



Sainsbury's staff and charity workers raise awareness about autism

Awareness of autism

Staff at Sainsbury's and the TreeHouse centre in Muswell Hill got together on 12 April to host a day to promote the awareness of autism sufferers and the work that TreeHouse does to help young people and their families understand and live with the condition. The store raised over £150 on the day with a Taste & Donate stall and collection boxes.

Rare and threatened visitors

By Nick Young

As the winter weather continued well into March, so did sightings of winter birds in East Finchley, with Fenella Reed of Eastern Road reporting siskins and redpolls in her garden.

"The redpolls arrive usually before Christmas; the siskins usually as soon as there's some very cold weather. They've been with me over the winter for the past four years: a delightful addition to the garden as they grow brighter and brighter into their spring colours," says Fenella.

These colourful birds are small members of the finch family and are in fact present in the UK all year round, although both species tend to breed in northern England, Scotland and Wales and only tend to visit the London area during the winter.

The siskin has a streaky

yellow-green body and a distinct forked tail; as is the case with some finches, the female is paler and greyer than the male. They prefer coniferous forests but do venture further afield, especially into gardens, during the winter.

Redpolls are identified by their red foreheads, pale double wing-bars and dark-streaked rumps. Unfortunately, redpolls have suffered a decline in recent years and are now one of 52 species on the RSPB's "red list", which indicates the most threatened species in the British Isles.

Sticky fingers

By Janet Maitland

Police officers are to be equipped with portable fingerprint machines. The machines will be used by officers on patrol when people they suspect are involved in crime either lie about their identity or refuse to reveal it.

A scanner on the machine quickly records the suspect's fingerprint which is then immediately checked against fingerprints held at New Scotland Yard.

"This does not mean random ID checks," said Chief Superintendent Adrian Usher. "An officer can only request your fingerprint if they reasonably suspect you are involved in criminality and only if they cannot identify you or believe

you are giving false details."

Police believe that the machines will save a considerable amount of investigation time by quickly eliminating an innocent person from enquiries. They also think that, by confirming an identity, police may not need to make an arrest but can deal with someone by means of street bail, where an appointment is made for the person to attend a police station.

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YOUNG ARCHER

Something Wicked This Way Comes

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

Finchley Youth Theatre's latest production was dark, disturbing and thought-provoking. Based on a Ray Bradbury novel, but with additional characters and dialogue created by the company through improvisation, it explored what happened when the evil Mr Dark brought his carnival to town.

Directed by senior arts worker Liz Sacre, the young people worked on this project for six months. Liz told *THE ARCHER*: "We played around with the theme of time; wanting to have time again, wanting to fast forward to see what the future holds. We also explored the character of Mr Dark, looking at manipulation and threat.

"Both the angry girl and the bereaved mother were created early on; the blinding scene, and the scene where the mother has to choose between her girls and her dead son, were entirely devised by the young people. In the first improvisation her mother was restored to the angry girl once she had paid with her eyes, but the girl was therefore unable to see her. The thinking behind this is that going back, trying to capture something that has passed, is not a healthy thing and is destined to go wrong.

"These are very dark scenes and we talked a lot about the balance of the piece. Right up to the last week we were still wondering whether we should magically restore her sight as Dark dies (as the girls who had become Siamese twins were freed). The young people felt strongly that the girl should not regain her sight – and at the end needs to learn to trust people and allow them to help her."

Liz made sure that there was hope as well as tragedy in this piece, and I felt that the balance was helped too by taking advantage of the setting to show off some of the young people's brilliant circus skills. The acting was convincing, especially in the pivotal role of Mr Dark, who exuded evil.

Don't miss the Youth Theatre's next production!



Soloist Asagi Nakata

Catch an outstanding performance

By Betti Blatman

When I first saw Asagi Nakata compete in the North London Festival of Music, Dance and Drama eight years ago she was only 10 years old, and I was absolutely mesmerised by her performance. I have continued to attend her competitions and concerts ever since and it has been a privilege to witness her outstanding performances each time.

Although it's Asagi's last year at Latymer School, she has won a scholarship to attend the Royal Academy of Music later this year where she will continue her musical education.

There is an opportunity to see her perform on Saturday 18 May 2013 at 7.30 pm, with the Finchley Chamber Orchestra in association with the North London Festival of Music, Dance and Drama at Muswell Hill United Reformed Church, Tetherdown, N10 1NB.

Seen and heard
David Smith of Abbots Gardens, governor and former pupil of Holy Trinity Primary School, was interviewed at the school for BBC London television news on the day Baroness Thatcher died. A plaque in the entrance hall commemorates Margaret Thatcher opening the school in 1975 when she was Minister of Education.

PARENT & BABY/CHILD ACTIVITIES

- **Baby & U baby massage.** Contact Ruth at babymassagewithruth@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/baby-and-babymassage
- **Bringing up Baby.** Screenings of the latest films for parents with babies. Phoenix Cinema. Wednesdays 11am. Box office 020 8444 6789.
- **Dads' Club:** Get-togethers for dads looking after young children in East Finchley. Adam 07957 441435.
- **EF National Childbirth Trust** contact Ruby Yang or Patrizia Canwell at eastfinchleynct@googlemail.com
- **Newstead Parent & Toddler Group,** Thurs 9-12-30, Green Man Ctr. Sajni 8359 3460.
- **Parent & Toddler Group,** Green Man Centre, Julia 8444 2276
- **Phoenix Cinema activities,** Bringing up baby screenings, Weds, 11am; Kids Club, Sat, 12pm; Toddler Time, Tues, 11am. Full details from box office on 020 8444 6789.
- **Stepping Stones,** interactive play session for under 3s. Karen 07957 278860.
- **Teddy Bears' Music,** singing for 0-3s in Holy Trinity Church, N2; Thursdays 9.45am & 10.45am. Liz 07836 284538.

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