

BRIDGEND COMMUNITY NEWS

Bridging Social
Isolation
Edition 40



Painting of Clarence Mill by Mark Fearn of Wonky Bolly Art as a prize in the Bridgend Virtual Online Auction 2020

Another packed edition of 'Bridging Social Isolation' for you this week!

We deliver paper copies of this newsletter to people in the area who might prefer to read a paper version. If you know of anyone who would appreciate one every week please drop us a line to let us know and we will put them on the mailing list.

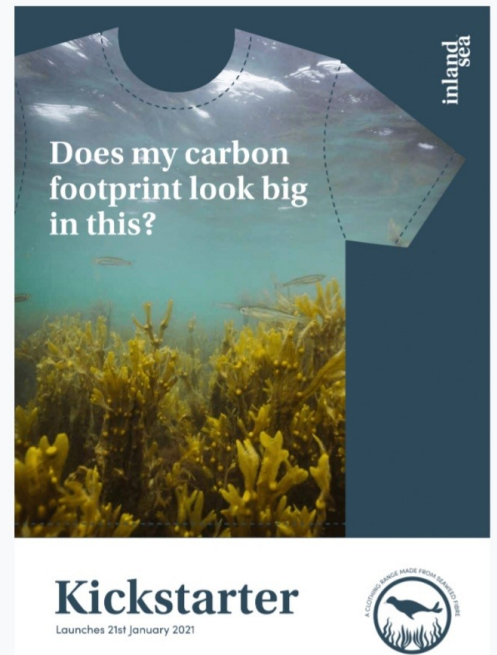
Thank you as ever to all our contributors. We always need articles, photos and pictures to entertain our fellow residents so please do drop us a line at info@bridgendcentre.org.uk if you have any inspiration.

Latest from Plastic Free Bollington and how Seaweed can change the world

The Plastic Free Initiative was set up in Bollington last year. The Bridgend Centre, Fruits of the Forage & Rootstock were quick to show their support and commitment by pledging to reduce their unnecessary single-use plastic. Others in our town are also coming forward to join us in our quest which is part of the bigger Climate Emergency picture, as declared by Bollington Town Council.

It recently came to my attention that here in Bollington we have our very own hero who is going all out to offer a solution to the crisis. Adam Costello, founder of Inland Sea (check them out www.inlandsea.co.uk) has an exciting new seaweed project that includes creating one of the most environmentally friendly t.shirts ever made. Adam's project is going to save the world, come along to our zoom event on Thursday 11/02 7.30pm to hear exactly how. Followed by a Q & A and hosted by Councillor Roland Edwards from the Future Resilience committee.

Email Claire at plasticfreebollington@gmail.com for the link to the event, see you there.



Time to Talk Day



Thursday was 'Time to Talk' Day, which is aimed at reducing the stigma around mental health and hopefully making it easier for people to open up and talk.

It is a tough time for many people at the moment, so if you are struggling please do turn to someone and tell them. It doesn't necessarily need to be a big conversation but just opening up and being honest may help a little. For more information please go to:

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/time-talk-day>

Dates for your diary—Bridgefest and Bollington Walking Festival

You may remember that we had originally organised a big party to celebrate 30 years of the Bridgend Centre to take place on Saturday 12th September 2020.

Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus we had to cancel it and rearranged it for May 2021. Now due to the ongoing uncertainty, we have rearranged the event for Saturday 14th May 2022.

Please put it in your diary, it should be a lot of fun and what a party we will have!
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The Bollington Walking Festival Committee have also agreed the dates for the Walking Festival this year as Saturday 24th September to Sunday 3rd October.

As usual we plan for there to be a wide array of walks and walking related events during the festival. We are facing a lot of uncertainty about the future at the moment but we hope to be able to run this event even if we have to react to the situation at the time and maybe do things a little differently. We will keep you posted on our websites and social media.



Celebrate your local

Over the past few months, the opportunity to slow down our fast pace of life has happened, our social calendars have taken a break. Retail therapy now has a new meaning, instead of planning shopping expeditions to towns and cities afar our doorsteps have become key destinations. We are not talking about the sound of the Amazon box dropping on your doorstep but your community retailers. During lockdown so many of us has rediscovered the power of community spirit, by saying hello to your neighbour and joining in the clap for the NHS and carers. This feeling can go further, by changing your shopping habits you can help to restore the power in your community, to learn about your heritage and produce, helping to create real community champions.

