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for residents of shirley

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# Joyous June!

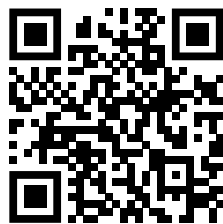
Welcome to the June edition

**There's a whole load of great events coming up over the next month - from outdoor plays to jazz festivals. Fingers crossed the weather's good to us and we can get our picnic blankets out!**

Or maybe you're busy getting your garden summer ready or preparing to move house. If you need help getting your garden landscaped, your drive re-done, or your bathroom or kitchen updated then have a look to see if one of the local and reliable businesses who advertise in here can help. Wishing you a great month ahead. Until next month...

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# community events

## The Jersey Boys Tribute Night

**8 July, Shirley British Legion**

This is a night with a difference! The Valli Boys UK are Wales' top tribute to 'Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons' and the hit musical 'The Jersey Boys'. Tickets from [www.tributenightpromotions.co.uk](http://www.tributenightpromotions.co.uk)

## Mamma Mia Summer Party

**8 July, Nailcote Hall**

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## Solihull Jazz Festival

**13-16 July, Solihull Town Centre**

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for everyone at this landmark music festival in the heart of Solihull, supported by the amazing Continental Food & Drink Market. More info at [www.solihullbid.co.uk](http://www.solihullbid.co.uk)



## West Midlands Fire Service band

**15 July, Shirley**

**Methodist Church**

The Band of the West Midlands Fire Service are giving a concert at Shirley Methodist Church on Saturday 15th July 2024, 7.30pm. Come and join us. Tickets from 07591 089104 or [ticketsbwmfs@gmail.com](mailto:ticketsbwmfs@gmail.com) or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/bwmfs](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bwmfs)

## Sense & Sensibility

**25th July, Brueton Park, Solihull**

Classic novel by Jane



Austen Sense and Sensibility, adapted for the outdoor stage by Heartbreak Productions. Bring a blanket, a picnic, and maybe something in case it rains! Tickets from The Core Theatre Solihull on 0121 704 6962.

## Ricky Gervais

**4th September, Utilita Arena Birmingham**

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# The Band of the West Midlands Fire Service

The Band of the West Midlands Fire Service are returning to **Shirley Methodist Church** for our eagerly anticipated annual concert!



On **Saturday 15 July**, join us for a night of live music, ranging from Robert Farnon to Pixar movie themes, and Shostakovich's Waltz No. 2 to Morricone. With a special feature from our Corps of Drums and their impressive stick work, it will be an exciting evening with the Band, and one we hope you will enjoy with us.

The concert begins at 7.30. Tickets are £10, 60+/students £8, children £5, and can be bought on the door or by phoning 07591 089104, emailing [ticketbwmfs@gmail.com](mailto:ticketbwmfs@gmail.com) or at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/bwmfs](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bwmfs)

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# COMPETITIONS

## Win 2 tickets to Sense & Sensibility

Classic novel by Jane Austen  
Sense and Sensibility, adapted for the outdoor stage by Heartbreak Productions. If you're the lucky winner make sure you bring a blanket or chair to sit on, weather-appropriate gear, and a picnic, as the tale could take some time to tell, and storytelling can be hungry work.



## Win 4 tickets to Dadbelly's Disco!

Fed up of the same old Saturday evenings? Then enter this competition to win 4 tickets to this disco with a difference on Saturday 15th July at RBL Solihull. You'll get to go around the world in 80 sounds, spin the wheel to choose the next music genre, and be entertained with games throughout the evening.



.....

### How to enter

For your chance to win, email [zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com) with the subject line Sense & Sensibility or Disco (or both!) and you will be added to our database to receive our monthly e-newsletter about offers and events in Solihull.

The winners will be notified by email after the closing date of 1 July 2023. The disco tickets will need to be collected from the RBL Solihull Club. There is no cash value nor exchanges for the prizes.

