

The PAL Gazette

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Edition No. 55 November 2024



Front Page Poems Snug and Warm

by Anne Coulter

The animals are lucky down on the farm,
When Winter comes they are kept warm.

Their hay has been toasted in the
summer sun,

They may not have space to skip
and run,

But the children visit which is always fun.

When Summer comes they will be
out again,

They don't always have to live in a pen.

Outside the back door there are boots
galore;

Inside the family is cold no more.

Both hands and feet are cosy and warm,

This is a family that will come to no
harm.

Logs burn brightly in the grate,

And hot chocolate is drunk to celebrate.

Quick-fire Phone Competition!

The 8th person to call Lois on **07595 261253** will receive a £10 Tesco voucher.

Calls will be taken 10am-4pm, Monday-Friday.

Competition closes 19th November.

Winner announced in next edition.

The winner of October's Edition (Edition 54) was **Ann Bain**.



Can You Read This Paper Clearly?

If you need a magnifying glass **phone or text Paul on 07436 174793.**

We will send you one through the post for FREE.



OLDER PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT

This month's PAL Gazette looks at the Older People's Parliament which took place on the 12th October 2024. This is a special edition of the Gazette in which we publish all of the speeches and interventions presented at the Parliament as a record of the views of older people on the issues that are affecting them the most.

The Older People's Parliament was an initiative of the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Assembly is seeking to deepen connections with the public, so a number of specialist Parliaments are taking place. These include a younger people's Parliament, a Parliament to represent the views and experience of people from ethnic minority communities, and a parliament for people living with disabilities. First up in this series was the Older People's Parliament.

Planning for the Parliament began in the summer. Representative organisations from all over Northern Ireland were invited to join a consultative committee to assist the Assembly team. Those organisations included Age NI, Building Communities Resource Centre, the U3A, and older people's forums from across Belfast.

A Northern Ireland-wide consultation was held consulting on the issues to be addressed at the Parliament, with over 1,700 responses returned to the Assembly. The issues highlighted for discussion were: access to health services; transport and travel; the rights of older people; loneliness and isolation; poverty; scams and IT; the value of older people to the economy; housing for older people; education and work.

Spokespeople prepared speeches on



each topic, with interventions written in a similar format to the debates within the Assembly itself. The event followed the same protocols as a normal NI Assembly debate, and participants were instructed on the protocols for the Assembly Chamber. The event had attendance from members of the public and was also broadcast online on NI Assembly TV.

It had been hoped there would be ministerial attendance at the event. In the week before the parliament took place it was announced that the First and Deputy First Ministers were not able to jointly attend the parliament. A number of the supporting older people's organisations were disappointed in this and decided not to attend the Parliament as a result. The parliament went ahead, and nine MLAs were in attendance including the Deputy First Minister, the Minister for Health and other MLAs. Over 500 people viewed the event online.

The main motion being debated was disappointment that the Draft

Programme for Government doesn't have a specific priority addressing the needs of an ageing population. The speeches highlighted the urgent need to take action on a range of issues including healthcare, housing, and poverty. After the Parliament, a report has been submitted to the Assembly as part of its consultation on the Draft Programme for Government, seeking the insertion of a tenth priority to support older people and prepare for an ageing population. The result of this consultation is due in the forthcoming weeks.

The Older People's Parliament was an important event for registering the views of older people. The speeches published in this month's Gazette are fascinating and highlight the depth of commitment older people have to improving society and making their voices heard.

We look forward to seeing what the legacy of the Older People's Parliament will be.

PAL Gazette News

GET INVOLVED! Would you like to join the team that helps put the Gazette together? You can help by writing articles, collecting recipes, searching for competitions, even helping with the mail out.

Call Lois on **07595 261253** if you would like to join the PAL Gazette team.

In the meantime, keep sending in your stories! We love your recipes, special stories, and poems.

Call Lois on **07595 261253**. Or if you use email, send them to **info@engagewithage.org.uk**



HERE TO HELP

To reach the Engage with Age team see numbers below.

We are always happy to receive your phone calls so our mobile numbers are:

John McCandless 07729 516576

Sharyn Ruseckas/

Sarah Gordon 07423 702721

Paul Hendry 07436 174793

Anna Albrzykowska 07425 627531

Colin McKinty 07468 695593

Our telephones are available during office hours and weekdays.

If you phone and we can't answer, please leave a message and we will return your call.



