



Roberto, the new owner of Barracuda. Photo Mike Coles

New Barracuda boss has plenty on his plate

By Cathy Young

“Before I took over, I came to check it out and I was excited by the outdoor space,” says Roberto Pandya, who has taken over as the new owner of the Barracuda café on the corner of Lincoln Road the High Road.

“I spent two weeks just sitting there and I noticed that 99% of the customers were locals; the same people coming here regularly. A lot of people in East Finchley seem to prefer the local, independent rather than the corporate atmosphere of big chains. I am determined to keep everything the same here; same chef, same menus.”

Persuaded by a work col-

league to quit his job as a group operations manager for a large company and to actually do something he loved doing, Roberto sold his own apartment and invested in the Barracuda.

He is keen to support local businesses, saying: “The Barracuda is part of a strong community and I love it. You don’t get that feeling anywhere else.”

He is continuing the Silver Service initiative where anyone over 60 can bring a guest for lunch on Tuesdays and eat for £5 each. He is also hoping to drum up more enthusiasm for his evening dining. “We are open for evening meals from 6pm to 10pm, Monday to Saturday. It’s a bit quiet now but I’m hoping news will spread beyond the regulars we have at the moment.”

Weapons seized in Grange estate raid

By Jan Lovell, East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team

On Friday 30 October your local officers working alongside a POLSA Police dedicated specialist police search team conducted a sweep of the Grange estate grounds looking for weapons and evidence of drug use/dealing. This was in response to concerns from Grange residents over anti-social behaviour on the estate.

Recovered during the search were items from a theft, two Samurai swords and four large kitchen knives. Following this, the local team will be working in partnership with Barnet Homes, using recent changes to legislation to discourage and prevent behaviour that undermines community safety. If you are experiencing issues now or in future please do not hesitate to contact us.

Theft and burglary prevention

One weekend at the start of November a handbag was snatched from the passenger

seat of a vehicle stopped at the traffic lights on the North Circular Road junction with Squires Lane and Strawberry Vale. Do get in the habit of always locking your car doors.

Thefts from vehicles has increased. In many cases the vehicle was undamaged, so possibly vehicles are being left unlocked or a blocker could have been used. To prevent this, make sure you hear/see your car locking system engage before leaving it.

Many of you will have received either an email or a leaflet through the door for our Locks Clocks and Lights

autumn/winter security promotion. I would like to add to the advice given there to always use the mortice lock on your front doors.

There have been a number of burglaries recently through front doors where only the Yale lock is engaged. A burglar can tell if your mortice lock is engaged just by pushing against the door at the bottom, and Yale locks need minimal force to open. For those of you with UPVC doors remember to use a key to lock your door after pushing the handle up for full security.

New library petition

By Daphne Chamberlain

If you disagree with Barnet Council’s plans for our libraries, there is still time to make your voice heard. A new petition is gathering support fast and reaching 7,000 signatures will mean that it must be presented at a Council meeting in January.

The petition protests about the proposed enormous reduction in space, resources and professional staffing; reliance on volunteers; safety risks, and the inevitable exclusion of unaccompanied under-16s during unstaffed opening hours. These proposals were rejected by the public in the recent consultation.

A paper petition will be available to sign at the East Finchley Christmas Festival on Saturday 5 December. You can also access it online at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-to-volunteer-and-unstaffed-libraries-in-barnet>.

Concert to save the library

By Daphne Chamberlain

Supporters of the library service, here is your chance to be a bit creative in your vocal comments. East Finchley Library Users Group is waiting to hear your library-themed versions of some of our best known carols.

Winning version will be sung at a Libraries Christmas concert at East Finchley Methodist Church, starting 7pm on Saturday 12 December, when all are welcome.

Put your own words to these carols: Oh Come All Ye Faithful, Silent Night, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, The Holly and the Ivy, Oh Little Town of Bethlehem, Once in Royal David City, I Saw Three Ships, Gabriel’s Message and We Wish You A Merry Christmas

The London Metropolitan Brass Band, who played on

library protest marches, will be there in support. Tickets are £5 in advance or £8 on the door, available from Martin Primary School office on weekdays between 10am and 3pm, or by email from pollynapper@btinternet.com.

Money will go towards a legal campaign to save the library service. Having read all the Council documents, three local lawyers have advised EFLUG that it is worth going ahead with this. For more information, contact Polly at the above address, or join the EFLUG Facebook group.

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