# Poached egg flowers

**P**oached Egg plants are among my summer favourites. *Limnanthes douglasii* (to give it its proper name) is a fantastic addition to any garden. It is easy to grow, requires little care and produces masses of beautiful flowers that attract pollinators. The best time to plant it is outside from March to May but if you have a sunny, well-drained spot you can plant them in early June and they will reward you handsomely with delightful fat yellow-centred blooms, which I think look more like fried eggs than poached ones! The delicate ferny foliage is also attractive.

Planting *limnanthes douglasii* is straightforward. Sow the seeds directly in a sunny, well-drained area. The soil ideal should be light and fertile. If you have heavy soil, you can improve it by adding sand and organic matter such as compost, leaf mould or well-rotted manure. Don't go mad or you'll end up with lots of leaves and fewer flowers.

Sow the seeds thinly on the surface of the soil and cover them lightly with a thin layer of soil. Water gently to keep the soil moist. Germination usually takes 7-14 days, and once the seedlings have emerged, thin them to a distance of



15cm apart to allow for good airflow and growth.

You might need to go on slug patrol while the plants are small, but once established, poached egg plants are low-maintenance and require little care. Water regularly, during dry spells and that's about it! You can also prolong the flowers by deadheading the faded blooms regularly.

*Limnanthes douglasii* is a prolific bloomer that produces masses of flowers from June to August, though if you plant now

they'll probably go through to the end of September if your garden is sheltered.

The plant grows to a height of 15cm and spreads to a width of around 15-20cm. It self-seeds freely so makes an excellent ground cover. It can be planted in borders, rockeries, meadows or as a filler in containers. It also attracts bees, butterflies, and other pollinators to the garden, making it an excellent addition to wildlife-friendly gardens.

Plant a poached egg today!  
Happy gardening!

# Nectarine Crumble



**Serves:** 6

**Preparation time:** 20 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 35-40 minutes

## Ingredients

For the fruit filling:

- 6 ripe nectarines (approximately 800g)
- 50g granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp cornflour
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

For the crumble topping

- 150g plain flour (or 100g plain flour and 50g ground almonds)
- 100g cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- 75g granulated or demerara sugar
- 50g rolled oats
- 1/4 tsp salt
- Flaked almonds

## Method

Preheat your oven to 180°C (160°C Fan) Gas mark 4. Lightly grease a 23cm x 23cm (9x9-inch)

square baking dish.

Prepare the fruit filling: Rinse the nectarines, cut them in half, remove the stones, and slice into 1cm thick wedges. Place the nectarine slices into a large mixing bowl. Add the granulated sugar, cornflour, lemon juice, and vanilla extract to the nectarines. Gently mix until the nectarine slices are coated evenly. Transfer the fruit mixture to the prepared baking dish and spread it out evenly.

Prepare the crumble topping: In a medium mixing bowl, combine the plain flour (and ground almonds if using), cubed butter, granulated sugar, rolled oats, and salt. Use your fingertips or a pastry blender to work the butter into the dry

ingredients until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle the crumble topping evenly over the nectarines in the baking dish, ensuring that the fruit is fully covered. Add some flaked almonds for texture. Bake the nectarine crumble in the preheated oven for 35-40 minutes, or until the topping is golden brown and the fruit is bubbling. Remove the crumble from the oven and let it cool slightly for 10-15 minutes before serving. Enjoy the nectarine crumble warm, preferably with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or a dollop of crème fraiche. Note: If nectarines are not available, you can substitute with an equal weight of peaches or plums.



# Feeling Waspish? In favour of the humble wasp.

With their distinctive black and yellow bodies, angry buzz, and stingers, wasps are easily recognisable. Most of us have splatted one that's becoming annoying. However, they are fascinating creatures with a complex social structure.

Wasps create nests using a combination of saliva and wood fibres. The result is a papery substance that is strong, yet lightweight. The nests themselves can take on a variety of shapes and sizes, depending on the species of wasp. Some nests are small and round, while others can be several feet long

and have multiple levels. They are often incredibly beautiful, and usually last for one season before being abandoned.