Send your letters to:

**The PAL Gazette,
Engage with Age,
East Belfast Network Centre,
55 Templemore Avenue,
Belfast BT5 4FP.**

Or you can email:

info@engagewithage.org.uk

Anne's Crafty Corner Christmas Tree Star Ornaments

Make these lovely ornaments with whatever yarn or wool you have on hand or colour coordinate with the rest of your decorations. Lovely decorations that can be made in three easy steps and in less than 30 minutes.

What you need:

- Old cardboard (thick)
- Wool or Yarn
- Glue - ideally a hot glue gun, but craft glue would work
- Scissors

To make:

Step 1

Draw a star on an old cardboard box (use thick card) and cut out – use this as a template to cut as many stars out as you want to make ornaments. You could print out a star from online or use a cookie cutter if you want to get the perfect shape.

Step 2

Wrap the star in wool, using dabs of glue to help hold the wool in place near the points of the star, until fully covered.

Step 3

Glue the ends of a length of wool to the back on one point to create a loop for hanging.

Top Tips

- These would make lovely gifts for friends and family
- You don't have to do just stars you could make them in any Christmas themed shapes such as: stockings, Christmas trees, bells or presents. Just trace their shape on some card and do the same.
- Add glitter or other craft items to personalise them.



The Questionnaire

Name: Colin McKinty

Role: New Development Officer for South Belfast with Engage with Age. I have worked with a number of organisations working with older people, including Glebe House, Brain Injury Matters, and most recently with NI Environment Link, highlighting the benefits of the environment for good health.

Favourite pastime:

I like cooking. I cook for my family, I'm the cook for the house, but I'm not great at baking. I can cook most things and during the week it tends to be something quick and hopefully tasty. I cook all kinds of different things, such as tacos, Asian or something vegetarian. My emergency meal if I'm stuck and in a hurry is noodles. I love making and eating a Sunday Dinner. For shopping I use the Tesco Real Food Section, it has a really good variety of food. My family likes sticky rice dishes but nothing too spicy. There are always chips on a Friday. I play table tennis and I also enjoy gardening too - it's something I can do with my family.

Why are your pastimes important?

I like to eat tasty things and I want to make sure the family is eating food that isn't heavily processed. I'm an avid fan of playing table tennis because I loved playing it when I was a kid and I took it up again about ten years ago. It keeps me active.

What is the best thing about living here?

I live in a rural area so it's the scenery. I can see the Mourne Mountains from my front door. I also live close to the beach. I know it's not France, but I really love it here.

Favourite Food:

Toast and strong cheddar cheese. When you're asked what your last meal would be mine would be toast with any kind of bread. It could be soda bread, could be sour dough, but it does have to be strong cheddar. Sometimes I have it with marmalade. All three elements together taste amazing.

Favourite Film:

That's really hard. I'm a regular cinema goer. I like old black and white movies, any kind of film noir



such as 'The Maltese Falcon', and I also love 'Young Frankenstein'. Though probably the movie I've watched most is 'Back to the Future'. Also, any of the 'Harry Potter' movies.

Tell us something that not many people know about you?

When I played football I kicked with my right foot but I throw with my left hand. It's always been that way. I think I'm slightly ambidextrous. I can play table tennis with both hands, though I have difficulty throwing the ball up with my right hand.

What advice would you give to a young person?

Don't worry too much about what other people think about you, be yourself.

Stay Warm and Cosy and Get "Hygge"

It's the time of year when the nights draw in and the temperature drops. Staying warm and comfy can be an enjoyable part of the change in the seasons. In parts of the world some people look forward to it. Here are some tips for readers, particularly those affected by the removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance.

Keep your room warm

Now is a good time to fine tune your household warmth. Make sure your heating system is running well. Use heating timers to plan use of energy in your home, so that you have regular warmth rather than sporadic bursts of heat which may be more expensive. Have your radiators bled if they need it, and put heat reflectors behind them to maximise the amount of heat going into your room. Try and keep radiators clear from furniture or at least have some space in front of them to allow heat to go up and into your room. Keep draughts and breezes out by using draught excluders around your windows and along the bottom of doors.

Curtains can significantly help maintain warmth. Keep curtains open until 3pm

as any natural light will help heat up a room. Draw the curtains as the light fades to help keep the heat in your room inside. Closing doors throughout your home will help trap heat and keep out the chills.