We spoke to Karen Webber of Goodness Marketing who helped to shine the spotlight on the community of local businesses and shops in Marple. Local businesses need our support more than ever. And while it is wonderful to buy from them whenever possible, support can get creative too.

In Marple, residents joined forces to celebrate the area's independent shops in the run-up to Christmas. With filmmaker Gavin Sturgeon and Sarah Laker, owner of Stationery Supplies Marple, we produced a fun video featuring the wide array of products available in Marple. Shop owners were filmed singing their unique take on the traditional song The 12 Days of Christmas.

- 12 gifts a-gifting: **British Red Cross** charity shop
- 11 cappuccinos: **Cloudberry Cafe**
- 10 cosy cushions: **Harmony Decor**
- 9 boots and jumpers: **Suburban Muse**
- 8 handmade vases: **Kala Walsh Ceramics**
- 7 collars clipping: **Barkley and Fetch**
- 6 songs a-singing: **Semitone Studios**
- 5 golden pens: **Stationery Supplies**
- 4 doggy treats: **The Hound Dog Grooming Spa**
- 3 treat boxes: **Little Button Bakery**
- 2 monkey lamps: **SVC Lighting and Electrical**
- A cold beer and tasty bar snacks: **Aggie's Bar**



The video features local award-winning voiceover artist Sara Starling and concludes with a montage of other Marple independents, including Abstract Heroes, Eat Homemade, Fiona Meakin Designs, Word Up Creative, Studio Lauren Taylor and Magpie Cottages and Spa. Even though the video only shows a small number of the amazing local businesses in Marple, it gives a taste of what's available on our doorstep. Locals loved it, with many saying it had inspired them to shop locally not just at Christmas but throughout the year! Please do check out the film by following this link.

www.goodnessmarketing.co.uk/posts/merry-marple-video

There are so many ways you can join the force to support local businesses, it might only take you a few minutes, but the impact can be long lasting. You can use the power of social media by following shops and businesses on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and sharing their posts. You could write a review of your purchase and post it on their website. If you are not a fan of social media word of mouth can be just as powerful, tell your friends and family all about your experience, this is particularly important now when we are all trying to find new things to talk about and to occupy our time. You could also challenge yourself to shop locally, try out your greengrocer, butcher or bakery. This will also allow you the opportunity to learn about local and seasonal produce helping to create a more sustainable community.

So go on, be proud of your doorstep!

Anna Hatley



Exploring Isolation

Week 1 "Life in Lockdown, are we really isolated?"

This week Ian Walker starts a six-week serialisation of his work on what true isolation is and explores who experienced it in the pursuit of adventure and discovery.

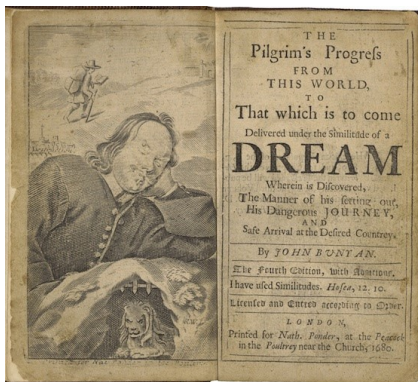
"He hung limply in space, a thin Alpine rope slowly spinning him round over a black, bottomless chasm. He was mentally exhausted, physically drained, and virtually frozen from the snow and ice that had seeped inside his clothing. And he was totally alone, some eighty miles from the closest living person."

This is the opening paragraph of Beau Riffenburgh's biography of Douglas Mawson, an Australian Antarctic explorer, a contemporary of Scott and Shackleton. It got me thinking about our present Coronavirus plight. What does it mean to be truly isolated?

So, what is isolation?

When I looked at my bookshelves, I realised many of my books were about real isolation. And so, the search started. Who had really been isolated and in what circumstances? Early explorers such as Leif Erikson, Columbus, Magellan, Vasco de Gama, Cabot, Drake, were never really alone. They had their ship's crew with them. Their isolation was from the rest of the world. No phones. Out of range of carrier pigeon. Their ventures were only recorded a success when they physically made it back home. Magellan never made it. He was killed in the Philippines. Only one of his five original ships, the *Victoria*, captained by Juan Sebastián Elcano, finally returned to Spain, completing the circumnavigation. Of the 270 men who left with the expedition, only 18 or 19 survivors returned. But not alone.

