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Week Ending 5th February, 2010

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Woodham Lodge Raise Cash for Haiti Shelterboxes



The Rotary Club appeal for "Shelterboxes" for Haiti received a boost this week when Woodham Lodge residents took to the road on a sponsored walk. The residents and staff were moved by the dire situation in Haiti and wanted to help. With the support of staff, friends and relatives

they set off around Aycliffe Way. The Care Home Manager Carol Britton told Newton News they were hoping to raise in excess of £300. Over 7000 Rotary shelterboxes costing £500 each have been sent to the earthquake disaster area.

Each box contains a large tent, kitchen supplies, tools, blankets and sleeping bags etc to accommodate 10 people. The tents are also being used as Emergency Hospitals. If you would like to support the appeal please use the donor form on Page 2.

ROTARY SEND £1,000 TO "HELP THE HEROES"

The Rotary Club is sending £1,000 to "Help the Heroes" from the collection the members made at Christmas in Tesco's, The Concert at Xcel Centre and the Santa Tour. President Jean Thompson once again thanks all who supported the appeal. "As usual our wonderful townspeople showed their generosity and we are so grateful" said Jean.

Ann Was Not Yolking!



Newtonian Ann Hordon, got a surprise when she cracked an egg open to fry an egg sandwich this week and found a four yolker! Ann, better known by her former married name of

Belton was in the dairy business in the 60's selling milk and eggs around the town and had never seen a four yolk egg. Ann's egg came from free range chickens kept at a farm near Bishop Auckland. Egged on by friends she brought the evidence to the Newton News offices. Ann was excited and pleased to be part of such a rare find and we took the photograph to prove it was genuine.

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Tel: 01325 319922

4 Church Street
Cushoe, Co. Durham
Tel: 0191 377 0227

Woodham College Launches New Website



Woodham Community Technology College this week launches its new website, www.woodham.org.uk, providing information for students, parents and those about to choose a secondary school for their children. The website provides a wealth of information about the college as well as a number of services for students and parents. These include access to a portal which allows students to access their work anywhere, anytime via any internet connected computer. Parents can also check on their child's attendance and progress through real time online reporting. The website also includes information on adult education and Family Learning opportunities at Woodham.

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

INCENTIVE TO USE CARE HOMES?

Dear Sir,
Reference the article in last week's issue on care in the home, which is a very emotive subject. The sad record that some care homes have created means that most people do not want to use them. Care in one's own home places a heavy responsibility on those partners caring for loved ones. Whilst they can be provided with a few hours of support there are 168 hours in a week where the biggest burden falls on

the home carer. This may save the taxpayer £35,000 a year but the person doing the caring may not even get the £40 allowance because they receive other pensions. There is also talk of removing the Attendance Allowance which is another disincentive for home caring. However the biggest incentive in home caring is the poor standard in Care Homes with a few exceptions. Name & address supplied

Garages for Cars

Dear Sir,
I sympathise with the couple who lost their personal effects when the landlords cleared out their garage by mistake. Personal goods should not have been in there, as the terms and conditions of the landlord clearly state that nothing, other than a motor vehicle must be stored. This widespread practice, of using a garage for storage, causes problems in itself. In my block there are ten garages, only one of which garages a motor vehicle. The rest are filled with builders supplies, woodworking supplies and of course household furniture and effects. This encourages burglary but also keeps 100's of cars parked on the roadside and verges because of the well documented shortage of garages in Newton Aycliffe. I wrote to the former Segefield Borough Council on this problem in 2009, urging them to make inspections but never received a reply. Perhaps if

they had, this unfortunate couple would not be in this position. Name & address Supplied

Icy Conditions Trap Elderly

Dear Sir,
I found the recent heavy snow and ice very frightening especially round old folks bungalows where I was unable to walk safely. I could walk on the grass, but it was covered with dog muck which for some reason dog owners failed to pick up off snow. We used to have a grit container near our house, but that disappeared, so our paths were untreated. Pensioners like to visit each other for a chat, but we were trapped in our homes because of the condition of paths. I would suggest the Council provide grit for areas around bungalows to make our lives happier and safer. Mrs. Moore

HALF TERM EVENTS IN AYCLIFFE

TREE PLANTING
Monday 15th February - 2pm- 4pm
Heres your chance to get your hands dirty and help plant a hedge in one of Aycliffe's best kept secrets; Cobblers Hall plantation. Everyone is welcome, full guidance will be given and all tools will be provided.
Meet at: Cobblers Hall Plantation entrance, off the Greenfield/ Rushyford Road.
WILD WEST OF AYCLIFFE
Wednesday 17th February - 10am- 12 noon
Join Environment Officer Steve Cooper in exploring the Byerley Park area of Aycliffe. Learn how to look for signs of mammals and other creatures that live there.
Meet at: Blue Bell Garage, off the Greenfield/ Rushyford Road.
BIRDY BONANZA- PART 1
Friday 19th February - 10am – 12 noon
To celebrate National Bird Box Week help make a home for the many small birds that live in West Park. You can then help the local expert to find a suitable tree to put your box with a little guidance. Booking Essential.
Meet at: the Boat house in West Park
BIRDY BONANZA- PART 2
Friday 19th February - 2pm – 3.30pm
Birds need extra help to find food over this severe winter, spend some time making your own bird pudding recipe that you can take away and put in your garden to help the birds.
Meet at: the Eco Centre, Moore Lane
All events are free of charge. Booking is only essential if stated above. All children should be accompanied by a responsible adult. To book or to find out more information please contact Great Aycliffe Town Council on 01325 300700.

CALLING WOODHAM CLASS OF 1987

Did you leave Woodham Comprehensive School in 1987? Did you go on that Legendary trio to Boulogne in 1983? On February 20th we are having a bit of a get together to chat about the good old days of Mrs Carr and Mr Lonsborough. So before we all get past 40 get yourself along to

the Oakwood Bar in the Leisure Centre after 6.30ish for a bit of chat, a bit of 80's music, a couple of drinks and we'll see what happens. Hopefully it will be an enjoyable evening? If you are 38/39 and left the 5th year of Woodham Comp in '87 then get yourself there. If you know anyone who fits this description then ask them to drop me an

email at paulbewley@02.co.uk just to let me know about numbers - or join our Facebook Group - Woodham Comprehensive Reunion 1987 graduates. Paul Bewley P.S If you are a teacher who was there at the time then please feel free to come along. The Rec Bar is much nicer these days.... Honest'

MILLIONS OF HAITIANS HOMELESS PLEASE HELP PROVIDE SHELTER

The greatest need in Haiti is shelter and the Town's Rotary Club are appealing for funds to buy Shelterboxes which contain, among many other items, a 10 man tent, sleeping bags, cooking utensils etc. Rotary International has already delivered over 7000 Shelterboxes, but thousands more are needed to accommodate the homeless millions. Please help the cause and donate by filling in the coupon below

