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Welcome

WELCOME to the May 2019 edition of Newton Mearns Connect.

Brought to you by Newsquest Clyde and Forth Weekly Press, publishers behind trusted titles including Barrhead News, Connect is proud to shine a spotlight on all the latest feel good community news, events, and features. On page 6 we hear of a local woman's personal journey after becoming the winner of a prestigious award in a UK-wide beauty pageant.



A kick in the right direction
See page 8

Summer is packed with exciting activities on throughout the area, browse our what's on guide on page 12 for some inspiration.

The Avenue Shopping Centre's efforts to develop future workers from Mearns Primary has earned them a nomination at the upcoming East Renfrewshire Business Awards, find out more on page 16.

We hope you enjoy this latest edition.

**Until next time,
Team Connect**

Contacts

Editorial

If you have a story that you would like to be included in a future issue of Newton Mearns Connect contact:

connect.mags@newsquest.co.uk

Advertising:

To find out how the magazine can help your business connect with new customers, contact-

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Councillor Barbara Grant

(Conservative):

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Councillor Jim McLean

(Conservative):

07388 859263

Councillor Jim Swift (Conservative):

07534515159

Newton Mearns North:

Councillor Tony Buchanan (SNP):

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Councillor Charlie Gilbert

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Pageant award for local mum

A Newton Mearns mum became the winner of a prestigious award after competing in a UK-wide beauty pageant.

Pragya Sinha was awarded the Mrs Elegance title after a glamorous showing at the recent Mrs India UK competition in London.

With a settled family and a stable job working in a senior role in banking, Pragya entered after seeing an advert for the competition in a newspaper, hoping it would offer her an alternative to the routine of her day-to-day business.

She was then selected at an interview to be a main contestant in the showcase.

Despite missing out on the top prize, the local resident has said the event has changed her outlook on life and has given her the confidence to continue with work she started during the challenge.

Pragya added: "It has taken me out of my comfort zone and given me the opportunity to try new things and re-discover myself.

"I have always been very fashionable, but once you are married and have kids we just ignore ourselves.

"This platform helps you focus on yourself and your personality does improve.

But more than that your love for yourself increases.

"I had misconceptions about beauty pageants. I thought that all you had to do was look good, but it is nothing like that."

Now in its third year, the competition is for Indian married women residing in UK celebrating culture, heritage, values and womanhood.

A glitzy awards ceremony at the Hilton Tower Bridge in London marked the end of a hectic three-month journey for finalists.

After carrying out charity work, working on their own nutrition and collaborating with fashion designers from across the UK, the competition picked the best of the lot from nearly 30 women.

Pragya, in particular, worked with women who had experienced domestic violence as part of her social initiative for the event.



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Join a whole new ball game

Walking football has kick-started throughout the surrounding area in a bid to improve health and fitness.

Targeting the over-50s, the sport aims to promote an active lifestyle, as well as give participants the chance to socialise.

Sessions are held every Friday at the Barrhead Foundry and if you'd find it easier to take part in Newton Mearns or would rather enjoy a kickabout at night, there are also sessions at Mearns Primary School on Tuesdays.

Peter Dunn, one of the coaches who organises the event, told Connect's sister title the Barrhead News: "It's a great group of guys. We've got a core group who turn up at both the Mearns on Tuesday and The Foundry on Friday.

"All in all there's about 24 to 30 of them who play walking football.

"We've been going now for about two years, it's good for their fitness, good for camaraderie and good for socialising.

"Everyone loves it, and all the guys get to share



their past stories."

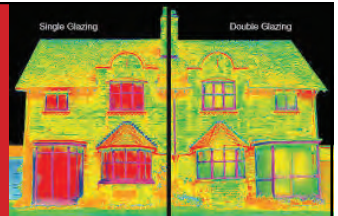
"Sometimes I have to remind them it's 'walking' football, but they'll deny all day long that they've been running.

"It's really positive for everyone who attends."



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Hit the theatre

A theatre show that really packs a punch is on its way to East Renfrewshire.

Stephen Purdon, best known for his role as Shellsuit Bob in BBC Scotland soap opera River City, takes on the title role in The Benny Lynch Story.

It can be seen at Eastwood Park Theatre, in Giffnock, on Thursday, June 27.

The play has been described as a poignant and entertaining look at Lynch's life, from his childhood in the Gorbals slums, through his boxing success and global stardom and, ultimately, to his demise and untimely death in 1946 at the age of just 33.