Keep yourself warm

Dress with plenty of layers and you will really feel the difference. If you are spending lots of time at home have plenty of hot drinks and hot food like stews and soups. Moving about is a good way to keep the blood flowing, so take advantage of the time indoors and perhaps clear out that back room you have been meaning to. Hot water bottles are ideal for an additional burst of heat, but check if your hot water bottle needs replaced. Printed at the top of the hot water bottle, on the front or inside of the spout, there should be a wheel with twelve 'petals' that has the year of manufacture. If your bottle is more than 3 years old it will need replaced. Look for signs of wear and tear.

Enjoy getting Hygge

"Hygge" is the Scandinavian lifestyle for taking time to enjoy the cosiness of life, and it is particularly relevant in the

colder months. Aspects of hygge include making time to be with friends and family, and part of it is also about making a cosy and enjoyable home. To achieve that cosy feel, have lots of throws and blankets to stay snug. Lighting can really help cast a rosy glow, so turn on your table lamps, using eco-friendly bulbs of course. If using candles to create a warm atmosphere keep them away from anything that could catch fire. Always extinguish candles if leaving the room for a longer period of time. And spoil yourself with little treats such as a steaming cup of hot chocolate, a good book or a film.

It might be getting cold outside, but it is possible to be warm and welcoming on the inside.



WHAT'S ON

WALKS

There will be walks in East Belfast every Wednesday afternoon at 2.00pm.

If you are interested in taking part, contact Paul on

07436 174793 or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

South Belfast Walking Group, weekly on Mondays at 11.00am in Botanic Park.

To join in, contact Paul on **07436 174793** or email

palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

THE KEEPING IN TOUCH GROUP (KIT GROUP)

Every Thursday 2.00pm. Dee Street Community Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

Every Friday 2.00pm at Finaghy Community Centre, 1-6 Geeragh Place, Belfast BT10 0ER.

To join in, contact Paul on **07436 174793** or email

palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

T'AI CHI

Every Friday 11am at Dee Street Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

DANCE GROUPS

Every Friday at 2.00pm. Contact Engage with Age for details on this fun dance group.

Tuesdays, 2.00pm at Morton Community Centre, Lorne Street, Belfast BT9 7DU

(Line/Sequence Dancing)

Dementia Friendly Coffee Morning

11.00am Wednesday 6th and 20th November 2024.

To attend, RSVP to Paul at palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

In all instances above, please phone Paul first on **07436 174793** or email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk for details

'The Grapevine' - Connection Hub

Tuesdays 11am - 1pm in 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast City Centre. Drop in event each week.

An opportunity to enjoy a chat, meet new people, become involved in events and learn about new services.

ONLINE EVENTS

Chocolate Bingo

7.30pm Thursday 14th and 28th November 2024. Via zoom.

Contact eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk for the link.

The Pub Quiz Without the Pub

7.00pm Thursday 21st November 2024. Via zoom.

Contact palproject@engagewithage.org.uk for the link.

Free IT Assistance

If you are over the age of 60, live in Belfast, and have a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone, you are eligible. The training is provided by Ignite IT and can help you with your email, getting online, online safety etc.

To avail of this, call Paul on **07436 174793**.

A GLOBAL REFLECTION ON PEACE

by
Godfrey Brok-Gadd

Armistice Day, observed on 11th November, marks the end of World War I and serves as a poignant reminder of the horrors of war and the importance of peace. This year, events across the globe are focusing not only on remembrance but also on the power of unity in diversity. From ceremonies in bustling urban centres to quiet gatherings in rural communities, the message is clear: peace is a collective responsibility that transcends borders and cultures.

Multicultural Celebrations

In cities like Toronto, London, Sydney, and Belfast, local governments and cultural organisations are hosting events that celebrate the various ethnicities and backgrounds of their citizens. These events feature traditional music, art exhibitions and storytelling sessions that highlight the experiences of diverse communities during times of conflict. In Toronto, a cultural festival accompanying the Armistice commemoration has attracted thousands, showcasing performances from indigenous, African, and Asian artists.

"The stories of peace and resilience can come from anywhere," said Maria Chen, a local organiser. "By sharing our cultures, we remind each other that our strength lies in our diversity."

Educational Initiatives

Schools are also playing a pivotal role in fostering understanding and compassion amongst students. Many educational institutions are integrating lessons on the significance of Armistice Day with discussions about cultural heritage and



the importance of peacebuilding. Workshops and collaborative projects encourage students from different backgrounds to share their narratives and learn from one another.

"Teaching our children about the past, including the contributions of various cultures to peace, equips them with the tools to build a better future," said Principal Ahmid Khan of Maple Grove High School.

