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LOCAL DRIVING TEST WAITING TIMES

Driving Licence test waiting times are three times their official target with 71,554 individuals awaiting an invitation to book their driving tests. Tallaght TD Paul Murphy calls on the government to expedite the recruitment of additional driver testers and implement a plan to ensure we are meeting the official target of a 10-week waiting period.

The Dail discussed a motion on Driving Test Waiting Times on Wednesday the 18th of October. The motion detailed how waiting times to book your driver's license test are now at three times their official target, an increase of 61 per cent over the last year reaching a staggering total of

71,554 individuals awaiting an invitation to book their driving tests.

Speaking on the Private Member's Motion, Paul Murphy TD explained how a constituent from the Tallaght area; "has spent the last 6 months on a waiting list to go on a waiting list to get a date [for his driving test]. He has been advised that when he gets onto the next list to do his test, he could be left waiting another 6 months".

The People Before Profit TD went on to ask the government to take immediate action to expedite the recruitment of additional driver testers and implement a plan to ensure that the official target of a maximum

of a 10-week waiting period is met. Currently, the national average waiting time for a driving test has now reached 30.4 weeks with people in some parts of the country facing a wait of nearly a year to sit their driving tests. Even the shortest waiting time nationally in Longford, with an 18-week waiting period is still well over the official RSA target.

The Chief Operations Officer at the Road Safety Authority committed that the driving test waiting time will be in line with the official target of ten weeks by the middle of next year. He has also pledged that the waiting time for an NCT will be reduced to a contractual agreement of 12 days by the end of 2023.

CITYWISE EDUCATION TO RECEIVE 'BEGIN TOGETHER' FUNDING



€500,000 is being allocated to groups across the island of Ireland in year four of the Begin Together fund, delivered in partnership with the Community Foundation Ireland. Pictured at Citywise Education is Aine McCleary, Chief Customer Officer Bank of Ireland, along with Citywise Education CEO, Daire Hennessy, and students Andrea Vwadia and Zuriel Chucks.

Cllr. Shane Moynihan

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GIRL GUIDES CELEBRATE NEW HOME IN TALLAGHT

The Mayor of South Dublin County joined members of Irish Girl Guides from around the country on the 14th of October to mark the official opening of their new offices, training centre, and multipurpose facility on Belgard Square. Irish Girl Guides purchased the building in 2019 and due to the impact of Covid, Brexit and increased construction costs, the staff and volunteers could only occupy the purpose-designed building over the summer. Irish Girl Guides is an eco-conscious youth movement and Mayor Alan Edge acknowledged the shared ethos of the Girl Guides and SDCC in refurbishing older buildings

and embracing sustainability. Backed by a visual display of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the ceremony involved youth members from Galway, Kildare, and Louth. Together with the Mayor, they officiated at the official 'ribbon-cutting' along with the CEO of the Irish Girl Guides Lorraine Mackey McHugh and the organisation's Chief Commissioner, Amanda O'Sullivan.

From a blank canvas, the Guides have created a multipurpose hub that will further the organisation's impact and help fulfil its mission of enabling girls and young women to become

responsible citizens of the world for generations to come. This facility is now home to the nationwide organisation and also offers local like-minded community and voluntary groups the use of training rooms. This includes meeting and conference rooms, training areas, a STEM hub, the Guide Shop, and a canteen area, with plans to expand and add additional spaces in the future.

Mayor Alan Edge, Mayor and first Citizen of South Dublin and a member of the South Dublin County Council (SDCC), warmly welcomed Irish Girl Guides to its new home. "Your organisation has a long, proud, and rich history of volunteering," he said. He stressed the importance of volunteerism to community building in SDCC and how beneficial to the area it is to take an existing building and refurbish and restore it to good and active use. "We are delighted to have you here," Mayor Edge said.

Amanda O'Sullivan, Chair of the Board of Directors



and Chief Commissioner as well as a resident of South Dublin, explained how IGG can be strengthened from our base in Tallaght. "We now have a home that can grow and change with our needs and the needs of our members," she said. "This building truly represents the Guiding spirit and stands as a testament to the strength of Irish Girl Guides."

A three-year fundraising campaign enabled the project to proceed and Helen Concannon, the Chair of the National Training Centre Committee took

the opportunity to thank the committee involved in the centre's development. "Thank you to all who took part in making this dream a reality," she said, citing the many volunteers and donors who held fundraisers, made personal donations, and sponsored LEGO blocks, as well as the grants received from the Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport; the Dept. of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth; the Albert Gubay Foundation; the Katharine Howard Foundation; Dublin Bus Community Spirit Initiative; and South Dublin

County Council. "Through your generosity, we can empower this generation of girls and young women, as well as the next," Concannon said. "We hope the facility will be of use also to other groups in the community."

If interested in renting the facility, please contact info@irishgirlguides.ie. Irish Girl Guides welcomes members from age 5+ and volunteer Leaders from age 18+. To find out more, see www.irishgirlguides.ie or tel: 01 6683898.