Well-known Scottish actor David Hayman, who has appeared on the small screen in the likes of ITV drama Trial & Retribution, takes on the role of Lynch's coach and mentor Sammy Wilson.

Holly Jack, of River City, Burnistoun and Waterloo Road fame, plays the boxer's wife, with former Taggart actor Simon Weir joining the cast as Gorbals sage Tash.

The play, produced by Cathkin Park Ltd, is visiting Giffnock as part of a Scottish tour.



A spokesperson said: "It doesn't matter if you're not a boxing fan – this show is about the extraordinary life of a Scottish icon.

"It is the ultimate rags-to-riches-to-rags story."

The show starts at 7.30pm and an age recommendation of 14 and over is in place, as there is some strong language.

Standard tickets cost £20, with concessions available for £18. Students can gain entry for £15.

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Newton Mearns Connect

WHAT'S ON

Stay in the loop with events taking place in Newton Mearns and the surrounding areas.

EVENT: BOOKBUG

Date: Various Days
Time: Various Times
Location: Mearns Library
Cost: Free

What's on: Bookbug sessions introduce music and reading to young children, using simple rhymes, songs and games. Fun and interactive, these sessions are for children and their carers. Bookbug Baby Session 0 - 18mths is held on Mondays at 2pm; Bookbug session 0 - 4 years is on Wednesdays at 2pm; Bookbug Session 0 - 4 years on Thursdays at 10.30am; and Bookbug Session 0 - 4 years Saturdays at 10.30am. Call the library on 0141 577 4979.



EVENT: THE POP-UP OPERA ROADSHOW

Date: Saturday, 8 June
Time: From 12pm
Location: Rouken Glen Park
Cost: £6

What's on: Scottish Opera is packing up its theatre on wheels and bringing three short operas to East Renfrewshire. The three brilliant shows for all the family are brought to life by a storyteller, singers, musicians and a series of colourful illustrations. Puffy MacPuffer & The Crabbit Canals (suitable for 5-8 years) will run at 12pm; A Little Bit of Iolanthe at 2pm; and A Little Bit of Magic Flute at 4pm.

EVENT: ABBA TRIBUTE NIGHT

Date: Saturday, 27 July
Time: 7.30pm-1am
Location: Mearns Castle Golf Academy
Cost: £25 (includes 2-course meal)

What's on: Party the night away as one of the UK's leading ABBA acts 'ABBA A Rival' play all of the classics. Don your platforms and dance and sing along.

To book contact the Academy direct on 01416448200 or email russell@mccgolfacademy.co.uk

EVENT: LIFTING THE LID - 400 YEARS OF FOOD & DRINK IN SCOTLAND

Date: Saturday, 8 - Thursday, 20 June
Time: Library opening hours
Location: Mearns Library
Cost: Free

What's on: Part of a Scotland-wide tour that aims to introduce the National Library's collections to people across the country, close to where they live, the Lifting the Lid exhibition helps visitors understand more of how their ancestors lived and how their diet links to what we eat today. Call the library on 0141 577 4979.

EVENT: EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT JAMIE

Date: Saturday, 27 July
Time: 7.30pm
Location: Eastwood Park Theatre
Cost: £15

What's on: Jamie New is sixteen and lives on a council estate in Sheffield. Jamie doesn't quite fit in. Jamie is terrified about the future. He is going to be a sensation. Supported by his brilliant loving mum and surrounded by his friends, Jamie overcomes prejudice, beats the bullies and steps out of the darkness, into the spotlight.

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Newton Mearns Connect

Investing in a brighter future

The Avenue Shopping Centre has been shortlisted for a prestigious award thanks to their efforts to develop future workers from Mearns Primary School.

The Newton Mearns centre is in the running for the Developing East Renfrewshire's Young Workforce award in the East Renfrewshire Business Awards 2019.

Commenting on the shortlisting, Michelle McCabe, Centre Manager at The Avenue said: "We're delighted with this recognition following the investment and commitment from Centre Management, Mearns Primary School and retailers here at The Avenue to ensuring we provide East Renfrewshire's future workforce with invaluable work experiences before they leave primary school."

The Avenue, in partnership with Mearns Primary School's Developing the Young Workforce, provides age appropriate class visits. A half hour lesson for every year group from Primary 1 to 7 has been developed, with every pupil being given the opportunity to move to the next work experience the



following academic year.