CASH DONATION FORM

I would like to donate £ to the Haiti Earthquake Appeal

As a taxpayer, I agree to Gift Aid the total (giving an extra 28%) Sign:

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PARK ATTENDANTS WILL CHECK BEFORE CLOSING

Dear Sir,
In response to the letter from the lady who was inadvertently locked in St Oswald's Park, the Council would like to apologise for any distress caused. It is the Town Council's intention to provide quality parks and play areas for residents to use and enjoy. The park is locked at the

times indicated on the signs located adjacent to the two entrance gates, however it is always the intention to check the park is clear of visitors before locking the gates. Staff have been advised to be extra vigilant to ensure that the park is empty before locking the gates and leaving the site.
Andrew Bailey, Town Clerk

SECURE CHILDREN'S HOME AT AYCLIFFE TO BE REBUILT

Councillors have agreed the appointment of the firm to build the 38-bed centre which replaces the existing Aycliffe Young People's Centre across the A167 – which looks after some of the most vulnerable young people. Members of Durham County Council's Cabinet agreed to appoint Heron Brothers as the contractor to build the new £13.9m centre.

Coun Claire Vasey, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services at Durham County Council, said: "This is an extremely

important project – not just for the council and the young people the centre cares for but also for the local economy as it will bring a much-needed boost to the construction industry.

"Heron Brothers was identified as the preferred bidder following a robust procurement process and I am confident they will provide the high quality facilities that we require."

The firm demonstrated a clear understanding of the requirements of the centre, and showed a strong commitment to the project, focussing on the needs of staff and young people. It had a wide range of experience and expertise having been involved in similar projects elsewhere.

A substantial part of the funding for the project has come from the Government and the National Treatment Agency. The remainder of the funding will be provided by the County Council and through income generated by the centre.

This includes a renewed contract with the Youth Justice Board through which Durham County Council will provide secure services for young people at the centre until 2014.

Work to rebuild the centre, within the existing site, will begin in February and the new facilities are expected to be in use by summer 2011. The current centre will continue to operate as normal throughout the building programme.

The secure centre will be housed within five smaller

units, one of which will be a high-dependency unit which will support young people with substance misuse issues. It will include educational and vocational facilities, visitor and meeting rooms, indoor and outdoor communal space, offices and training rooms. It will also be installed with high-tech

security systems.

The secure children's home, looks after young people aged between 11 and 17, many of whom have committed criminal offences and have been sent there as a result of court proceedings. On average a young person will stay at the home for around eight weeks but the

length of a person's stay can vary from a few days to up to two years. While they are there, young people are challenged to change their offending or anti-social behaviour and are given help and support to address issues such as substance misuse, mental health problems and self harm.

"The Head" Featured in Photo Exhibition

Elaine Vizor who completed a photographic study of the production of Aycliffe's sculpture "The Head" is exhibiting her work in Durham. 11 of her prints of "In Our Image" is in the Media Centre of Clayport Library in Durham, which is quite an honour.

"I am showing my works as a member of the Durham Photographic Society. The exhibits are on a theme and I was asked to exhibit on the project I did of the Aycliffe sculpture, so it is an Aycliffe exhibition in that sense" said Elaine. There's an explanation of Elaine's project on the pillar in the library which is a good plug for Aycliffe and the artist J. Hillier. The prints went up on Monday and should be there for about six weeks.

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AYCLIFFE TO GET NEW STAND

PROJECT FUNDING NOW IN PLACE



Newton Aycliffe have received official confirmation from the Football Foundation that they will match-fund the club's project to build a new stand. Club chairman Gary Farley received the letter last week, confirming the Foundation's commitment to contributing £9,350 (48.32%) of the total cost.

It means Aycliffe can now step up the project and install the 113-seater stand before the Northern League's March 31 deadline. "This is fantastic news for the club," said Farley. "We'd been advised from the start that the match-funding was a formality, but there's nothing as certain until you get it in writing, so naturally we're delighted.

"Thankfully we can now crack on and the wheels are already in motion to get the new stand in place as soon as we possibly can. One of the problems we face is actually getting it over to the ground from the club, but we've already made in-roads with those provisions so hopefully we'll be able to look at getting it delivered sooner rather than later. When it's ready and in place we'll make sure everyone

knows about it!"

Aycliffe's game at Seaham Red Star last Saturday was the latest to fall foul of the weather as most of the Northern League fixture list was postponed. They're due to take on Chester-le-Street at home on Wednesday night (Feb 10, 7.30pm kick-off) in the third round of the League Cup.

Aycliffe's game at Hebburn, postponed on Saturday January 16, has been re-arranged for Wednesday February 17.

FIXTURES

Wed Feb 10: Chester-le-Street (H), 7.30pm
Sat Feb 13: Guisborough (A), 3pm
Wed Feb 17: Hebburn (A), 7.30pm
Sat Feb 20: Brandon (H), 3pm
Wed Feb 24: Crook (H), 7.30pm
Sat Feb 27: Sunderland RCA (H), 3pm
Sat March 6: Stokesley (A), 3pm
Sat March 13: Jarrow Roofing (H), 3pm
Sat March 27: Washington (H), 3pm
Sat April 3: Northallerton (A), 3pm
Sat April 17: Team Northumbria (H), 3pm.

www.newtonaycliffe.co.uk

SWIMMERS COMPETE FOR COUNTY TROPHY

Nearly 150 primary school children will compete to be crowned the county's top young swimmers next week.

Durham County Council's second Primary Schools Gala Final will see 144 pupils from 12 schools take part including Newton Aycliffe in the competition at Freeman's Quay Leisure Centre, Durham.

Aged seven to 11, the youngsters will take part in 12 individual races and one team event. Two winning schools from each of the School Sport Partnership swimming galas – held in Chester-le-Street, Derwentside, Durham, Easington, Sedgefield and Wear Valley/Teesdale – qualified for the final. All children will receive a certificate and the first three in each race will receive a medal. The overall winning school will be presented with a trophy by the Mayor of Durham, Cllr. Dennis Southwell.

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GREAT AYCLIFFE TOWN COUNCIL

Dates and Times of Statutory Meetings of the Town Council and its Committees

Wednesday 24th Feb. 2010
Environment Committee - 7.15pm
Followed by the Recreation Committee

QUESTION TIME

A period of up to 15 minutes has been set aside for electors to ask questions at the Recreation, Environment and Policy & Resources Committee Meetings. Written questions must be received by the Town Clerk at least 5 clear days prior to the meeting. Oral questions may be asked at the meeting which relate to an agenda item or to a matter for which that committee has responsibility. Agendas/Reports are available on the Council's Website on the Friday afternoon preceding the meeting (www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk).