Later explorers like Mungo Park, Richard Burton and David Livingstone opened up Africa but were with expeditions or native guides. Burton's journey to Mecca in 1853 was a rare exception. He travelled in disguise and passed sufficiently well to make the Hajj. Discovery would have meant certain death. But he was not alone.

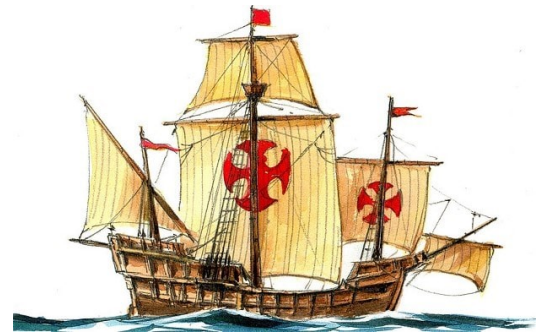


Of course, these explorers were isolated by choice. An early example of one not isolated by choice was John Bunyan, a Parliamentarian in the Civil War and a non-conformist. He was arrested late in 1660, after the restoration of the monarchy. Convicted of having "devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service" and having held "several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom", he spent the next 12 years incarcerated in Bedford County Gaol. He was occasionally let out, on the whim of his gaolers! During his imprisonment, he started work on 'Pilgrim's Progress' which was eventually published in 1678. From an isolated author came a tale of Christian's solitary journey through life, an allegory of all the trials and tribulations that beset people on their way to salvation. Christian is joined later in his journey by Faithful and Hopeful, and all three eventually reach the Celestial City. So even Christian didn't

have complete solitude on his journey.

You have to look elsewhere for true isolation. At the beginning of the 18th century Alexander Selkirk was alone, cast away on his tropical island for four years and four months, before being rescued by a British privateer. Unlike his alter ego, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Selkirk was completely alone on the island except for two brief visits by Spanish ships, from which he kept well hidden, knowing full well what his fate would have been if they had found him. He, of course, was not isolated from choice!

Then there is the strange breed of the solo sailor, who voluntarily goes to sea by himself. At the end of the 19th century, an American sailor, Joshua Slocum, became the first to circumnavigate the globe single-handed. He set sail in *Spray*, a 37ft gaff rigged sloop, on 3 July 1895 and returned on 27 June 1898. He described his voyage in his book 'Sailing Alone Around the World'. In the days before radio, Slocum would only have picked up news of the outside world when he made infrequent land-fall. *Spray* was so well designed and built that she could sail a course for hours with no attention from Slocum, who was free to read or complete his log and notes of the voyage. **Continued on Page 5**



An artist's impression of Christopher Columbus' ship, the Santa Maria



An illustration of Alexander Selkirk

Finally February!

As the first month of the year, in the middle of the winter and after the busy festive period, January can sometimes feel like it lasts far longer than the standard 31 days. With the addition of a nationwide lockdown, it seemed to last even longer this year. Finally this week it has come to an end and we turned the corner into February with a beautiful day of bright sunshine, reminding us all of the promise of spring to come.



Whilst February is probably most associated with Valentine's Day, there is far more to the shortest month than just romance and flowers. February fluctuates between having 28 and 29 days per year. The 29th day only occurs every 4 years during leap years.

The length of February was finalized when Julius Caesar remade the Roman calendar and assigned the month 28 days and 29 days, prior to this it fluctuated in length being just 23 days long at its shortest point. In 713 B.C., February was officially added to the Roman calendar.

The name of February comes from the Latin word "februum" which means purification. It is named after a purification ritual which was like an early Roman spring cleaning festival (inspiration to get our feather dusters out!) The Saxons called February "Sol-monath" which translates to "cake month" because they would make offerings of cake to the gods during this time. In Welsh, February is sometimes known as "y mis bach" which means "little month."

As the last of the winter months, February can be bitterly cold but also teases us with thoughts of brighter weather in the Spring. One of the more heartening things is the noticeable increase in daylight and by the end of the month we gain an extra hour and 40 minutes a day compared to the first of the month.

