

Welcome to our Community Newsletter! Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to friends and colleagues – if they wish to receive this direct please ask them to register an email address with us. For further details please see the 'How to get involved' page.

ACHIEVEMENTS

DR NAQVI'S DREAM COME TRUE

The finishing touches are being added to a new facility for the borough's heart patients.

The Cardiac Catheter Laboratory extension funded entirely from public donations is set to be opened by Dr Naqvi on 8th January .

Work on the £320,000 provision at Wigan Infirmary has been under way for around 18 months but now only the equipment is left to be installed. The extension, attached to the ever growing cardiology department at the hospital has been funded from the 'Heart Beat Two' campaign pioneered by Dr Naqvi

FABULOUS RESULTS FOR WIGAN ROTARY 2017 XMAS COLLECTION

The annual collection made by members of Wigan Rotary Club in the company of Father Christmas throughout December 2017 has been a huge success with the total amount raised reaching £14,063!

Wigan Rotary President Gwyneth Millard said "Thank you to all the great people of Wigan who have donated so generously throughout December to Wigan Rotary Club's Santa collection. We have met some fantastic people on the routes and at the supermarkets and with this record collection we can continue to support the work of community groups in Wigan."

ROTARY CLUB OF LEIGH PRAISES 'GENEROSITY' OF RESIDENTS AFTER SANTA'S SLEIGH TOUR

The Rotary Club of Leigh has praised the 'generosity' of residents after they donated more than £14,000 in its Santa's Sleigh tours for the second year in a row.

St. Nicholas rode his sleigh on the streets of Leigh and Lowton for four weeks across November and December as well as stopping at supermarkets to give children the chance to see him before his busiest day of the year.

Residents dug deep to donate £14,000.70 to the Rotary on the tours which was close to matching last year's record of £14,250. Club president Brian Mills said: "The people of Leigh and Lowton have once again been so generous, especially at such difficult financial times."

SUCCESS FOR RESIDENTS SUPPORTED INTO EMPLOYMENT

Residents in Wigan Borough with disabilities who have secured and sustained employment have had their important contribution to the workplace recognised and celebrated.

At the annual supported employment awards Warriors Player Anthony Clubb joined parents, carers, family and friends to recognise the fantastic achievements of disabled residents that have been supported into employment and continued employment for 5,10,15 and 20 years. The awards night also applauded bosses from local firms who employ a workforce that reflects our local communities who also provide excellent leadership and support to people with disabilities.

Wigan Council is encouraging local employers who could offer paid opportunities or work placements to someone with a disability to come forward and join the success.

Local firm MPV Packaging has been supported Wigan resident Andrew Knight, who has a learning disability, for 16 years. Andrew was one winner of the Supported Employee of the Year 2017. Louise Boardman from MPV Packaging said: “When Andrew first started he was very shy and over the years has grown into his own. He hasn’t let any of his disabilities affect him. “With support from his colleagues and supported employment services Andrew has completed all the challenges that have been set for him and has shown determination and fully deserves his award as supported employee of the year. “We would like to thank the supported employment service for their continued support over the last few years.”

The council’s supported employment team works with people who have a disability, getting to know them, developing and matching their skills, interests and aspirations to the right job for them. As well as helping with job applications, they help with interview techniques, work placements and provide support in the workplace. The service also celebrated an outstanding achievement of one individual who has been employed for 20 years at a local retail store.

Cllr Keith Cunliffe, cabinet Member For Adult Social Care, said: “Over the years our residents have achieved brilliant things. The awards night is great because you get a real insight into what employment for someone with a disability really means to them and how important their role and contribution can be. “I’m so proud of what the service has achieved. Our advisors do a fantastic job of working with individuals and employers to find the right opportunities and to see people flourish and grow in their positions is inspirational. “We would urge local employers to come forward if they can offer an opportunity to someone with a disability. We can support them with the right training and will be there every step of the way until people can work independently.”

Wigan Council has also pledged to strengthen its recruitment of people with disabilities or long term health conditions, recognising the strengths of a diverse workforce that reflects local communities, committed to offering a wide range of jobs across all areas of the council.

Employers are being encouraged to contact the council if they would like to learn more about the advantages of creating employment opportunities for people with a disability within their workplace. If your business can offer paid opportunities or work placements for disabled people please contact supempt@wigan.gov.uk or 01942 828439.

Full list of winners from night:

Paul Davies – Wigan Council – 5 years employment (Although he has been employed for 40 years)

Dawn Turnbull – Tesco – 10 years employment

Stephen Robinson – McDonalds – 10 years employment

Robert Hamlet – Wetherspoons The Bocket – 10 years employment

Sean Gough – Asda – 10 years employment

Darren Turner – Empire Cinema – 10 years employment

Kevin Starkie – Profile Patterns – 10 years employment

Paul Heaton – Belmont Packaging - 15 years employment

Colleen Beaman – Morrison’s – 15 years employment

Ciaran O’Connor – Sainsbury’s – 20 years employment

Matthew Turnbull – Special Recognition Award –Asda Swinton

Andrew Knight – MPV Packaging – Supported Employee of the Year

RUDOLPH THE RECYCLING TRUCK SURPRISES PUPILS

Two schools won a Wigan Council competition to produce a video encouraging more residents to recycle and as a thank you for taking part they had a surprise visit from Santa and Rudolph the Recycling Truck.

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Hindley Green Sacred Heart Catholic Primary and Oakfield High School and College both produced winning videos to promote recycling and won £1,000 each for environmental improvements to their schools, sponsored by FCC who look after the borough's recycling centres.

The eco-council pupils from both schools were shocked to see the bin wagon, dressed up as Rudolph, pulling into the school playground and even more shocked to see Santa driving him! Santa said he loved both the recycling videos and gave the children selection boxes as a thank you.