The press and public are cordially invited to attend.

The Public Entrance to the Council Chamber will be open 70 minutes prior to the commencement of the meeting.

13 YEAR PURSUIT OF JUSTICE

It was solely thanks to Mrs Muckley's sheer determination that led directly, 13 years later, to the recovery by the police of the Ceremonial Silver Plated Spade and Casket used in the ceremony to mark the occasion of the foundation of Newton Aycliffe.

Newton News wishes to record thanks on behalf of the residents of Great Aycliffe to Mrs Muckley for helping restore these important heritage artifacts to the people of Great Aycliffe. These are now in the safe custody of the Town Council, but what is needed is a special mini museum of all artefacts either in the Town Council offices or other premises, easily accessed by the general public and schools for viewing and education.

Badminton Coaching

Oak Leaf Sports Complex holds a weekly Junior Badminton Coaching Session on Wednesday evenings from 7.00pm–8.00pm, with Malcolm Sellers. All standard players are welcome, so whether you are a total novice or experienced come along and join in the fun.

For further details or to book your place contact Oak Leaf Sports Complex on 01325 300600



Carol Muckley widow of Andrew Muckley, with former Mayor Arun Chandran and Ian Wiggett.

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SATURDAY FILM CLUB IN CHURCH HALL - FREE

St Elizabeth's, Woodham are pleased to announce the launch of their "Movie Dome", on February 11th at 7pm. Due to the generosity of individuals and organisations including the Council and the town's Rotary Club, plus fundraising at St Elizabeth's, we have been able to purchase equipment to show old favourites and the most recent releases on Blue Ray DVD's, on a large screen which gives the impression and quality of being at the Cinema.

As part of St Elizabeth's outreach and mission we are pleased to announce that children's films will be shown on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month at 1pm, beginning Saturday 13th February. Children wishing to attend must in the first instance

be accompanied by an adult in order to complete a registration form. We hope to host a variety of films for all age groups but initially we will be providing a film club for children if accompanied by a parent. Without a parent children must be 12 years and above. St Elizabeth's can also cater for private children's parties where they can choose the film they wish to see. Membership of St Elizabeth's Movie Dome is FREE and there is no charge to watch a film. All we ask is for a donation. For details please contact Brian on 319067.

LETTER

Bungalows Rented to Outsiders

Dear Sir,

Why is Sedgefield Borough Homes letting Bungalows to people from outside the area? These rarely come up for rent and have always been reserved for elderly and disabled persons who have lived or worked in Newton Aycliffe. Residents reaching retirement age and seeking to downsize should have access to bungalows, releasing larger houses for families.

SBH promised nothing would change when they got our vote but letting bungalows to outsiders is a kick in the teeth!

Disappointed

Name & address supplied.

Ed: we contacted SBH who say the Government have changed the rules whereby anyone, anywhere can be accommodated. Bungalows are allocated on the same points basis as previously.

Valentines Family Disco

A Valentine Family Disco is to be held on Saturday 13th February from 1pm until 4pm. at the Navy Club, Burnhill Way for the Junior Neighbourhood Watch/Young People's Voices group. Parents and young children are all invited to the Disco, age limit 13yrs. There is a competition for the best Valentine Card. Admission is just £1. Come and enjoy yourselves.

We are hoping to start a Young Peoples Voices Group and consult with school years 6, 7 and 8, to hear their ideas for activities which we can, with their help, take forward.

In the past there have been many consultations but no outcomes. We would truly like to change this and would like to hear from parents who are interested in their young becoming involved. Come to this Disco and get involved.

Dorothy Bowman and Volunteers. Tel: 308094.

GYM PAYS YOU TO LOSE WEIGHT

A local fitness club is paying it's members to lose weight. £5 for each kilo. Members of the Lifestyle Fitness facility in Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre are gaining £'s at the same time as losing lb's with a new initiative aimed at getting more people into a healthy lifestyle.

"We have all different types of activity to keep members motivated from challenges to new fitness techniques but as far as I am aware Lifestyle Fitness are the only club in the area to offer its members up to £50 to lose weight" said fitness Co-ordinator Terry Anderson

The facility which was recently overhauled at a cost of £2.5 million and was described by Tony Blair as "World Class" offers three floors of fitness, sauna, steam room, spa facilities, and great pieces of kit like the Power Plate to allow everyone to find something that suites them.

Alistair Ruddick who is tasked with getting as many people as possible into a healthier lifestyle said "This facility is one of the best equipped in



the area and it's right here in Newton Aycliffe. It's for all ages from 11 upwards and we thought that offering our members a monetary reward for each kilo of weight they lose would help keep them motivated. We are already seeing results and I think it would be absolutely great if we made Newton Aycliffe the healthy capital of the North East".

Anyone who would like to try the facility out can obtain a free pass for two people by calling Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre on 01325 300800 or directly to the fitness facility on 01388 826017.

TOWN'S DEBT COUNSELLING CENTRE RE-OPENS

As the UK Struggles out of the Longest Recession on Record the CAP Centre re-opens in Newton Aycliffe to reduce debt misery.

Christians Against Poverty, the national debt counselling charity, has today announced that its centre in Newton Aycliffe is once again offering a free, comprehensive debt-counselling service to anyone in the area who is struggling with unmanageable debt.

Using its successful combination of practical and sustainable financial solutions, coupled with sensitivity to individual and personal needs, the charity aims to bring hope to those trapped by debt.

Heading up the re-opened CAP centre is Newtonian Bede Feechan who will work with all members of the local community, regardless of religious belief, negotiating with creditors to work out a realistic budget for clients, which prioritises food and essential bills to ensure they will be debt free within five years.

Bede will be supported and managed by the charity's Operations Centre in

Bradford, so that he will be able to offer clients a CAP Account and insolvency services if needed.

The CAP Account acts as a simple bank account to help people pay their priority debts and the insolvency service provides a solution to those who, even with careful budgeting, would be facing a life sentence of debt repayments.

Matt Barlow, UK CEO, Christians Against Poverty, said: "We are thrilled to re-open our centre in Newton Aycliffe as the UK continues to battle against the increasing tide of personal debt.

"We aim to bring hope and a free, practical solution to the problem of debt, whilst helping individuals through the often traumatic consequences, which can include divorce, going hungry and even attempted suicide.

"Bede will be a fantastic asset to us as a charity as we seek to help even more people across the UK, and we have every confidence that the local community will soon feel the benefits of having a CAP centre on their doorstep once again." Bede Feechan, CAP



Centre Manager in Newton Aycliffe, said: "Debt is an increasing problem in our society, but individuals can receive the help and support they need through the work of Christians Against Poverty.