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DUBLIN 24 CHILD RECEIVES SPECIAL BOOKMARK FROM DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

A Dublin 24 child is the lucky recipient of a magical Dolly bookmark to celebrate 200 million books being gifted globally since Dolly Parton's Imagination Library inception in 1995.

To celebrate the 200 million book milestone, seven Dolly bookmarks were randomly hidden inside Imagination Library books mailed to children in five countries, including right here in Dublin. The lucky recipients receive a personal video chat with Dolly, with a personalized signed letter from Dolly, an autographed photo of Dolly and four Dollywood Theme Park tickets.

The Dollywood Foundation will also donate €2,000 on

behalf of the child to their Local Imagination Library Partner in their community - The Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) - as a thank you to who Dolly calls the true heroes of her programme. The Imagination Library is an early childhood book-gifting programme that mails a high-quality, free book each month to children from birth to age five. CDI is excited one of their own children was a lucky recipient. CDI enrolls 4,700 - 5,000 local children in the worthwhile program each month - that's 72 - 75% of eligible children.

"We were delighted and so excited across the whole organization because Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

is one of our farthest-reaching programmes," exclaimed Clare Bohan, literacy coordinator for Childhood Development Initiative. "To know one of the children who was quite literally chosen, one in more than two million, is incredible and we weren't expecting to have a recipient here.

Bohan went on to say, "To know we played a role in the 200 million books delivered worldwide is a really positive thing we're really excited about. It gives us the feeling we are part of something bigger than us and part of something special and we know our families feel the same."

The €2,000 will go straight back into serving more families in the area by funding these high-quality books for more than a thousand local children. Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the

children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her programme spans five countries and gifts over 2.6 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world - one book is mailed every second! There is never a charge to families who participate in the programme and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programmes.

"I know there are children in communities around the world with big dreams and

the seeds of these dreams are often found in books," said Dolly. "It's been one of my greatest gifts in life to help instill a love of reading through my Imagination Library. Reaching 200 million books worldwide is a major milestone that I'm so very proud of, and I want to thank all of our local programme partners, funders and supporters from the bottom of my heart. But we're just getting warmed up, we have so much more to do! Together, we can inspire even more children to dream more, learn more, care

more and be more." Bohan echoed this sentiment. "Books can play a huge role in a household - instilling the importance of reading. Books are so much more than words on a page. They mean bonding and serve as a prompt for spending quality time together. We know from our parents these books play an important role in building confidence in reading and preparing children for school."

To learn more, visit www.imaginationlibrary.com/200-million-books.



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DEEP CONCERN OVER LONG DELAYS IN LUCAN SWIMMING POOL CONSTRUCTION

People Before Profit Express Deep Concern Over Long Delays in Lucan Swimming

Pool Construction. People Before Profit TD Gino Kenny and People Before Profit representative for Lucan Mark Kerins are voicing their serious concerns over the extensive delays in the construction of the Lucan swimming pool, a project that has now been in progress for nearly four years. Despite initial promises and projections, the completion date for the Lucan swimming pool has been continually pushed back, causing frustration and disappointment among the local community. The repeated delays have left residents wondering when they will finally be able to enjoy the much-needed facility.

community members,” said Gino Kenny, People Before Profit TD. “The prolonged delays in the construction of the Lucan swimming pool are unacceptable, and we share the concerns of our constituents who have been eagerly awaiting its completion.”

Mark Kerins, People Before Profit representative for Lucan, added, “The fact that the Lucan swimming pool project has been in construction for almost four years raises serious questions about the efficiency and management of public infrastructure projects. Local residents deserve transparency and

accountability in how their taxes are being spent on these vital amenities.” People Before Profit advocates for a solution to address these types of delays in essential public projects. One key proposal is the establishment of a state-owned construction company, a policy that, if implemented, could significantly reduce delays in the completion of crucial public amenities.

“A state-owned construction company would bring about a level of accountability and efficiency that is currently lacking in the management of public projects,” explained Gino Kenny. “By

cutting through bureaucratic red tape and streamlining the construction process, we could ensure that important facilities like the Lucan swimming pool are completed in a timely manner, meeting the needs of the community.”

People Before Profit remains committed to fighting for the timely completion of the Lucan swimming pool and will continue to push for policies that prioritize the efficient delivery of essential public services. The residents of Lucan deserve better, and People Before Profit will actively work to make sure their concerns are heard and addressed.

“People Before Profit recognizes the importance of timely completion of public projects, especially those that directly impact the well-being and recreational opportunities of our

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HOME INSTEAD HR MANAGER WINS HR PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD

Home Instead is delighted to announce that HR Manager, Lisa Cassidy was named as HR Person of the Year at the recent annual Home Care and Community Ireland (HCCI) Awards.

Lisa, a dedicated professional who works in the Home Instead Dublin West office in Rathcoole, emerged as the winner among numerous submissions from home care companies nationwide. Her outstanding achievement was celebrated at an awards ceremony hosted at The Alex Hotel.