Over the initial seven-year project, in excess of 5900 pupil visits will take place, all with different learning outcomes applicable to the class year involved whilst meeting the objectives of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

The business award winners will be announced on Thursday, 6 June at a glittering back tie dinner hosted by Elaine C Smith.



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Local building sells to UK investor

A large supermarket building in Newton Mearns has been sold for £12.1 million.

Waitrose on Greenlaw Place has been sold to a UK investor by Northern Bank Pension Trust, which is managed by Danske Bank.

Savills, which acted for the vendor, noted the unit is let to Waitrose for a further 12 years and generates a rent of £714,733 per annum.

It said the unit had “formed the catalyst for the wider development known as Greenlaw Village”.

Stuart Orr, of Savills, said: “[It] is a compelling investment given the demographics of the catchment, which is set to significantly grow with a further 3,000 family homes being built.”



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Teachers trained on mental health

A new mental health learning resource for school teachers has been rolled out across Scotland by the charity SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health).

'We All Have Mental Health' is a free e-learning tool aimed at teachers, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to recognise and respond to pupils who are experiencing mental health problems.

In 2017 SAMH surveyed over 3,000 school staff and found that two-thirds of teachers didn't feel they had received sufficient training in mental health to allow them to carry out their role. The mental health charity has created "We All Have Mental Health" in direct response to that feedback using charitable funds.

In response to growing concerns about children and young people's mental health highlighted by organisations including SAMH, the Scottish Government has recently committed to ensuring all secondary schools across Scotland have a counsellor from 2020 onwards. SAMH wants to see a whole-school approach, in which all school staff can support students through mental health challenges.

'We All Have Mental Health' has been designed to introduce mental health to teachers. The resource has been created by SAMH in conjunction with the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

Pam Steel, education development officer at SAMH, said: "Everyone with a role in a young person's life should be confident that they can help – parents, teachers, sports coaches, youth workers. When it comes to mental health, the golden rule for teachers is 'recognise, respond, and refer'. Through our new online tool, teachers now have access to a resource which can help them recognise, respond to and, if necessary, refer pupils who are experiencing mental health problems.

Teachers can access 'We All Have Mental Health' at www.samh.org.uk/teachers



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Expansion plans for nursery

Crookfur Primary Nursery Class in Newton Mearns is to relocate to a new, purpose-built facility.

From August 2020 the class will move to the new Crookfur Family Centre, which is being built to replace the current Crookfur Pavilion. Building work is set to start on the project in the coming months.

The new family centre will continue to be managed by Crookfur Primary head teacher, Sheena McGuigan, and will offer more places than available at present, as well as opening all year round, rather than just term time.

Relocating the nursery class to the pavilion site will also mean that the former nursery class accommodation can be used by the primary school from August 2020.

The move is part of the council's early years expansion plan, which is being put in place as a result of changes being introduced by the Scottish Government.

Local authorities currently provide 600 free hours of childcare for all three and four-year-olds and eligible two-year-olds, and this will increase to 1,140 hours by August 2020. This is a rise to 30 hours per week, matching the amount of time children spend each week in primary school.

Director of Education Mhairi Shaw said: "The aim of our expansion plan is to offer families more opportunities for flexibility and choice for their early learning and childcare needs. Creating these new facilities will help us to achieve this, whilst also providing more space in our schools which will benefit our pupils."



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Newton Mearns Connect

MP backs new Cancer Research campaign

A new Cancer Research campaign urging the Scottish Government to address a shortfall in the cancer diagnosis workforce has been backed by East Renfrewshire's MP.

Paul Masterton gave his backing to the initiative after discovering survival rates can be as much as three times higher if cancer is caught early.

More than 18,000 people waited longer than six weeks to have a cancer diagnosis last year.

Mr Masterton said he was delighted to meet the Cancer Research team to help their cause in getting patients diagnosed sooner.

He said: "Like everywhere in Scotland, cancer has a huge effect on families in East Renfrewshire, so it was interesting to meet with Cancer Research UK team to hear more about their priorities for diagnosing patients sooner in Scotland."

National guidelines suggest that no-one should be waiting longer than six weeks for a cancer diagnosis.

However, statistics revealed more than 20 per cent of people wait longer than six weeks for diagnosis.

Gordon Matheson, public affairs manager in Scotland at Cancer Research UK, said: "The NHS is under continued strain, with too many patients still waiting too long for tests, some of which could detect cancer.

"With a welcome focus on screening and early detection of cancer, there's an urgent need to comprehensively address workforce shortages."