The Newton Aycliffe centre has already helped more than 250 families to work their way out of debt, and the worst thing someone in debt can do is stay silent. I would urge anyone in financial difficulty in the area to contact me on 0800 328 0006. Being in debt is nothing to be ashamed of and I know we can work together to provide a lasting solution." For more information, visit www.capuk.org or call on 0800 328 0006.

COUNTY DISCUSS 2010/11 BUDGET

Lowest Council Tax Increase for a Decade

County Councillors have agreed to recommend spending plans for the coming financial year and Members of the Cabinet discussed the authority's proposed Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget.

The proposals will now be put to a meeting of the full council on Wednesday, 24 February. Despite uncertainty over future funding from central government, the plan and budget outlines the following:

An additional £7.2m government grant for 2010/11
Expected savings of £6.77m as a result of the Local Government Review.

Proposals for £36m investment, including a boost to the Capital programme and a future commitment to the City of Culture bid.

The £36m revenue investment Councillors are proposing would be spread across a number of areas, reflecting the authority's five **Altogether Better** themes – **Altogether Weathier, Healthier, Safer, Greener and Better for children and young people.** Areas being proposed to benefit from funding include housing performance, social care services, child protection and winter maintenance.

The report also outlines a range of options for capital investment and proposes additional revenue support to finance a Capital Programme of £90m, which focuses on economic regeneration.

In order to fund these investments, ways of making savings have been identified that will cut expenditure without affecting quality of service. Officers across the council are already examining savings proposals for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Cabinet agreed to recommend to the County Council meeting in February, a Council Tax increase of 1.9 per cent. This would mean an annual increase of £23.94 (or 46p a week) for a Band D property and £15.96 (or 31p a week) for a Band A property. This would be the lowest Council tax increase for more than a decade.

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QUAKERS HOLD QUESTION OF SPORT NIGHT

Darlington are staging a special Question of Sport evening as part of the club's ongoing fans nights. Ex-Quakers star Kevan Smith will host the event on Thursday February 25, with past players taking on current stars in the Ron Greener Suite at the Northern Echo Arena.

Craig Liddle will captain the ex-players' team, assisted by Neil Maddison and Kevin Stonehouse, while the modern-day team will be skippered by Ian Miller. Darlington are aiming to hold regular fans' nights, on or around the last Thursday of every month, with a different theme each time, providing they're well supported.

"Our last fans night was a great success," said general manager Phil Preston. "It went down extremely well with supporters who want to come to the Northern Echo Arena, other than just on matchdays, and feel part of the club.

"These evenings give fans the chance to speak with the management and players, as well as ex-players on occasions, but they're also entertaining and very enjoyable, so we'd certainly expect this to be a popular event as well."

Tickets cost £5 each, which includes food, and can be bought in advance from the Northern Echo Arena main reception, by calling 01325 387000, or email commercial@darlington-fc.net

Valentine's Day

with Darlington FC

Enjoy the Famous Darlington FC Carvery on Valentine's Day, including live singer
One course £6.95, Two-course £9.90, Three-course £12.85
Booking advisable.

Sunday 14th February (12noon-4pm)
Call 01325 387000

GREENFIELD CARE



Mr A. Harris and his Year 7 tutor group at Greenfield were determined to find some way of helping the victims of the Haiti Earthquake. With tremendous enthusiasm and commitment the team swiftly set into action their plans for a bring and buy sale. Pupils and staff across the school responded well and brought in from their own homes numerous DVDs, CDs and games. Quality items were sorted and priced and opportunities were created to reserve over 200 items listed on the school website prior to the big sale. On the day the 'market stall' was set up to the point of overflowing with terrific bargains. Mr Harris, along with his trusty team supervised the sale and before long over £400 was raised. This was a magnificent response and Mr Harris would like to express his thanks to all and offer particular praise to Courtney Anderson and Emma Stapleton (both Year 7 pupils) for their fantastic commitment.

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SWAP YOUR OLD HOME FOR NEW



ONE of the UK's leading independent house builders Miller Homes is advising homeowners in Newton Aycliffe to consider part exchange as a means of fulfilling their dreams of owning a new family home right away. A part exchange deal with Miller Homes offers a guaranteed buyer for your current home with a cash sale and no need for a Home Information Pack or bridging loan. The scheme also eliminates advertising costs and estate agents' fees. Miller Homes regional sales director Debbie Dunthorne said: "If you didn't think that you could move home this year – think again. This is the year when we are advising people not to be put off by the talk of the recession as with Miller Homes' part exchange scheme a new home can still be within reach. "House buying is notorious for taking time but buyers choosing to take the part exchange option will be pleasantly surprised at how quick and easy it is to find and move into their dream home. "Part Exchange can take the stress out of a move and enable buyers to by-pass many of the problems associated with selling a home. Once a price has been agreed with the homeowner and a new Miller Home to suit their requirements has been chosen, the transaction can move quickly. "This surely makes part exchange a fantastic option for those who are wanting to trade in their old home for a bigger, better model." Miller Homes has a selection of stunning three, four and five bedroom homes that are ready to reserve at its developments across County Durham including, the popular Meadows development at Cobblers Hall where there is a range of three, four and five

bedroom homes with prices starting from £174,000. Miller Homes also currently has a selection of tempting homes at its other developments across the south of the region including, Fairview Gardens in Norton, Kingmoor in Stockton on Tees and The Pastures in Darlington. All of the property styles are built to Miller Homes' award winning standards. For further information on Miller Homes' developments across County Durham, contact Cobblers Hall on 0800 840 8491, open five days a week, Thursday to Monday, 10:30am – 5:30pm). Alternatively, visit www.millerhomes.co.uk for further details on the Part Exchange scheme.

Community Centre Wish List

If you are able to give something back to your community please scan the following voluntary positions at Neville Parade Community Centre. An active Chairman. Fundraisers Marketing Manager, Table Tennis Tutor/promoter. Wii Tutor and promoter Domino Co-ordinator Choirmaster Pianist (casual basis) Odd Job Man Bingo Caller (small club) Coffee/Teamakers Gardener. If you can help please ring Peter Beaty on 313924.