This year February is also aesthetically pleasing as from a calendar point of view it is a "perfect month." This means that it starts on a Monday, is exactly 4 weeks long and finishes on a Sunday, nice and neat! The month starts with Children's Mental Health Week from 1st—8th. Quickly followed by the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on the 11th. The 12th is Chinese New Year and this year it will be the year of the Ox. The 14th brings Valentines Day but also International Book Giving Day. The 16th is Pancake Day or Shrove Tuesday to use it's proper title. I think my favourite is the 17th which is Random Acts of Kindness Day, one that I think we all need more than ever! Whatever you get up to, we wish you a healthy and happy February! **Kerry Langstaff**



Exploring Isolation

Isolated Explorers Continued from page 4...

Solo circumnavigation didn't really catch on until the second half of the 20th century. Sir Francis Chichester sailed *Gipsy Moth IV* west to east from 27 August 1966 to 28 May 1967, stopping only once, in Sydney, Australia. The next milestone was Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, who won the Sunday Times Golden Globe Race in *Suhaili*, becoming in 1969 the first to navigate the globe non-stop and solo. Of course, women also circumnavigated. From 1976 to 1978, Poland's Krystyna Chojnowska-Liskiewicz became the first woman to perform a single-handed circumnavigation, but she made stops. Naomi James became the first woman to perform a single-handed circumnavigation via Cape Horn, from 1977 to 1978, but she too made stops. In 1988, Kay Cottee became the first woman to perform a solo non-stop circumnavigation. By this time radio was widely used and navigation was a science not an art. These later solo circumnavigators knew where they were and where they were going – mostly!

More recently, there have been other harrowing tales of enforced isolation, with people taken hostage for political reasons, mainly in the Middle East. I was privileged to meet Sir Terry Waite, when he came to open the 2005 Bollington Festival. His story of incarceration was fascinating. Waite arrived in Beirut on 12 January 1987 with the intention of negotiating with the Islamic Jihad Organization for the release of two American hostages. Instead, he himself was taken hostage, on 20 January 1987. Waite remained in captivity for 1,763 days, the first four years of which were spent in solitary confinement. He was finally released on 18 November 1991. I was most taken by his account of the books and poems that he knew almost by heart, that sustained him during his captivity. An early mental eReader!

Next week: The Polar Explorers, True Isolation

The benefits of lockdown and life

As the saying goes cats aren't just for Christmas they are for life! Well, cats are now more than ever being appreciated for what they bring into our lives and they were lifesavers for people during the lockdown in 2020. As many people are finding the 2021 lockdown even harder, cats yet again may save the day.

Cats can calm us, lower our stress level and ease loneliness by offering companionship. They provide a structure to the day, bring lightness and laughter with their playfulness ...even our older cats can still have their skittish half hours! They also bring a sense of purpose into our lives and mean that we have a responsibility for another. Cats foster our compassion as we care for them, think about them and want to make their lives pleasant.

The benefits of having a cat are shown in many studies, they include:

- Cat owners being less likely to suffer from depression than those without cats.
- Playing with a cat can elevate levels of the calming and relaxing chemicals in our bodies, serotonin and dopamine.
- Even our cardiovascular health can be improved by owning a cat.
- Cats can also help us make healthy lifestyle changes and having a healthy lifestyle can help with stress, anxiety and depression. It also helps us when we are going through challenging times like a pandemic and the associated restrictions and lockdowns. So how do they do this? Well ...

Cats provide companionship and companionship can help prevent illness and even add years to our lives, while isolation and loneliness can trigger symptoms of depression. Caring for our cats can help us feel needed and wanted, and take the focus away from problems, if only for a short while. This is especially important if people live alone. Cats can be confidants, we can talk to them, tell them our troubles and they just sit there listening and not judging ...providing love. Coming home to the greeting of a purring cat is a winner every time.

Cats can help us to connect with people as being a cat owner and cat lover means that there's always a story to tell or anecdote to share! They can even help us start and maintain new friendships as we bond over our cats. The numerous social media groups, cat magazines and organisations provide a great way of sharing photos, tips, getting advice and just linking in with likeminded people. It's easy with a cat vibe to find our cat tribe!!

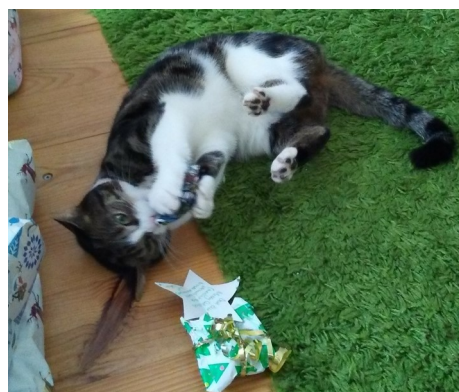
Cats can help lift spirits and boost energy. Research has found that just watching cat videos can make us feel more energetic and can create positive emotions.