To find out more about Cancer Research and the work the charity does to support patients, visit www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-us



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Embrace the pelargonium this season

For quick-fix glorious garden style, look no further than the pelargonium, which needs so little watering and should thrive in a sunny spot through summer and into autumn. A staggering 40 million are planted in UK gardens each year.

Award-winning garden designer Claudia de Yong says: "To create a low maintenance garden without compromising on colour and visual interest, look for plants like pelargoniums that can be grown with minimal aftercare, and still remain healthy and happy throughout the summer."

She offers the following tips...

Combine varieties

There are more than 500 varieties, from scented-leaf to trailing ivy



specimens along with upright bushy regals. Combining different varieties together creates a beautiful, eye-catching range of colours and growth habits - even the foliage variations can be stunning.

Use block colour

Choose a single colour theme and colour-block your pelargoniums to create a strong statement.

Include them in borders

Pelargoniums aren't just for pots and

planters, they also grow beautifully in herbaceous borders - combine with Nepeta (Catmint), Erigeron (Mexican fleabane), Erysimum 'Bowles Mauve' (Wallflower) or Salvia Caradonna (Balkan Clary) for bee-loving visual interest.

Go vertical

Create a vertical 'garden' of pelargoniums by affixing pots to walls, fences or balconies - an effective way to create privacy.

Take them indoors

Pelargoniums love being in a sunny spot indoors too - planting single varieties in simple terracotta pots for the kitchen table or work surface brings summer inside. Alternatively, use them as cut flowers - pelargoniums will last for up to three weeks in a vase.



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This chance encounter came when a fellow passenger on the bus overheard the customer's situation and passed on our number. This story highlights the power of 'word of mouth' and for that we are forever thankful.



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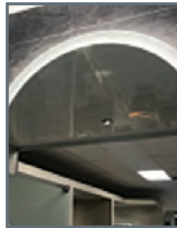
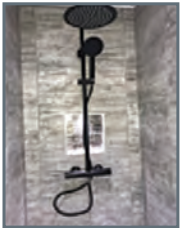
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- Deborah Wilson-McKay



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Discover simple solutions to cut down on your food waste

The UK currently wastes 10.2 million tonnes of food a year - it's a shocking stat, and we're all a little bit responsible.

According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 1.8 million tonnes of that waste comes from food manufacture, one million from the hospitality sector, 260,000 from retail, and the rest from households - but hopefully things are changing.

Want to take on the challenge, and cut your contributions towards climate change too? Here are some steps to take at home, to reduce your household's food waste...

1. Buy what you need

If a recipe you're planning on making only requires one red pepper, avoid buying the multipack - even if it works out cheaper - if you know you're unlikely to eat the rest.

2. Save all your leftover pasta

Chuck odds and ends of spaghetti and fusilli in together, for a medley that can be thrown in with a sauce, or into soup.

3. Grate cheese and freeze

Preempt mouldy ends of cheese by grating the lot and freezing for a later date, when mac and cheese, lasagne or cheese on toast is needed.

4. Pickle and preserve

Got a glut of tomatoes, cucumber, cabbage etc.? Pickling veggies, or making chutneys, is a great way to use them up, and store them for later use.

5. Eat the skins

Opt for skin-on chips, roast carrots and parsnips with the skins on, and even beetroot skin is more than edible - it'll save you time not having to peel 'em too.



6. Keep an eye on use by dates

Whether in the fridge, or if you're bulk shopping, freeze things immediately if you know you're not going to get round to eating them in time to beat their use by date.

7. Use your nose

The best before date is a guideline, use your nose - if something smells OK and looks OK to eat, it probably is. Use by dates though ought to be abided by.

8. Buy the ugly fruit and veg

The wonky veg is most often the kind that ends up in landfill - rescue it, it'll taste just as good as the aesthetically beautiful stuff.

9. Plan meals ahead, and think about how you could reuse leftovers

If you have a meal plan for the week, it'll cut down on your fridge filling with random bits of food without a job to do. Also, if you know what you've got in, you'll be able to work out what to do with leftovers too.

10. Keep your fridge tidy

If you can see what you've got, use by dates will be easier to access, and you'll avoid ending up with a salad drawer of green, decaying mush.

11. Make soups, stocks and smoothies

All three can use up tonnes of leftover veggies and fruit on the turn, plus they freeze really well.

12. Compost

If all else fails, everything except meat, fish and dairy can go straight in the compost, so any nutrients can return to the soil.



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