Charity Walk to Newcastle

A NEWCASTLE United supporter on the town is hoping to do his bit for the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation by trekking 33 miles just to see a game! David Neale is planning to walk from Newton Aycliffe to St James' Park for the Toon Army's final home game of the season in April. The 22-year-old United season ticket holder has wanted to organise a fundraiser for the foundation ever since Robson passed away in July last year. David has set a target of raising at least £1,000 with the brave challenge, which will see him cycle home after the Ipswich game on April 24. "Like all Newcastle and football supporters alike, I was deeply saddened by Sir Bobby's death, but inspired by his bravery and determination to raise money for cancer research. "I know people who have been effected by cancer so ever since Sir Bobby's passing I'd planned to do something, just to do my bit" said David. David, a service advisor for Bristol Street Motors in Darlington, has already been sponsored more than £200 for his fundraising effort, and has set up an official Just Giving account through the foundation. "I'm also planning bucket collections and other promotions to hopefully raise as much as I can, and I'd be delighted to hit my target of



£1,000, so all donations are gratefully received and very much appreciated by the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation." Pauline Buglass, the foundation's head of fundraising, added: "The support we receive from football fans like David is truly amazing. I hope it turns out to be a good game and worth walking 33 miles for! "David's fund-raising efforts will help cancer patients from across our region and will help fund clinical trials of new drugs which are not yet licensed by the NHS. Donations can be made at www.justgiving.com/david-neale, or anyone who'd like to contact David can email him on dmneale9@aol.com

Place your Valentines Day Greetings in your local newspaper the "NEWTON NEWS"

JOHN & JANE
To "squidgy widgey"
on Valentines Day
love from your little
bunny
X

**Above example:
£12.00 (inclusive)
(maximum 15 words)**

JOHN DOUGH To my "squidgy widgey" on Valentines Day, love from your little bunny X

JANE DOUGH To my little bunny, all my love on Valentines Day, love from "squidgy widgey"

**Above example:
15p per word**

JOHN DOUGH
To my "squidgy widgey"
on Valentines Day, love from your little bunny X

JANE DOUGH
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STUDENTS TO HELP ANOTHER CONTINENT



Last year, Stephenson Way Community School supported work being done to help Africa. It seems this year, they are ready to explore a new continent, after being introduced to Peru in South America. Emil Franchi aged 16, of St. John's Sixth Form Centre in Bishop Auckland, paid them a visit to explain about Project Peru. He and about twenty other students intend to travel there in July, in order to continue a building project begun by fellow students last year. The pupils are keen to keep up with Emil's progress and make links with children out there. Each class has a calendar to mark off all the different fundraising events taking place, especially when Emil has to have his injections!

BAKERS HELP DOROTHY KIT-OUT HER RED BUS

Deputy-Mayor, County Councillor and all-round super-gran, Dorothy Bowman received over £600 of IT, exercise and play equipment from Warburtons, to help kit-out her special mobile community gym – a converted single decker bus – owned and operated by 73-year-old Dorothy herself!

The baker made the donation to Dorothy who aims to help local children live healthily. This includes staying fit, eating well and providing them with somewhere safe to play and socialise outside school.

'Dorothy's Bus' travels across Newton Aycliffe offering fun ways for young people in the area to keep active – a task which can be particularly challenging during the dark winter months. Warburtons donation included a Nintendo Wii console with a Wii Fit package and accessories, plus games, frisbees, hula hoops, portable goal posts, footballs, swing ball sets and skipping ropes.

On a typical evening anywhere between 10 and 20 children hop-on-board the bus, which Dorothy operates between three and four nights a week. Welcoming the new kit on-board, Dorothy said: "I'm very passionate about the area I live in and think the children deserve somewhere safe to play and meet their friends, which is what I'm trying to provide through the bus. "For the most part, I've had to fund the majority of equipment myself which impacts on the number of activities on offer. Also, things do break over time with wear and tear and it costs to replace them. "Receiving this donation has been a fantastic surprise and the children have been excited waiting for everything to arrive. We are all extremely appreciative to Warburtons for its support."

Jackie Warren, Warburtons



community champion, based at Newburn Bakery in Newcastle, met Dorothy and delivered the games consoles and exercise gear. She said: "Dorothy is an inspiration and it's been a pleasure to see the fabulous work she's doing in the area and meet some of the children using the service. "Warburtons is a family business and takes an active role in the communities it serves. Dorothy's bus is a magnificent resource for the local children, despite only having a very small budget. When we heard about Dorothy and her great initiative, we knew straight away that we really wanted to help her through the bakery's community fund. I hope this extra support will bring pleasure to everyone who uses it."

Dorothy, who has been a qualified HGV class one driver for most of her life and has driven heavy goods vehicles across Europe, added: "I've had some very positive feedback from parents who think the bus is a great idea and

a safe way for their children to play outside, especially during the winter months and darker evenings.

"I wanted to give something back to my community and I've never been one to sit about all day just because I've reached retirement age. I've been involved in transport all of my life and thoroughly enjoy the taking the bus out into the community. "If anyone would like to volunteer to help with the bus, please get in touch with Dorothy on 308094.

LETTER to the EDITOR

Political Confusion

Dear Sir,
It is time for Ray Bowman, an elected Independent Councillor, on Great Aycliffe Town Council, to come clean on his political affiliations.

Over the past months persistent rumours, peddled openly by Labour Party insiders stated Councillor Bowman, stood as an Independent candidate – and was elected – at the last Town Council elections, when he was still a member of the Labour Party. In effect he was a Labour Party member, masquerading as an Independent, standing against the selected Labour Party candidates.

This is an extraordinary situation, if true, and goes against all rules, regulations and ethical behaviour.

However, it is illogical for Independent councillors to protest so vociferously, as there is no such thing as an Independent Party and each councillor elected

under the banner of being an Independent, now needs to reflect whether they are fish or fowl. One cannot be an Independent Councillor and have a spokesman issuing statements on behalf of Independent councillors, as if they were a political party.

The Labour Party is suffering terminal decline in its popularity and credibility, with mass resignations of activists all over the town. West Ward has seen at least eleven leave or resign. Even the newly formed Lib Dems have found the job of attracting new members, and becoming an alternative to The Labour Party, a long, hard slog.

Aycliffe is a political desert at the moment, with the vast majority of the residents having either no interest, or a jaundiced attitude to all politicians.

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Come with us - we welcome people to join us who are single and who would welcome the company of people who enjoy themselves visiting new places.

We also meet every Tuesday 2pm at the Navy Club Burnhill Way. Next week we are going to have a talk on home security.

Over the following weeks we have a visit from Age Concern, Line Dancing and more trips away including a trip with J.C. Coaches to Spain (Bilbao). We are hoping to start our Sunday Lunch and Mystery Tour trips with the Cumby Arms and J.C.Coaches in the near future

If you need further information ring 01325 308094

Mother's Day

Sunday 14th March

Treat Mum to a special day at Darlington Football Club's Northern Echo Arena.