Cats can help with loss and bereavement .They have been shown to help people get over their loss more quickly as cats serve as social supports during difficult times.

Cats can help us have a healthier heart as they lower stress levels and also petting a cat has a positive calming effect.

Cats can help us sleep better. Studies in the UK have found that people (especially women) prefer to sleep with their cats than with their partners! They even reported sleeping better with a cat than with a human. The Mayo Clinic Centre for Sleep Medicine found that 41 percent of the people indicated that they slept better because of their pet, while only 20 percent said that it led to disturbances.

Cats can help us to be more mindful. As cats live in the present moment and have a soothing influence, they make the perfect pet to demonstrate the principles and benefits of mindfulness. Cats can make it easy to be mindful and also can show us how to be more self-caring and self-compassionate .Taking care of ourselves and others is now needed more than ever. Cats can share their mindfulness qualities with us and already bring them into our lives.



Ann Mayer's gorgeous rescue cat Elsa.

All of these factors will be huge benefits in helping us deal with, manage and get through the COVID lockdown, restriction and any other difficult times in life.

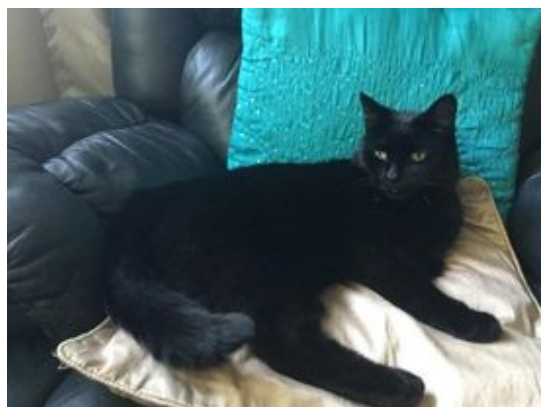
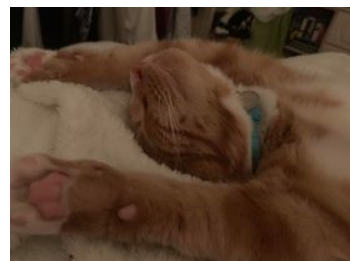
Written by Carole Bosanko author of 'Mindfulness for Cat Lovers', Mindful Self-Compassion teacher and Psychologist



Boo shows his softer side!



Jane McGill-Hoyland's furry friend Jazzy looks particularly



Let's Dance!

If the thought of an online exercise class fills you with dread, fear not! There are still ways to keep ourselves active at home without donning the Lycra. What better way than by grooving away to the sounds of your favourite music? Even if you are of restricted mobility, you can still enjoy a chair dance or a toe tap.

Dancing is great exercise without feeling like it and provides a full body cardiovascular work out. Guidelines recommend 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day, that's not even a full album's worth of dancing. It is generally gentle on the body (unless you choose to punish your knees with lots of jumping!) Typically we use many more different muscles when we dance, as opposed to walking on a treadmill for example. This can help us to improve our core strength and balance.

Quite aside from the physical benefits, dancing is great for boosting our mood and has also been linked to improvement in memory. That is aside from all the memories that grooving to our favourite tunes can trigger. It can be a great way to bond with the members of your household and break tensions! If you live by yourself though, you can still let loose and remember the old saying "Dance like no-one is watching!"



Vegging Out - Winter vegetable soup recipe

We all know that we should be eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. That can be easier said than done sometimes, so to help out we have come up with some ideas to help you pack in some more veg to your diet. Soups can be a fantastic way to pile up the vegetables in a warm and hearty lunch without even noticing (see our suggested recipe below.) Another handy idea is to substitute pasta with courgette spaghetti, mashed potato with sweet potato and carrot mash and white rice with Cauliflower rice (goes particularly well with a curry!)

Why not have a go at our tasty recipe for roasted vegetable soup, its easy versatile, warm and filling.

