



Hello Everyone,

I am writing this early on a glorious Bank Holiday morning and I hope the sunshine continues. Here we are on the 10th bulletin and I'm now finding that I've settled into a routine. The highlights are : Write the news bulletin on Monday, WI office day Tuesday, Wednesday rest day, Thursday food shopping, radio interview and clap for carers (exhausting day), Friday night take the bins out, Saturday cook a full English breakfast, Sunday ironing - I don't know how I cope with the excitement!!!

I hope you and you families are all coping and staying safe and well. We are trying hard to make sure that everyone has some WI contact during this time and I know that many of you are making calls, visiting at a safe distance and helping where you can. Kindness and support for each other is a great strand in being a WI member.

I would like to welcome Judith Kane to the area. She has recently moved to the SR3 region of the Federation and made an enquiry on the unofficial WI Facebook page. It was heart-warming to see how many responses she got from members of our Federation. I've since emailed her with the details of all our WI's and we look forward to welcoming her to one of our meetings as soon as we can.

Whatever else happens there are two (at least) positive things to come out of our lockdown situation. One is the progress made in lots of areas for WI members connecting digitally – so many people are now using Zoom, Facetime etc, when in the past they might have avoided it at all costs. Secondly, is the development of 'Denman at Home' at last members in our area are able to access events and activities organised by Denman. I know a number if you have participated/watched the cookery classes – lots of Saturday night dinners of Indian food after the Indian cooking event last week. Altogether there were over 250 ladies took part in the session and here are the results made by Debra Phippen and Joanne. The recipe is available on the Denman Facebook page.





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There have also been a number of non-food related events from Denman too! I signed up for a talk about World War 1 on 22nd May which I found really interesting. The popularity and relative ease of access for most members might make the educational aspect of the WI easier to deliver in future and is to be welcomed.

One of the outstanding elements of the whole pandemic landscape has been the kindness that has shown itself in so many ways. At the beginning of the year when the Board of Trustees had their strategic planning day, we had decided that the next year for the Federation would be a year of kindness, before we had the chance to carry out plans, we were taken over by events. However, we needn't have made any plans as kindness is a huge feature of our Federation. When you carry out an act of kindness you can't ever evaluate how much good you are doing, the smallest thing can have a huge impact on someone and make a major difference to their frame of mind. So, thank you for the acts of kindness that make the world a better place.

On the subject of kindness, I asked a couple of weeks ago for donations of spare craft stash to send to women in prisons. We were asked to send donations to Durham prison, as it happens we were given incorrect information by National – anything we donate will go to Low Newton not Durham. However, we were asked for craft stash whereas the prison thought that individual craft kits to be distributed to the women were more acceptable. After a series of e-mails and communications I am awaiting a message to see what can be achieved. Thank you to those of you who collected together materials to donate and if you can hang onto them, I will get back to you as soon as I hear any more information.

We have had some good news this week from National WI. As you know this year's Annual Meeting at The Albert Hall had to be cancelled and those due to attend were very disappointed. However, the good news is that next years A.G.M. will be at The Albert Hall on April 19th, a little earlier than normal but as The Albert Hall celebrates it's 150th Anniversary next year we are lucky that we could be fitted in. In consultation with our Board of Trustees we have decided that all the arrangements made for this year should stand. i.e. those who were link delegates and those who were successful in the ballot for observer tickets will still go, and hopefully those who fancied a trip to London will still want to come. Obviously, the dates may not be as convenient for some people but we will be able to deal with that when the office re-opens.





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In the same letter that gave us the information about the meeting the Chairman and Treasurer were also invited to attend a Zoom meeting to talk about future developments – again a good sign that consultation and involvement of all aspects of the WI is facilitated by technology.

How have you been keeping busy?

Across the Federation members have been busy as usual. Fells Angels have a regular daily quiz or puzzle on Facebook and this week they also held a raffle – all members were entered and the prize was a delivered afternoon tea for 2.