Voice for Peace

At the heart of this year's commemoration is a commitment to dialogue and healing. Community leaders and peace activists are amplifying their voices, advocating for a future where differences are celebrated rather than feared. In many cities, peace marches are being organised, bringing together people of all backgrounds to call for an end to violence and conflict worldwide.

"True peace is achieved when we listen to each other and work towards mutual understanding," stated Elena Rodriguez, a peace activist and daughter of immigrants. "We must learn from our past to create a brighter future for all."

Conclusion

As the world pauses to reflect on the meaning of Armistice Day, the call for a multicultural approach to peace resonates louder than ever. By embracing diversity, communities are not only honouring those who fought for freedom but are also paving the way for a future where peace is celebrated in all its forms. The hope is that this spirit of unity will inspire generations to come, reminding us that our shared humanity is the foundation of a peaceful world.

As we remember the past, let us also look forward to a future where differences are not just tolerated but cherished, and where the message of peace transcends cultural boundaries.

"On hold"

by Ruth Carr

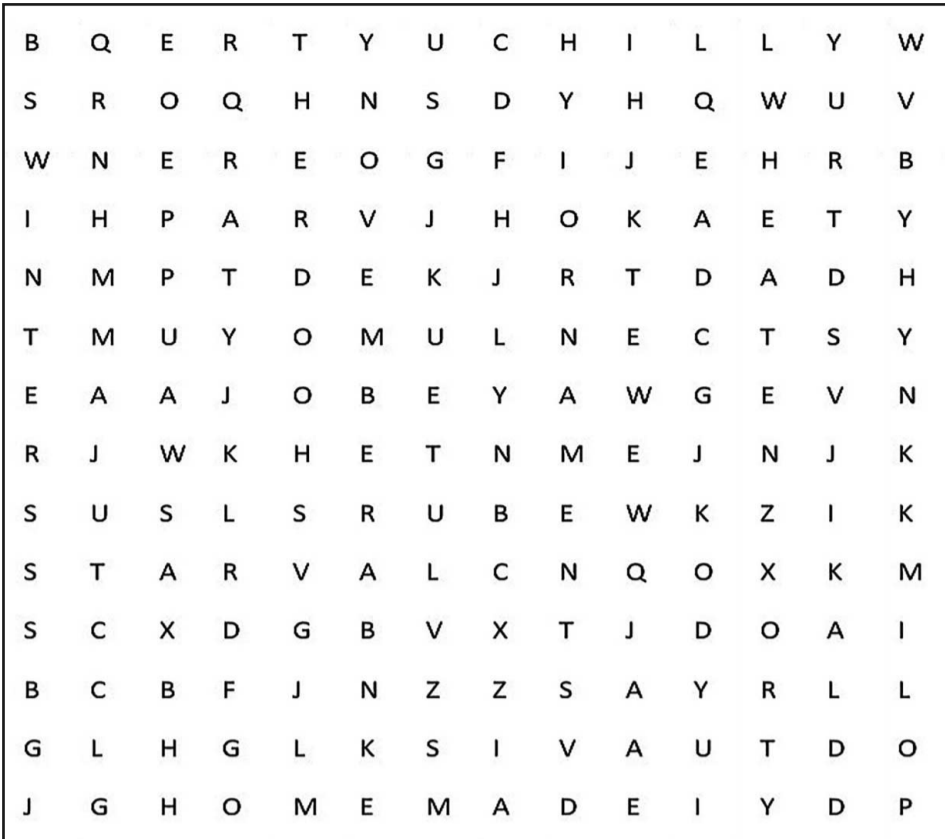
It's dawn
I press pause
listen to the birds
the slackened traffic
listen to each beat
each thought
each image of thin hope and fat
despair,
insatiable contagion
sweeping us like dust
unto the dust we are
and something trips me there
insists
breathe out the fear
don't let it scare you selfish
breathe in each beat
each pulse of love
and spread it far
fed on every kindness
every care.
This is who we are
holding together.

"When I'm done"

by Ruth Carr

When I'm done with deadlines
And even little hills are hard to climb
I want to be as unconcerned
as the woman who walks out early,
who swings her feet to the sky
in the empty playground,
ears plugged in to her music
singing along out loud, holding the
tune
like nobody's business but her own,
her little dog, chin on paws
equally unconcerned, watching the
birds
and waiting to walk her home.

