a regular at the Cherry Tree Wood café over the last 16 years, my constant complaint was that there was no accessible toilet for wheelchair users. The only way to get down to the loo was by taking my wheelchair down the little path leading to the gents, leaving my chair and doing the rest of my journey with my walking sticks.

Until now. Recently I met a friend at the Lazy Sally Café and, to our surprise, we found the graded steps that took one down to the loos had been replaced by a ramp. I'm delighted to say I'm able to take my chair all the way into the hand washing area.

It is good to see the council has done this work, and I know I speak for many other women who had problems with the steps.

However, there are a few things that need addressing: the lack of light and the lack of vandal proof loo paper holders. I think the only way to stop vandalism and theft in both the ladies and gents is to have floor to ceiling iron gates at the entrances to stop anyone getting in after, say, 6pm.



Wish you were here

Eighty per cent of Barnet residents are satisfied with the borough as a place to live, according to figures published by Barnet Council. Eighty-three per cent answered positively when asked if people from different backgrounds got on well together in Barnet. Fifty-seven per cent felt that they belonged to their neighbourhood.

Fifty-one per cent described themselves as satisfied with the council, although 81 per cent said it was "doing a good job".

Mike Freer, leader of Barnet Council, said the overall message from the survey was "We like it here".

Power to the people

By Caroline Broome

The East Finchley Village Residents' Association (EFVRA) has a raft of new members after running a stall at the Community Festival in June.

Our volunteers who manned the stall were greeted with much enthusiasm and encouragement. We increased our membership by 50% on the day, and now have almost 150 local residents signed up, spread across N2, from Fortis Green to East End Road.

Local issues

Many parents of young families, new to the area, were pleased there was an organisation that could offer supportive action regarding local issues, such as secondary school placement allocations and Safe Routes to Schools.

Another issue raised by many visitors to the stall was the recent decision by Barnet Council to change the street lighting. Many people were concerned about blocked pavements and sleep deprivation due to light pollution.

The issue that continues to be of greatest concern to people in the Church Lane area is the proposal to install a mobile phone base station and multiple masts in the church tower of Holy Trinity. Many N2 residents further afield from the Church Lane epicentre of EFVRA were very keen to add their support by signing our objection petition. As a result we now have 239 signatures, and the number is growing daily.

EFVRA meets next on Monday 14 September at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2. For further information, contact EFVRA@btinternet.com.

Sunshine for children's hospice

A holiday company has brought some sunshine to the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice by sponsoring an extra nursery nurse for one year.

Olympic Holidays, based in North Finchley, has chosen the north London hospice to receive £34,000 through its Childcare Fund. The extra nurse will enable Noah's Ark to reach more families in the Barnet area.

Noah's Ark supports life-limited children and their families with hospice services and a community programme that helps children in their own homes.

Olympic's HR manager Tracey Collins said: "We are so pleased to be able to assist such a worthy local cause through our Childcare Fund. We thank our clients, too, who have contributed to our fund."

Meanwhile, the Noah's Ark Family Support Volunteers Scheme is also expanding the help that the charity can give to children and their carers. Already 28 volunteers have qualified, and 13 have been matched with families. These volunteers offer weekly support in the home and help families participate in Noah's Ark family events.

To know more about Noah's Ark or to get involved with its services, call 020 8449 8877 or visit the Noah's Ark website at www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk.

Everything in the garden is rosy

By Janet Maitland

Last year, my garden opened under the National Gardening Scheme for the first time. Back gardens are intimate places. The experience of letting strangers peer into every corner is about as relaxing as inviting them to read your old love letters. After all, 'show me your garden and I shall tell you what you are' (Alfred Austin 1907).

A few days before the opening, I still had so much still to do I was contemplating pretending to be out on the big day. Then *Amateur Gardening* got in touch to ask if they could feature my garden in their magazine.

Photoshoot

My ego got the better of my nerves. The photographer, Jacqui Hurst, arrived the following morning and spent the best part of two days taking pictures. I had imagined it would take an hour at most as my garden is so small, but every time I looked out of the window she was crouched behind another bush peering intently through the lens.

Hundreds of people came to the opening. Everyone was very complimentary. The afternoon flew by. My head swelled. Lots of money was raised for charity. Some plants got trampled in the crush. I didn't care.

This year, on 7 June, I opened the garden again. A few days before the opening, a copy of the magazine arrived by recorded delivery. The article was timed to coincide with the open day. As this had never occurred to me, I had long given up on them ever publishing it.

So, I floated up to the ceiling with pride as four pages of photographs and words about my garden danced in front of



A place to relax: Janet Maitland's cottage garden.

Photo by John Lawrence

my eyes. If you ever want to see your garden looking a whole lot

better than it really does, call in a professional photographer.