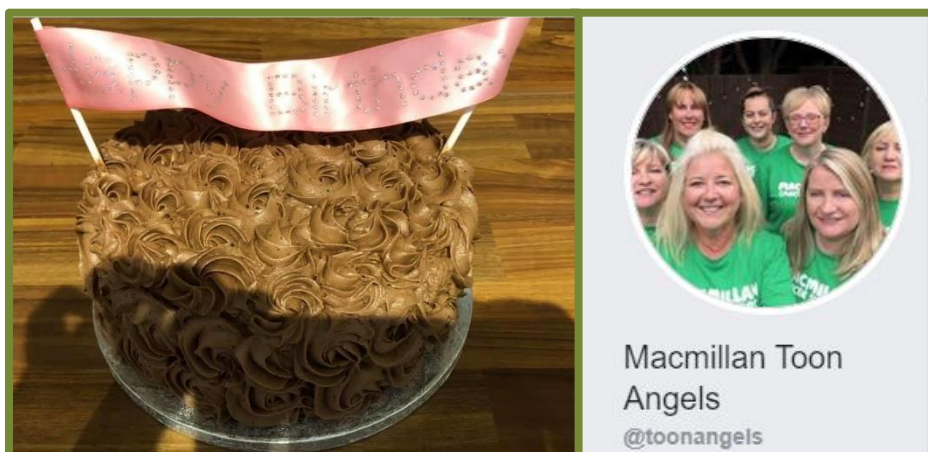
Whickham Village Belles member Karen Tann opened her Kettlebell Exercise group to members beyond Whickham and I've heard great things about how much participants enjoyed it and then they had an informal coffee session afterwards.

We know lots of you have been sending cards to your members, which is a great way to keep in touch with everyone. Washington Concord sent these beautiful creations opposite.



Bowes Belles get a mention on this month's WI pages of Crafts Beautiful magazine, Gillian Kane, Steph Hutchinson and Pat Graham set themselves a weekly lockdown craft challenge and share their results on Facebook, I always love seeing what they have produced.

As you will know many charities are suffering as a result of so many things being cancelled. There is a group of fundraisers for MacMillan who call themselves MacMillan Toon Angels and they raise funds that stay in this area. Earlier this month they organised a 'Bake Off Challenge' whereby people bake a cake, submit a picture and make a donation. The pictured bake was judged and a member of Whickham Village Belles – Louise Borrell won it. Well done Louise.





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The 25th May marks the beginning of National Barbeque week so the sunshine is a bonus and its also the start of British Tomato Fortnight. It's a great time to make the best of tomatoes, they are a basic ingredient of many dishes but sometimes a simple approach can be delicious, so this week we have two lovely tomato salads.

Summer Tomato Salads – Salad tomatoes should be ripe but firm enough to slice thinly without squishing.

Recipe 1

1lb/450grms firm tomatoes

1 level tbsp caster sugar

Juice of 2 lemons

Few drops of Worcester sauce

Finely chopped fresh parsley and mint.

Peel tomatoes by pouring boiling water over them and leave to stand for 1 minute. Drain and the skin should come away easily.

Slice the tomatoes and arrange in a large shallow dish. Sprinkle with the sugar, a seasoning of salt and pepper, the strained lemon juice, Worcester sauce and plenty of chopped parsley and mint. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving.

Recipe 2

4 large firm tomatoes

2 large onions

Raspberry vinegar

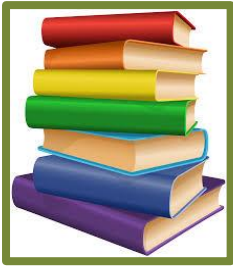
Slice both vegetables very thinly and layer alternatively in a glass dish. Drizzle a small amount of raspberry vinegar over the vegetables.

Cover the refrigerator for a couple of hours.





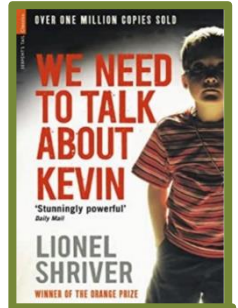
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Read and Rhyme

I have always been an avid reader but when the lockdown started, I seemed to have lost my reading motivation. Happily, it's come back and I've read about four books over this last week. Two I would recommend: -

'We need to talk about Kevin' by Lionel Shriver. This book has been popular since 2005 when it won the Orange Prize for fiction. For some reason I never got around to reading it and could kick myself! Harrowing, tense and thought provoking, raising issues about parenting and a mother's love. I can't recommend it highly enough, A very satisfying read. It was also turned into a film in 2011.



'The Perfect Couple' by Jackie Kbler is a 2020 psychological thriller, when a woman's husband disappears and no one has ever seen him at their new home there doesn't seem to be any answers. Lots of twists and turns. An intriguing tale to keep you turning the pages, a great read.



Many thanks to Jane Heritage, a committee member of Jarrow WI, who kindly sent in this ode she has wrote about her hero 'Monty Don'.

Ode To Monty Don

The stage is set
The TV's on
The chair's reclined
The kettle's on
The time is once again upon
It's Gardener's World! It's Monty Don!