Councillor Kevin Anderson, cabinet member for environment, said: "Both schools produced brilliant videos encouraging more people to recycle more, recycle right and they are so passionate about it. We were so impressed with them both and wanted to do something to say thank you!"

Tony Waterworth, site business manager for FCC Environment, said: "We are delighted to have been involved in this project and we too have been really impressed with the videos so it was a huge honour to hand over our wagons to help deliver the great news to the two worthy winners."

View the winning videos on YouTube:

Oakfield High School and College: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAE1Ae0J1fQ&feature=youtu.be>

Hindley Green Sacred Heart Catholic Primary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJsg2u-Gi1M>

GREEN-FINGERED VOLUNTEERS NOMINATED FOR QUEEN'S AWARD

A Volunteer group is celebrating after being nominated for a Queen's Award.

The Green Grass Centre's Growing Together programme, which is on the Hagfold Estate in Atherton, gives residents who are out of work and looking to improve their chances of employment the opportunity to gain valuable life skills while giving something back to the community and working in the centre's allotment.

The Queen's Award, which was nominated by Wigan Council, recognises excellence in voluntary activities carried out by groups in the community.

Centre manager Lynn Hayes said: "We never expected it. "We are all extremely proud and the volunteers are so happy- it means a lot."

The group will find out if they have won the accolade next June.

CYCLE SPEEDWAY

Astley & Tyldesley Cycling Club members celebrated their most successful season to date with the annual Presentation and Social event. The function room of the Miners' Welfare Club at Gin Pit was packed with 80 members, families and friends present to enjoy the occasion.

It was the presentation of awards, to celebrate the club winning five leagues this season - Northern League Divisions 1, 2 and 3, the Northern Junior League, the Manchester League Division 2 - plus the various club awards and other individual successes, which was the highlight of the afternoon. A staggering 115 rider awards were presented by former World Champion Steve Harris, with the five club special awards rounding off the rider presentations. Mark Grantham won the Club Most Improved Rider award, Tom Morrissey took the Rory Blackwell Cup for the Best Newcomer award, Aiden Green received the North West Trophies Cup for Best Novice award, John White won the J. Fisher & Sons Young Rider of the Year Cup, with Emily Burgess a popular winner of the Alan Farrell Memorial Cup for Club Rider of the Year award.

The A&T club have long valued the importance of its officials and volunteers and 23 volunteer awards were made. Lee Phillips was presented with the Ron Hack Memorial Cup for Club Volunteer of the Year.

YOUNG ACHIEVER WINNER 2017 CELEBRATED AT WIGAN TOWN HALL

The Soroptimist International Wigan 2017 Young Achiever Award was presented to winner Olivia Barrow at Wigan Town Hall by the Mayor of Wigan Borough Councillor Bill Clarke, his wife Joan and Wigan President Angela Holmes.

Olivia received her award for outstanding achievement for service to the community and academic achievement.

Runner up Olivia Monks was also congratulated for her achievement in service to the community.

The event was a celebration of the achievements of both girls and was attended by family members, and representatives of Soroptimist International Wigan.

5TH TYLDESLEY SCOUT GROUP TURN A BANANA INTO £4,000 TRAILER TO HELP THEM WITH FUTURE ADVENTURES

A Scout group has completed a challenge to turn a banana into a £4,000 trailer to help them to carry their equipment on their adventures.

Assistant Cub Scout Leader John Worrall of the 5th Tyldesley Scout Group came up with an uptrading idea in July where they started with one banana and managed to swap it for a plastic dog house, a baby push toy and three children's bikes. One of the bikes was then exchanged for an adult's bike.

Cub Scout Leader David Simpson said: "We are delighted to get our new trailer and cannot wait to take it over to Ireland with us in April "When John came up with the idea, everyone- including me- thought he was crazy and would struggle to raise the £4,000 we needed. "But against all the odds, we did it and the trailer will enable us to take all of our young people camping for years to come."

To speed up the progress of reaching their target, the group set up a Justgiving fundraising page which generated more than £2,100. A Wigan Council Brighter Borough funding grant of £1,500, a £275 cheque from Tyldesley with Atherton Rotary Club and £250 donations from councillors in their area also helped the scouts to achieve their goal.

David added: "We would like to personally thank 5th Tyldesley Scout Group members' parents, the general public and all of the local businesses for helping us to reach our target." All remaining funds after the purchase of the trailer will be spent on future activities of the scout group and any additional equipment they may need.

SELFLESS TEENAGER RECOGNISED BY ATHERTON AND LEIGH FOODBANK FOR COMMITMENT IN HELPING COMMUNITY

A selfless teenager has been recognised for her volunteering efforts in collecting donations for a food bank.

Bedford High School pupil Abi Holdsworth, 13, from Leigh, spends hours of her spare time with her mum Lisa in supermarkets in the town helping to collect supplies for Atherton and Leigh Foodbank. Abi has also recently organised a collection at her school in which a shopping trolley's worth of tins was filled and donated to the food bank.

Last week she was presented with a special certificate from Atherton and Leigh Foodbank manager Warren Done at the Manchester Road school to thank her for her hard work

Abi has organised shoebox collections, taken part in sponsored runs and been covered in paint to raise money for charity too.

The food bank has just had its busiest week ever in its five year history with more than 150 people and families going into its different centres across the borough in need of help.

Manager Warren Done added: "We rely completely on donations from members of the public, local businesses and organisations. "We also depend on our volunteer helpers to keep the operation moving which is why people like Abi are so important. "It is safe to say she has made a big difference to the lives of many people in her local community and she should be really proud of her achievements."