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Darlington youngsters will be able to fill their spare half-term time up with an action-packed week-long soccer course. The Quakers are holding the popular courses during the February half-term break (Monday 15-Friday 19) at Eastbourne Sports Complex in the town, when children can spend a whole day with the club for less than £10 a day each. The footy-mad youngsters will also be treated to a visit by the whole Darlington squad on one of the days, when they can get autographs and pose for pictures. Boys and girls aged between five and 12 will be with the club's Football in the Community staff, who are all trained and CRB-checked, from 9am through to 3.30pm, for just £40 each for the whole week. "This is a great way of keeping children entertained during the half-term break," said Kevin Stonehouse, Darlington's Football in the Community manager. "The best thing about them is that youngsters don't need to be top footballers to join in with the fun, and it doesn't cost a fortune, making it affordable for most parents."

LIB DEMS SELECT CANDIDATE

Regional Liberal Democrats have selected a candidate for the Sedgefield Constituency in the forthcoming General Election. His name is Alan Thompson an experienced Northumbrian County Councillor. from New-biggins by the Sea. He is due to meet local activists at the Lib Dem's branch meeting at The Cubby on February 9th.

"All children who attend the courses thoroughly enjoy them, and if the weather is bad for outdoor fun we turn to our indoor facilities which is just as much fun!" Children are advised to take football kit consisting of shin pads, football boots and trainers, waterproof clothing, a warm coat, a packed lunch and plenty to drink. There's an additional discount of £2.50 each per second and third child. To book, call 01325 387019, 07790 015410, or email kevin.stonehouse@darlington-fc.net

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ABOVE AND BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Dear Sir,
I was called to check on my elderly aunt at Bishop Auckland because she was not answering the phone. The taxi driver not only took

me to the house but stayed while the police arrived, helped to gain access and, when it turned out that my aunt had passed away, he stayed to see that I was OK before leaving. I am only sorry I did not get his name. I would like to thank the Safeline taxi driver who stayed with me through a very unpleasant experience in Bishop Auckland. He was very reassuring, sympathetic and kind. I have always found this company provides an excellent service but this was above and beyond what one might expect and I am very grateful.
Many thanks
Diane Robinson

Catering

CRAFTY CAKES For any occasion, cakes made and iced or just iced. Tel 316084

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WANTED property portfolio to rent or buy. Please call John on 01325 778 206

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

IF THE QUESTION IS WRONG – CAN THE ANSWER BE RIGHT?

Dear Sir,
The questionnaire asked whether people would prefer to have care at home or live in a residential home. Not many would choose to give up rights to their refuge, the home they had saved for and the freedom to live there the life they choose.

Fast-forward some years. You become frail in body, failing in mind and memory. Your family may be uncaring or separated by distance and time or, through giving you care 24/7 are totally exhausted. They are terrified to be unable to provide the necessary medical and social attention you need. Reconsider the question. Would your response change?

D.C.C. claim to be cost saving by closing our Shafto House residential home. Newton Aycliffe has a rapidly ageing population. Shafto House is our only Council Home within a five-mile radius.

It is vital, as a hospice, a convalescent home, or to give respite care when families need a short break from their responsibilities. Its closure would mean Privately run Residential Homes would have an open cheque as to their charges. This is the situation but, weeks ago, the Group Labour meeting voted 46 to 6 for closure. How did your councillor vote? Ask them directly for their reasons. Would they donate the sum they are given annually for charity, to help support Shafto House? They, and you, as you age, may need help.

So what is to be done? Absolutely nothing. The Labour Group has decided. When the D.C.C. general meeting takes place they will all vote as they have been told. There will be no appeal. Does it matter that common humanity is ignored. Does it matter that old people have outlived their usefulness? It seems not. M & C Carter

meeting takes place they will all vote as they have been told. There will be no appeal. Does it matter that common humanity is ignored. Does it matter that old people have outlived their usefulness? It seems not. M & C Carter

POLITICAL HYPOCRISY

Dear Sir,
Now that the people's Member of Parliament, Phil. Wilson, has joined the debate about Shafto House I fear the worst about the outcome of the home.

We all remember how he never missed a photo opportunity (a general election is close) when the debate was taking place about sub post offices and how any closures would affect the people of Newton Aycliffe.

He stood shoulder to shoulder with the people until it came to voting time when he raced down to London to make sure that he was there to vote for the closure of all our post offices that were on the list, the true mark of a political hypocrite.

He's a Labour Party MP and the Council that wants to close Shafto House is Labour Party controlled so we can assume that Phil Wilson being a loyal Labour Party supporter will, at the end of the day, defend any action that the Council decides to take, telling the people that the Council has made the correct decision. Peter Dolan

Woodham Golf Club

Telephone: (01325) 301551

KARAOKE NIGHTS

Every Friday
8.00pm - Midnight

with Stan Fuller (from the Huntsman)
Back by popular demand

Commencing Friday 12th February

SBH STAFF HELP HAITI

Sedgefield Borough Homes' employees gave a helping hand to Haiti by holding a dress down day on Friday, 29 January. Generous employees raised over £200 which has been matched by SBH to bring the total to a fantastic £504.70. The money has been donated to UNICEF, who have sent several teams to Haiti to provide clean water, shelter and save lives. Chief Executive of SBH Colin Steel says, "Our donation will help to provide over 50 families with basic water kits, helping them remain healthy during this crisis. We are pleased to support this gesture to benefit the Haiti relief operations."

MAYOR'S CHARITY NIGHT RAISED £949.35

The Mayor Mary Dalton, held a Charity Cabaret Evening in the Royal British Legion Club on Thursday, 28th January 2010 to help raise funds for her nominated charities during her year in office. Councillor Dalton has jointly nominated the North East Army Benevolent Fund and local Town Organisations as her charities. The evening was a huge success and an amount of £949.35 was raised. Cheques will be presented to her charities at the Annual Council Meeting to be held on the 12th May 2010. The Mayor would like to thank everyone who supported this event, especially the Cabaret Artistes, the Royal British Legion for allowing us the use of their concert hall, the Legion Committee Members and the catering staff from the Legion Restaurant who supplied the delicious pie and peas.

Calling Volunteers for Sports Coaching

Youngsters from across the county will benefit from more sports coaches thanks to a new recruitment drive. A new project run by Sport England, 'Recruit into Coaching' is aimed at attracting local volunteers, who have no previous qualifications, into the world of sports coaching. The overall aim is to use this program to provide additional qualified coaches for clubs, schools and community organisations. County Durham Sport, Durham County Leisure and NHS County Durham will support the scheme. More than £13,000 is being made available for training in the Easington, Wear Valley and Sedgefield areas. Those interested in becoming a qualified sports coach thanks to the scheme must show a commitment to coaching with a local club, school or community organisation. Volunteers will also attend a number of courses including

SOCIAL EVENTS AT St. CLARE'S

The weekly Coffee Mornings continue at St.Clare's Church, Newton Aycliffe every Saturday and Tuesday mornings 10am- 12noon. All are welcome with an opportunity to meet old and new friends for coffee and company. KIDZ FLICKS on the first Saturday of each month at 4pm - the next one being February 6th. Admission is only £1 and all films shown are suitable for children 5 years and over. We will also be holding a Pancake afternoon at St. Clare's on Tuesday 16th February 2 - 4pm which is again suitable for all ages. Tickets are £1 which includes pancake and drink. Any queries for these social events contact [Helen 319002] or [Marjorie 316255].

