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Letters

Cherry Tree Wood really is a very valuable, historical local amenity and I am happy to see that the work of the Friends continues to do everything possible to protect and preserve it. Yours nostalgically, Anne Lalaguna, East Preston, West Sussex.

Pumping iron

Dear Editor, With the 2012 Olympics coming soon, I have noticed that many parks in London now have outdoor gym equipment, looking almost like playgrounds. Following suggestions for improvements to Barnet parks, especially those in East Finchley, I think this is certainly one of the more feasible ideas at this time.

If Stanley Field is restored, this would be an ideal place to try out the outdoor equipment, maybe next to a new indoor gym that was proposed to compensate for the old Wilmot Centre. Highgate Wood, just over the border in Haringey, has had a set of gym bars by the open field for years, and apparently parks in Scandinavia have had outdoor gym equipment for at least a decade already.

As for Cherry Tree Wood, I hope the assault course plan can eventually go ahead. Improvements here within the last few months have included a new municipal recycling bin by Lazy Sally's Cafe, new welcome signs with some historic trivia about the park, and the ongoing re-surfacing of paths.

Volunteer Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have also had their exercise weeding out invasive plants. Although we are some distance from the site of the Olympic Village, I think that, like every London borough, Barnet should have enough equipment to give its people a sporting chance.

Yours faithfully, Jake Eiseman-Renyard, Fortis Green, N2

Free up our tennis courts

Dear Editor, Did anyone see the news that almost a third of our kids will be obese by the end of primary school and Barnet Council is worried about this? Really? Then make Cherry Tree Wood tennis courts free for all (as they were for years) and do it now. Parents are supposed to take this issue seriously while our council seems incapable of doing the easy stuff.

Yours faithfully, Ken Behan, Ingram Road, N2.

Good to see bench is back

Dear Editor, Although I moved away from East Finchley four years ago, I still keep a close eye on what's happening there, thanks to THE ARCHER, which my very dear friend Mary Atkinson sends to me every month.

I was very relieved to see in the June edition that the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood bench has been safely returned to the Wood again. The Friends worked so hard to raise the money for that bench and its installation, using donations, second hand book sales and various raffles at the East Finchley Festival for two or three years. It took a lot of effort and determination but we got there in the end.

Rock on, Cam'ron

Nine-year-old Cam'ron Rock has only been doing Taekwondo for two years but he's already one of the best young martial artists in the country.

The Tudor Primary School pupil was awarded a bronze medal in the British Junior Taekwondo Championships held in Margate, despite being one of the most junior belts in the competition.



It was his first medal and now he's hungry for more. His coach Kevin Guy at Master Wolf's Taekwondo School believes he's good enough to win a medal at the World Championships in Croatia later in the year.

Cam'ron's mum Natalie Allen said: "I am very proud of him. Obviously I'm biased but it's a huge achievement for him. Taekwondo is something he's taken to and wanted to learn. He likes it because it's a way to channel all his energy, and he has endless amounts of that."

Volunteering is good for you

By Natalie Broadbent

Volunteering comes in many different forms, from coaching or helping at sports clubs, to administration, befriending, advice giving or writing for a community newspaper such as THE ARCHER. As a result of today's economic climate, Volunteer Centre Barnet has seen the number of people registering to become volunteers double in the last year.

Aruna Bhatt was made redundant 18 months ago. She said: "Losing my job was a big shock to my system. I felt my life had come to an end. I became very ill which led to depression."

Aruna got in touch with Volunteer Centre Barnet and started volunteering over six months ago with East Finchley Advice Service.

Now Aruna says: "I have gained lots of new skills and am still learning as each day is different. I enjoy what I do as I feel very motivated, respected and know I belong somewhere. Losing confidence and feeling no one wants you is the worst feeling in the world. The best way to keep going is to become a volunteer and help the community. I wish I had done this 18 months ago but I am glad I am doing it now."

Backbone

Volunteers are the backbone of many organisations. They bring great enthusiasm, a willingness to learn and many have vital skills. Without them many organisations would not exist, so Volunteer Centre Barnet is urging more organisations to offer volunteering opportunities.

Volunteer Centre Barnet holds a bi-annual Community Volunteer Awards to recognise the hard work of Barnet's volunteers. The next ceremony takes place on 16 July. Those who have given 100 hours or more of their time over the past year will receive a certificate to be presented by Barnet's Mayor, Councillor Brian Coleman.

To find out more about the awards or about volunteering or if your organisation would like to use volunteers please contact Volunteer Centre Barnet on 020 8364 8400.



In memory of Albert

THE ARCHER was contacted by the family of the late Albert Daggars as they marked the second anniversary of his death.

Albert owned the Sound Services television and radio shop in the High Road for more than 30 years up to his retirement in 1990 and was great friends with many of his customers. Many of them continued to call him after his shop had closed down and he always helped them out, however small the job was.

His wife Della said he had the untidiest shop but he could always find everything, including the smallest resistor. His daughter Angela hoped that many people in East Finchley would still remember her father two years on.

She said: "I'm sure that he is still remembered by many people in the area. He was still fixing their electrical equipment right to the end, and never turned anything away, from kettles to dental suction machines."

Ann Vautier

Ann Vautier died in hospital on May 27 with her husband Antonio and daughter Caterina by her side. It is a painful loss for so many family and friends across the UK, Italy, Canada, where she grew up, and around the world.



charity Contact, where she went out of her way to help local people.

As well as being a befriender and an escort, Ann acted as secretary to the group for over two years. Her indomitable fund raising skills were an added bonus, along with her calm, positive manner which greatly influenced others.

Her funeral was held on 4 June and was attended by many family and friends. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Ann Vautier Fund (Leukaemia & Lymphoma Unit), University College London Hospital. Contact Sara Goldman on 020 7380 9526 or sara.goldman@uclh.nhs.uk

Ann cared about the community and she will be sorely missed. She was a long time contributor to, and distributor of, THE ARCHER. She was also an inspired and motivational volunteer for the East Finchley

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