Inside the nest, the queen wasp lays eggs and is responsible for the reproduction of the colony. The worker wasps are responsible for building and maintaining the nest, foraging for food, and protecting the colony from predators. The males, or drones, are responsible for mating with the queen and do not have a stinger.

But there's no doubt that wasps can be a nuisance to humans (especially those humans trying to enjoy a

picnic). Instead of killing them try the following:

- Cover sweets drinks and foods.
- Distract wasps to another location, by placing sugar water or banana skins away from seating and eating areas.
- Use a safe, deet-free insect repellent.
- Burn citronella candles.
- Don't eat close to fruit trees - especially ripe plums or apricots, they are a magnet for wasps.



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# a good read

By Natasha Donovan

## Milkman

by Anna Burns

I will preface this by saying that *Milkman*, the 2018 Man Booker Prize-winning novel by Anna Burns, is an excellent but challenging read. It deals with resilience and resistance set in the heart of a divided community. Burns weaves a captivating story centred around an 18-year-old protagonist, known only as “middle sister,” and the community in which she lives. The novel is set in an unnamed city, though it bears a strong resemblance to Belfast during the Troubles. It grapples with the complexities of political conflict, societal expectations, and the power of rumour and gossip. As “middle sister” navigates her life, she attracts the advances of the eponymous Milkman, a middle-aged paramilitary figure who begins to stalk her. The novel’s portrayal of the menacing and intrusive nature of the Milkman’s pursuit encapsulates the larger oppressive atmosphere of the community. The pervasive sense of paranoia and suspicion is conveyed through the use of a first-person narrative, filled with intricate details, creating a vivid and visceral experience for the reader. One of the challenges involves Burns’ use of stream of consciousness. Her prose is often dense and demanding, featuring long, sprawling sentences with minimal punctuation, a stylistic choice reflecting both the chaotic environment and the protagonist’s internal turmoil. The most striking aspect of *Milkman* is the absence of proper names for characters and places. This lends a surreal-but-universal quality to the story, evoking many conflict-ridden societies. The novel explores the impact of gender, politics, and power on the individual, as well as the collective psyche of a community, often using humour so



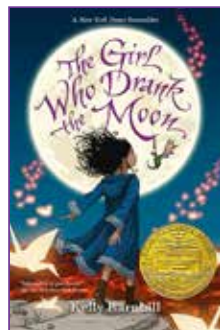
dark it might make the reader squirm.

With its unflinching portrayal of the protagonist’s struggles and resilience, it serves as a testament to the indomitable human spirit in the face of adversity. While the novel’s challenging style may not appeal to all readers, those who persevere will be rewarded with an unforgettable and thought-provoking literary experience.

## The Girl Who Drank the Moon

by Kelly Barnhill

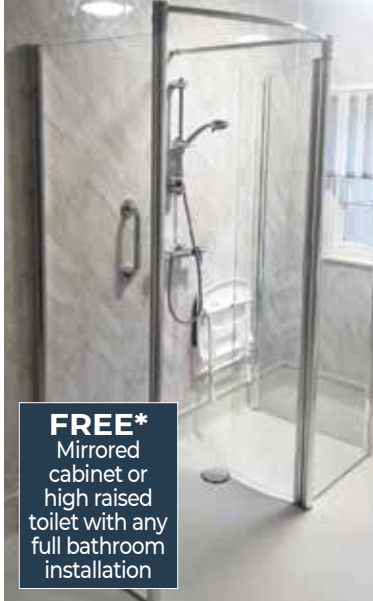
*The Girl Who Drank the Moon* is a captivating and enchanting Newbery Medal-winning novel. Set in a world of magic and wonder, it tells the story of Luna, a young girl unknowingly filled with powerful magic after being fed moonlight by the good witch Xan. The novel follows Luna, Xan, a wise swamp monster named Glerk, and a tiny, talkative dragon called Fyrian as they navigate the complexities of Luna’s magical abilities and unravel the mysteries surrounding their world.