INGREDIENTS

1 medium butternut squash, peeled and seeded
3 parsnips
3 carrots
1 yellow onion, peeled
1 sweet potato, peeled
1 head of garlic
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
7 cups (1656 ml) [chicken](#) or vegetable stock
5 sage leaves

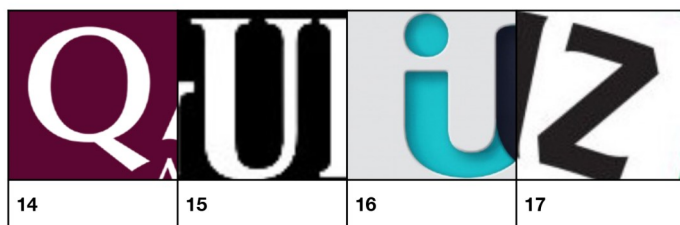
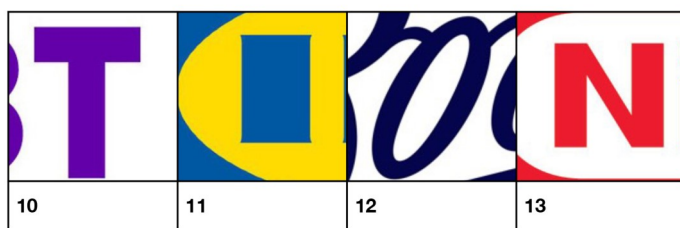
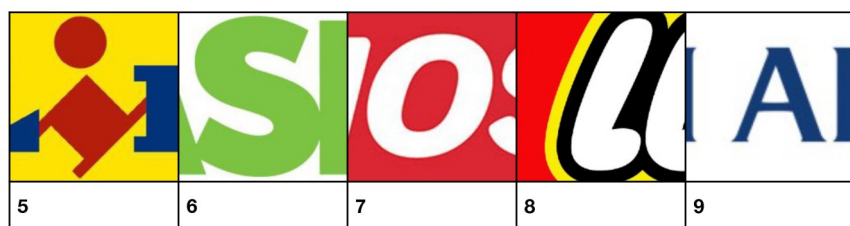
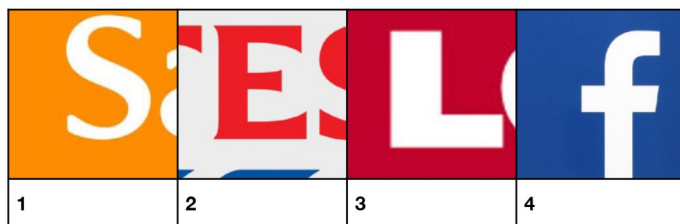


DIRECTIONS

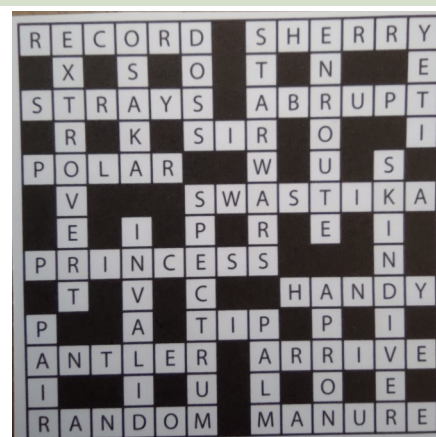
1. Preheat oven to 200 degrees C.
2. Chop squash, parsnips, carrots, onion, and sweet potato into equal sized cubes. Toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Evenly spread the vegetables on a baking sheet or dish. Slice the very top of the garlic head off, exposing the cloves. Drizzle a bit of olive oil over the exposed cloves and place the head of garlic on the baking sheet with the vegetables. Place in the oven and bake for 40 – 50 minutes or until the vegetables are tender and the garlic is golden.
3. With your hand, gently squeeze at the base of the garlic popping the roasted cloves out of the head. Add the garlic to the roasted vegetables. Divide the roasted vegetables in half. Place one half into a blender with 2 cups of stock. Blend on high until pureed and smooth, about 1 minute. Pour into a large soup pot. Repeat with remaining vegetables. Add remaining stock (more if needed to reach desired consistency) and sage to the soup and simmer for 10 minutes over low heat. Remove sage. Taste and add additional salt and pepper, if needed.

Mind game—Logo Quiz

Can you name the logos of the companies/products that are used to spell out the following? Thank you to The Poachers Inn for this quiz



Answers to last week's crossword



Thank you to our sponsors and supporters

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I am Print printed the paper copies 'at cost', which are delivered to the homes of isolated and vulnerable people in Bollington. An anonymous donor sponsored the printing of this edition. Thank you so much to all three supporters, it means the world.

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