



Pleasant tents: Neighbours relax together at the Manor Park Road party.

Hand snake: Mushu the snake makes friends in Manor Park Road.

Snakes alive! It's the Manor Park Road street party

By Thalia Pellegrini
After a week of rainy weather, residents of Manor Park Road had been envisaging waterproofs as suitable attire for their street party on Saturday 15 June but on the day they were delighted

to wake to blue skies. Bright bunting up and down the street marked the third annual party, which has become a summer highlight for residents. "It's so inclusive and welcoming," one resident, Emma, remarked. "It's lovely to talk to people instead of just

passing them on the street," added Pamela. The day was an easy blend of games, music, chatting and play. Children raced up and down the long car-free street on their bikes while the grown-ups relaxed and caught up with neighbours. There was

a lot to enjoy, including the now established egg-catching competition, plus (new for 2019) the hugely popular pets' corner, courtesy of Jean Davis, featuring Mushu the snake and Gibby the gecko. There were artful creations, face-painting, giant Jenga, singing, a mini-concert and a fantastic buffet lunch provided by residents, odd numbers

bringing savoury dishes, with even numbers providing the puddings. Despite dark clouds gathering, the rain held off until late, giving everyone the chance to stay outside talking until well into the evening. One resident summed up the success of the day: "Life is all about connecting. The street party brings us outside and together."

John gets a send-off

Continued from front page

And that community said "thank you" in return. Soon after John moved away last year to recuperate at his daughter's home in the Midlands, customer Darren Mitchell started a retirement collection with a fundraising total of £300. With the help of John's friend Nalin Shah, who had a collection box at his Galaxy Drug Store nearby in Church Lane, the final sum raised was £855. A cheque was handed over to John after he made a special trip back to the area for the Manor Park Road street party on Saturday 15 June. He was also given a retirement cake made by Imelda Santillan, a "happy retirement" card and

lots of handshakes. "John has been an outstanding member of the community by providing his services, smiles and good deeds for 30 years now," said Darren. "He made so many friends and became a well-known face and still to this day no one has a bad thing to say about him. "He will be missed by everyone and we all wish him the very best in his retirement. We hope he left with pleasant, happy memories of this special event and his days in East Finchley." Darren thanked everyone who had contributed to John's retirement present and who helped with the presentation at the party.



John Omar receives a retirement card from local residents in Manor Park Road. Photo Mike Coles

Brian takes the plunge for church roof fund

All Saints' Church in Durham Road, N2, received a welcome boost to its roof repairs project when Brian Hooper, a member of the congregation for over 40 years, presented a cheque for £740 to the church.



In the swim: Brian presenting his cheque to Father Richard at All Saints'.

Brian raised the money from a sponsored swim of 100 lengths of the 25m pool at the Cally Pool & Gym in Caledonian Road which he tries to visit three to five times a week. The swim was achieved in 56 minutes.

Brian commented: "I love swimming, it's my way of keeping fit, and I am so pleased

to combine my favourite sport with being able to raise money for the All Saint's Roof Appeal."

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