AGNEWS

At the Agnew Community Centre's Annual General Meeting members decided on some changes to the Management Committee, and returned the following. President - Jean Cochrane, Chairman - Cllr. Paul Gittins Vice Chairman - Margaret Lovelady, Treasurer - Lesley Bailey, Secretary - Ron Mitche. Committee members: Trevor Lovelady, Gladys Brown, Paul Chamberlain, Judith Chamberlain, Mark Banks, Shirley Coates Thanks must go to Lileen Cuthbertson for the work she has put in and it is hoped she will still continue to support the Centre in other ways. It was reported the New Centre was going well and it was anticipated it would continue successfully and expand. We take this opportunity to thank all who support the Centre at this time including the LIP team. Thanks to the 2 local county councillors for support both financial and otherwise without wishing to be mentioned every time they have helped us. If you are a voluntary group we can recommend you join CAVOS who have helped this Centre in so many ways. Please note that the Phoenix UK Taekwondo has moved to Sunday 5pm to 7pm. Instructor is Paul Isles and you can just turn up or contact him on 01388-605960 or 07525 820526 The new Mobile number for the Agnew Secretary is 07535 255098

Garden Sales

The Gardens Guild Hut at Clarence Chare Allotments will be open 10am till 12noon from Sunday 7th February. All gardeners are welcome to purchase quality goods at very reasonable prices.

Obituary

TYLER J. BAMBRIDGE. Born asleep on 28th January 2010. A great loss to his Mother, Amy, Grandmother Shirley, Grandad Stephen, Uncles Lee and Ross. The Funeral will be held at West Cemetery on Monday 8th February at 10.30am **ELLIOTT** 27th January, suddenly but peacefully of Newton Aycliffe. Molly (Mary), aged 86. Loving Wife of Hilton (George), devoted Mam to Barbara and Pauline the late Chris. A loving Mother-in-Law to Rob and Bruce, also a treasured Nanny and to Michael and Stephen. Would friends please meet for Service in Darlington Crematorium on Tuesday 9th February at 10.15am

In Memoriam

ABIE WALLS 07.02.05. Forever in my thoughts Dad, miss you so much. Luv Sue xxx **REID WILLIAM** 6th February 2000. I do not need a special day, to bring you back to mind. The days I do not think of you, are very hard to find. Each morning when I wake, I know that you are gone. And no-one knows the heartache as I try and carry on. My heart still aches with sadness, and secret tears still flow. What it meant to lose you Son, no-one will ever know. Love and miss you always. From Mam and all the family xx **BILLY HAILES** Precious memories of a loving Husband, Dad and Grandad. God we have never asked a miracle, but today just one would do. To see the door thrown open and to see you walk through. Loved and thought of always, by Doreen and all the family xx **NANCY WATSON** (Mam). 3rd February 2002. Deep in our hearts your memory is kept to love and to cherish and never forget. Joe, John, Lorraine, Karen and families xxxx

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Birthday Remembrance

JENNY SALKELD (Shepherd). Look around your garden Lord, find the Sister that I love, put your arms around her Lord, I only wish I could. Love you always, Sister Mena, God Bless xxx **MALCOLM HALL** 9th February. Happy birthday Dad. Love, Micky, Rich and Sadie

For Sale



WOODEN playframe including slide, pole, rock climb, rope and ladders, great fun for the kids. £160 (no offers). Dismantled and ready to go Tel 307 530

BARGAIN BUYS Bargain of the Week. Washing machine, 6kg load, A energy class, 2 year warranty, delivered and fitted for £219. Tel 321 678 **FACIAL** sun lamp, hardly used, still in box, £10; Coffee table, 120x60, beech with frosted glass insert, £90; Boys first bike, £20; Leather framed mirror, 114x83, £40; JVC CD radio alarm clock, remote control £30, Ipod Shuffle (blue), £20; Gear 4, Ipod dock black box, 24/7, alarm/radio, remote control, £20; Gear 4 blackbox speaker, remote control, £10. Tel 307 530

PALLETS and Pallet toppers first come first served. Free, call at Newton Press M-F, 9am-4pm **BRAND NEW** double divan with fully quilted mattress. Can deliver, £120. Tel 07789 113 343

SOLID OAK KITCHEN includes fridge/freezer, dishwasher, oven and hob, sink and taps, dresser including cupboards, drawers, shelves and lighting. Call 311 487 or 07790 022 031

WHITE MATSUI DISHWASHER 12 place setting, 22x24x33, out of packaging but never used. Instruction manual provided, £150. Tel 07958 648 161

POND moulded plastic, holds 750 litres of water, 22inches x 7ft x 5ft, brand new, £60. Tel 07958 648 161

ITALIAN MAHOGANY dining room furniture. Display cabinet, table and 4 chairs, coffee table, 2 lamp bases. Good condition, £100 ono. Buyer to collect. Tel 07879 817 498

DISABILITY Scooter, 3 wheels, fully serviced, new batteries, excellent condition, £350, buyer to collect. Tel 312664 or 07931 727318

NEW garden shed, 6x4 apex window, heavy duty, tanalized, delivered and erected. £170. Tel 07538 812963

GAS BBQ double burner, plus hot plate, gas bottle and weather cover. Also a family size suitcase in good condition. £75 the lot. Tel 07816 159193

BLACK LEATHER two seater recliner and chair recliner good condition £150 must collect tel.0132531040

28" BUSH digital TV in good working order, complete with stand, £80. Tel 319321

BEIGE coloured electric rise and recliner chair in excellent condition, £300. Tel 319321

28" TOSHIBA television in good working order complete with stand, £50; A digital box, £10. Tel 314205

BEKO chest freezer, as new, £50; Worktop freezer, as new, £20; Swan deep fat fryer, as new, £10; 3ft trampoline, £5. Tel 321134

LARGE pine table with four chairs, good condition. Tel 304131

NEED An old domestic appliance removing? Can't wait for the Council? Tel. 321 678.