Barnhill’s lyrical prose and vivid world-building draws readers into the story, and the characters are both endearing and complex. The book is a delightful blend of fantasy, adventure, and coming-of-age, with a touch of darkness that lends depth to the narrative. It explores themes of love, sacrifice, and the power of knowledge, providing valuable lessons for both young and adult readers. The plot is intricately woven, with enough twists and turns to keep the reader engaged throughout. *The Girl Who Drank the Moon* is a beautifully written, heart-warming tale that effortlessly blends fantasy and reality. It will captivate readers of all ages, leaving them with a sense of wonder and a deeper appreciation for the magic in their own lives.



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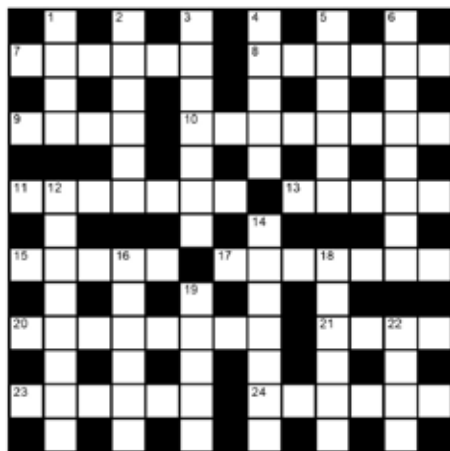
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## crossword



## clues

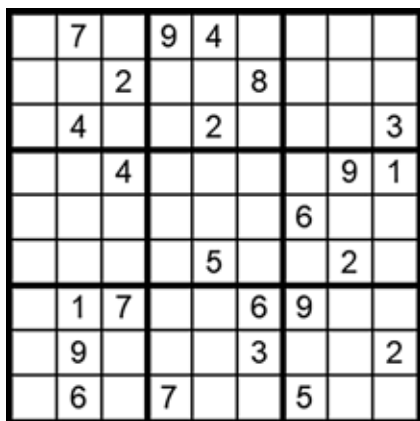
### Across

- 7 Assuage, soothe (6)
- 8 Insurgent, mutineer (6)
- 9 Inscribe (4)
- 10 Disturbances, upsets (5-3)
- 11 Sterile (7)
- 13 Food staple (5)
- 15 Chat, utter (5)
- 17 High sea wave (7)
- 20 Traditional, devout (8)
- 21 Lively dance (4)
- 23 Sound system (6)
- 24 Indifference (6)

### Down

- 1 Skin blemish (4)
- 2 Chess piece (6)
- 3 School pinafore (7)
- 4 Monk (5)
- 5 Person who behaves affectedly (6)
- 6 Abnormal tissue growth (8)
- 12 Keep apart (8)
- 14 Never attracted to anyone (7)
- 16 Comply, heed (6)
- 18 Common, usual (6)
- 19 Turn of phrase (5)
- 22 Repetition (4)

answer on page 28



## how to play sudoku

### It's simple!

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box, contains the numbers 1 through to 9 with no repetition. You don't need to be a genius. These puzzles use logic alone. Watch out! Sudoku is highly addictive.

answer on page 28



# What's all the buzz about!

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### LOCAL COUNCILLORS

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[rosemary.sexton@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:rosemary.sexton@solihull.gov.uk)
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A	E	I	U	M	C
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E	E	M	L	L	O

**Crossword Solution**  
from page 17

3	7	8	9	4	1	2	5	6
6	5	2	3	7	8	1	4	9
9	4	1	6	2	5	8	7	3
5	8	4	2	6	7	3	9	1
7	2	9	1	3	4	6	8	5
1	3	6	8	5	9	4	2	7
2	1	7	5	8	6	9	3	4
8	9	5	4	1	3	7	6	2
4	6	3	7	9	2	5	1	8

**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 17

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