WORD SEARCH



Enter our Word Search competition for a chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

Find the following 9 words hidden in the word square above:

- **NOVEMBER • WINTER • CHILLY • WHEATEN • BREAD**
- **HOMEMADE • ORNAMENT • STAR • WOOL**

To enter, phone Lois Kennedy on **07595 261 253 on weekdays, 10am-4pm.** Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

The winner will be announced in the next edition of The PAL Gazette.

Entries for this edition's word search need to be in by 19th November 2024.

The winner of October's Edition (Edition 54) was Andy Elliot.

Night Blessing Submitted by Audrey Lynas

In the vastness of life, may you be given people to walk with who are faithful friends. There is a difference between embracing the gift of solitude and being lonely. May you never be the latter and learn to embrace the former. May you be graced with companions. **#niteblessing**

Stop the spread

Follow the steps below to help protect your family and stop the spread of germs.



Rest up

Know when to stay home to stop the spread. If you have a high temperature stay home until you feel better or if you have diarrhoea and/or vomiting, you should stay home for at least 48 hours after the last episode.



Catch it, bin it, kill it



Wash hands regularly



Antibiotics don't work on viruses



Speak to your pharmacist about over-the-counter remedies

Winter vaccines

If eligible get your COVID-19 booster & flu vaccine



HSC Public Health Agency

Tea Time Quiz

Answer each of these five questions correctly for your chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

- 1. Who wrote the book Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang: The Magical Car?**
- 2. In which part of your body would you find the cruciate ligament?**
- 3. What is the most populated city in Australia?**
- 4. What is the name of the main antagonist in the Shakespeare play Othello?**
- 5. How many of Henry VIII's wives were called Catherine?**

To enter, phone **Lois Kennedy on 07595 261 253 on weekdays.** Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 19th November 2024. Winner of October's Edition (Edition 54) was **Margaret McDougal.**

For all quiz lovers, join in The Pub Quiz without a Pub, 7pm Thursday 21st November 2024.

For zoom link email palproject@engagewithage.org.uk

The answers to August's quiz were:

1. Mercury 2. Salvador Dali 3. Four 4. Bristol 5. Rice

Recipe Lime and Cajun Spiced Chicken

Submitted by Barbara Redmond

This month's recipe is from Barbara Redmond, our colleague from the Belfast Trust. Barbara has been teaching this air fryer recipe as part of the falls prevention workshops that are happening across Belfast. Staying nourished and hydrated is important for keeping our balance and staying steady on our feet. This recipe is perfect for filling our bellies and staving off light headedness. It is also perfect for being made in an air fryer but can also be made in an oven.

- Mix and let this marinate in the fridge for at least half an hour.
- Set your air fryer at 180°C, and when heated cook for 15 minutes, stirring and turning the chicken half-way through.
- If you don't have an air fryer, cook on a baking tray in your oven at 180°C/170°C fan for 40 minutes, turning half-way through.
- Serve with some ready to eat brown rice warmed in the microwave.

Ingredients

- Boneless and skinless Chicken Thighs.
- Cajun seasoning (from any supermarket, costs £2-3 for a jar).
- Lime juice.
- Salt and pepper.

Method

- Cut the chicken thighs in to bite sized pieces and place in a plastic food bag or on plate.
- Coat with a tablespoon of Cajun seasoning and some salt and pepper.
- Sprinkle on the juice of one lime.



Available from October 2024

WINTER VACCINES

If you're in one of the following groups, you can avail of both COVID-19 and flu vaccines

- All those aged 65 and over
- Care home residents and staff
- Those in clinical risk groups aged 6 months to 64 years, including pregnant women
- Frontline healthcare workers

HSC Public Health Agency

scamwiseNI
PARTNERSHIP

Reporting Scams

If you've been scammed or suspect that someone is attempting to scam you or someone you know, you should **always report it.** Don't feel embarrassed or ashamed.

Forward scam texts to **7726** – the free scam text reporting service.

By reporting a scam, it gives important information to the authorities that can be used to warn other people.

! Report scams 24/7 to PSNI by calling 101 or 999 in an emergency. You can also report to Action Fraud.

Engage with Age thanks its supporters and funders:

OLD JOKES HOME!

Submitted by our Anonymous Phone Caller who loves a joke.

Which days are the strongest?

Saturday and Sunday. The rest are weekdays



HSC Public Health Agency

HSC Belfast Health and Social Care Trust



Belfast City Council

HALIFAX
FOUNDATION
for Northern Ireland

COMMUNITY
FUND

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