Congratulations

NEIL HURST - 3rd February



As it's your special birthday, we thought it's time to celebrate. Even though we know you think being 50 isn't great. We don't know why it bothers you, you're still fit and in your prime. And yes, there are some grey hairs, but at least they're thick, not fine. Granted you're not as nimble when you play the 'glorious' game. But even now your 'footy' skills can put young legs to shame. Don't worry about growing grumpy, let us allay your fears. Nothing's going to change now, you've been like that for years. embrace your mid-life crisis, as it's plain for all to see. Especially when you're roaring round in your little green MG. So now

perhaps all that's left to say, is that we're all really glad, to share this special day with you, such a brilliant Husband and Dad. Happy birthday and lots of love, Carrie, Sam, Joe and Louis xxxx

HURSTY IS 50!

but he doesn't look it!



3rd February 2010

You will always be a winner with us Neil. Happy birthday! Enjoy the celebrations, we love you lots. Bev, Lindsey, Mark, Russ, Ashleigh, Niall, Brooke, Danielle and Ryan xxxxxxxx

Nathan Bell



Happy 1st Birthday
To Our Perfect Angel
Nathan. Enjoy your party
Sweetheart. Love you
always, Mammy and
Daddy xxxxx

Demi Leigh Hindmarch



Happy 18th Birthday
10th February 1992
Love, Dad, Mam, Zara,
Paul, Dean, Jade & Ross
Keegan

Liz Wheatley



Happy 60th Birthday
All our love from Bob and
the lads, Mam, Vicky, Kev,
Elisha and Emily, Neil
and Lola, Terri, Dinx and
Joshua xxx

Maisie Isabel Selby



Happy Birthday Princess
8th February 2008
Have a great party. Love,
Mammy, Daddy, Ellie and
Lewis xxx

Morgan



Cadet Hutchinson

Happy 13th Birthday
"Hope you don't turn into
a Kevin!" Lots of love
from Mam, Paul and all the
families xxx

Happy 13th Birthday
Morgan. Lots of love, Nan,
Grandad and Caera xxx

Thank You

BRENDA, JOHN, Kevin and family of the late Amie would like to thank relatives, friends and neighbours for their kindness and messages of sympathy. Thanks also to the Royal British Legion for their help and support. Special thanks to Rev Linda Potter for a comforting Service and to Gillian Marley of the Co-operative Funeral Care for her help and guidance

I WOULD like to thank the couple who stopped and helped to push my motorised scooter home. Your help was much appreciated.

JOHN McNAMEE Jill and family wish to thank relatives, friends and neighbours for the cards, flowers and messages of sympathy that they received since their very sad bereavement. Special thanks to the North East Ambulance Service for their help and kindness. Thanks to the Rev. Linda Potter for her comforting Service and John Meynell for their help and support. Also to John Melvin and everyone who attended John's Funeral Service. "The world has lost a very special man"

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Gymnastic Trophies for Aycliffe

Twenty eight pupils from Aycliffe Village Primary School participated in the 'First Steps' Gymnastics Competition at the South Durham Gymnastics Club on Tuesday 26th January. For many pupils, it was their first competition, but

all participated well and joined in demonstrating their skills. The youngest pupils competed in the Key Stage 1 Novice division, where they took Floor and Vault trophy and the team trophy. Pupils from Key Stage 2 participated in the Novice

and Intermediate divisions - the younger KS2 children took the Floor and Vault trophy as well as the Novice Team trophy and the older children took the Mixed Team trophy. In total, twenty medals and nine trophies were presented to the Aycliffe pupils! The older pupils have been invited to attend the County Finals in February. Well done to all concerned!

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P.A.C.T. Meeting

Police & Community Together

PC Alan Thompson will hold a PACT Meeting at Simpasture Court Coffee Lounge from 6-30pm to 8-00pm on Tuesday 23rd February. Durham Constabulary are dedicated to making your neighbourhood safer. If you have any issues affecting your quality of life and want to discuss it with your neighbourhood Police Team then get involved in your local PACT Meeting. This is an informal discussion with the Police and local partners to resolve problems where you live. Ring 0345 6060 365

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A 'HOLE' LOT OF TROUBLE!

With potholes estimated to cost motorists £320 million every year, and more potholes than ever appearing with the thaw of the recent cold-snap, the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) has issued advice on how to deal with them. Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research, said: "Potholes form and get worse after icy spells as water gets into small cracks in the roads, expanding as it freezes and forcing the tarmac apart. "For this reason, roads will increasingly start to show signs of damage as the weather warms up. "As well as worrying about your vehicle, with potholes being a major cause of suspension failure, drivers should be particularly conscious of cyclists and motorcyclists trying to get past a pothole and give them a wide berth. They are entitled to a wobble and would appreciate not having a motorist attempting to overtake just as they avoid a hole in the road," added Mr Greig.

out to avoid a hole – you might discover that there is a motorcyclist trying to get past you, or encounter an oncoming vehicle

- Bikers and cyclists need to look well ahead and change direction early so they have time to deal with the holes, and so that their movements don't cause surprise to other road users
- Potholes tend to reappear in the same place again and again as previous repairs fail - remember where you saw one and expect it to be there again
- Be extra vigilant on roads with lots of lorries and also around bus stops. Extra pressure is put on the road surface wherever heavy vehicles stop, start or turn

"Always make a point of reporting a pothole to the local authority as an early repair could prevent a future accident, although councils are reluctant to carry out permanent repairs until the winter conditions subside," Mr Greig added.

OPEN INVITATION TO LIB DEM MEETING

The next meeting of the town's branch of the Liberal Democrat Party will be held on Tuesday 9th February, at 7pm. As an expression of our support for their fight for survival, we will again be meeting in The Cubby. Observers and prospective new members are cordially invited to attend the first part of our meeting and we will make you most welcome. Free refreshments for all (though a donation towards The Cubby fighting fund, would be gratefully accepted). The agenda includes The General Election, Distribution of the Focus questionnaire

to one of the town wards and collation of feedback; The threat to Shafto House - supporting GARA; Off road parking; The safety of pedestrians during inclement weather; Resignation of Labour Party members from West Ward; Town Centre toilets (an update). Liberal Democrat Councillors, Blenkinsopp and Palmer will give an update on Town Council matters. Come along and join us. Together we can make a REAL difference. For any further information, or more about the Lib Dems, please contact Bill (308057) or Derek (301395) Derek G Atkinson,

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LETTER

NHS HEAT WASTED

Dear Sir

Can I make a suggestion which should, if implemented throughout the country, save the NHS thousands, if not millions, of pounds per year. It is simply to fit timers to the heating systems of buildings such as the Acley Centre on Burn Lane. This building is unoccupied outside the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday but the heating is belting out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Surely if it could be regulated to operate from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday the savings would be tremendous in that building alone. There must be many similar buildings throughout the country costing a fortune, not only in heating charges but also, in Ed Milliband's favourite mantra, the carbon footprint. Cobblers Hall resident

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