Just to watch him, it's so relaxing
And his advice is not too taxing

I've pricked out my seedlings
And tackled my weeding
And my Busy Lizzies are happily breeding

My Petunias are perky
And my Roses are rampant
My Tomatoes are tumbling
It's all quite humbling

My Melons are swelling, they're fit to burst
But Oh! My Cucumbers are surely cursed

It doesn't matter if my blooms have drooped
Or if I'm sipping wine when I'm feeling pooped

His hands in compost delight the nation
Pleasing every generation

Don't get me wrong I love my hubby
But it's not the same when HIS hands are grubby

Monty, you're my type of guy
Would love you to be guest speaker at our WI!??
..... with apologies to Mrs Don and family.



Fantastic – well done Jane - a little picture to bring you a smile !!!!



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Maureen James, a member of Washington Concord, appeared on Julie Pendleton's Radio Show last Sunday (2 – 4pm) and read out these great lyrics (Slightly tweaked) from a song appearing on the Film Breakthrough by Maddie and Tae.



PEOPLE NEED PEOPLE - Maddie & Tae.

You know how a flower needs a little rain
And how a ray of sunshine needs a window pane
You know how the ocean needs a shore to break
Well I just feel like we all feel that way

People need people when the highs get low
The world's a bit too heavy for one shoulder to hold
The strongest souls still wear out and the hardest hearts still break
Sometimes you ain't alright and sometimes that's okay

So, if you're asking me
People need people
Somebody to call when you're too close to the edge
Somebody to catch you when you're dancing on a ledge
Somebody to pray for you, someone that you can pray for
To need and be needed, oh I believe it's what we were made for

So, if you're asking me
People need people
Share your way with me
Swear you're safe with me
I'll be your shelter, you'll be my calmer
It's okay to need each other
Sometimes you ain't alright and sometimes that's okay

So, if you're asking me
It's what else this world can be

People need people

The radio show was excellent as always, an update from myself, and there was an excellent interview about mental health. If you want to have a listen <https://www.novaradio.co.uk/listenagain>.

What can you do this week ? Here are some ideas for you that perhaps you could try

It's the virtual Hay Festival where there are lots of free events you can sign up for with Q&A afterwards. It runs until 31 May, have a browse and see if there is something you fancy
<https://www.hayfestival.com/home>

How about doing a free adult learning courses with Newcastle College who is offering an exciting programme of **FREE** courses for adults. why not take this opportunity to enhance your skills, take up a new hobby or improve your existing knowledge? There is a great variety of courses to choose – from basic word and excel courses to health and social courses.

<https://www.ncl-coll.ac.uk/adults/-communitylearning>



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Have a listen to Radio 5 Live between 3 and 4pm on a Wednesday. They have a great cookery programme called 'Eating In'. Today they have a great cook called Chris Bavin talking about lockdown lunches and the week afterwards they have the amazing Heston Blumenthal. If you would be interested in going on the phone to ask a question get in touch with Joanne and she can help.



Joanne has been trying her hand at acrylic painting following tutorials on U tube, her favourite being '#clive5art' where he shows simple painting techniques for beginners. If you don't have access to the internet you can get some great step by step magazines showing how to paint and draw – its very relaxing and extremely good for your mental health. Let your creativity run wild – it doesn't have to be a Picasso it's the pleasure in getting there!

Well I would like to welcome to new members to the WI; Joanne asked for you to guess what her project was last week; Darren and she have spent all weekend making a henhouse !!!! and they have taken delivery of 2 small Plymouth Buff Bantum chicks. They are only nine weeks old, called Marianne and Scarlet. Scarlet is so called as she did a runner when she first arrived, straight out through the mesh on the hen house and it took 9 of them to catch her – Scarlet Pimpernel!!!!

The henhouse is very palatial with plenty of room for them to run around, although Joanne does intend to get chicken harnesses complete with leads and walk them regularly. We will keep you informed when she gets her first egg!

On that pleasant note we will say goodbye once again, take very good care of yourselves.

Very best wishes

Margaret Carter - Chairman - Tyne and Wear South Federation of WI's

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Any woman who needs to travel to find refuge from domestic violence can do so for free on any uk train as of yesterday. The cost of the ticket will be covered by the relevant rail operator. Email railtorefuge@womensaid.org.uk. Feel free to spread the word.

For information and support on domestic abuse, contact:

- Police: 999 press 55 when prompted if you can't speak
- Refuge UK wide 24-hour helpline: 0808 2000 247