Lisa began her illustrious home care career as a Caregiver, providing in home care to older adults. Six years ago she joined

Home Instead’s Dublin West office, where she took on an administrator and recruitment role. In that time, Lisa has shown a drive and ambition to develop and progress in her career. She transitioned from admin and recruitment to HR, completed her master’s degree in the subject and now holds the position of HR manager for the Dublin West office.

Home Instead Dublin West Managing Director, Páraic Curtis said, “Approachable and compassionate are just two of many words to describe Lisa. She is an exemplary person. Driven, kind and a continuous source of support and encouragement to colleagues in her role

as HR Manager.” Lisa’s nomination and subsequent win is a testament to the commitment, enthusiasm and determination that she has shown in her work and career to date. She has developed into an integral part of the Dublin West team, helping to create a great place to work while assisting in changing the lives of ageing adults.

Curtis continued, “Anybody who spends time with Lisa leaves her company with a smile on their face, a full heart and the tools to help them succeed in their job.

We are thrilled that Lisa has won this award and it is a pleasure to have her as part of the Dublin West team.”

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INDIAN AMBASSADOR AKHILESH MISHRA MARKS SIGNIFICANT HINDU FESTIVAL IN BALLYMOUNT



Indian Ambassador Akhilesh Mishra, alongside Local Fine Gael TD, Emer Higgins, joined the Hindu community at the Ballymount Vedic Hindu Cultural Centre Ireland (VHCCI) to mark Durga Puja, a significant Hindu festival celebrating the goddess Durga’s triumph over evil.

DUBLIN FIRE BRIGADE INSTALLS PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATORS AT ALL ITS STATIONS

In support of international 'Restart a Heart' day recently, Dublin Fire Brigade unveils fourteen new Public Access Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) located prominently outside each of its fire stations across the city and county. This is a significant step forward in enhancing community safety and will be available 24/7 to provide immediate assistance especially during critical moments when every second counts. These AEDs will guide an untrained person through Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation, with voice prompts and encouragement while paramedics make their way to the patient and guidance is provided by Emergency Service Controllers over the 999/112 call.

The installation of the AEDs was prompted by an incident which happened outside Finglas fire station in January of this year. Pauline Ryan suffered a cardiac arrest in Finglas village while she was a passenger

in a car being driven by her sister, who had the presence of mind to pull into the fire station. At the time, the fire appliance, ambulance and all their medical equipment were out at another call, coincidentally, another Cardiac Arrest. Fortunately, the District Officer and a Firefighter/Paramedic were in the station and were able to perform life-saving CPR on Pauline until the arrival of colleagues from Phibsborough Fire Station, who were able to successfully defibrillate and resuscitate Pauline.

There is a simultaneous unveiling of the AEDs across all fourteen locations, and we are joined at Finglas Fire Station by Dublin Lord Mayor Daithí de Róiste. Speaking at the launch the Lord Mayor said, "I'm honoured to unveil the Public Access Defibrillator here at Finglas Fire Station, and to be part of the simultaneous launch of thirteen other AEDs across the city. The life-saving piece of equipment is a positive addition to the

local community and to the people of Dublin."

Dublin's Chief Fire Officer is represented today by Assistant Chief Fire Officer Greg O'Dwyer who commented, "The Firefighter/Paramedics and Officers of Dublin Fire Brigade recognise the fire, rescue and medical role they provide in the wider community but also their closest neighbours to our 14 stations. Obviously we hope that these AEDs never have to be used, but we also hope that the installation of the AEDs provide some piece of mind and reassurance to our neighbours or commuters who pass our stations."

Pauline, whose medical emergency prompted the installation of the AEDs joined with the Firefighters at the launch. Pauline said, "Only for the quick actions of my sister, the two firefighters in Finglas fire station and their colleagues from Phibsborough, I may not be here today. To them I am forever grateful. Knowing

what I know now, I would encourage everyone from a young age to learn CPR. It is a life skill, literally"

This initiative aligns with Dublin Fire Brigade's dedication to proactive community engagement and safety. By having these AEDs at our fire stations, we aim to bridge the gap between emergency services and the public fostering a sense of unity and co-operation within our great city. Dublin Fire Brigade encourages members of the community to take a course in CPR and the use of an AED. Visit www.irishheart.ie for a list of available "Heartsaver AED and CPR" courses in your area.

The AEDs are located outside each of the fourteen fire stations in a heated secure box. Members of the public can access the defibrillators by calling 999/112 stating their location. Simultaneously medical help will be dispatched and guidance will be given over the phone.

INSTALLATION OF LIFE SAVING DEFIBRILLATOR AT TALLAGHT FIRE STATION



Pictured at Tallaght Fire Station to mark the installation of a life saving defibrillator were Mayor Alan Edge with Councillors Charlie O'Connor and Lilian Gueret and ACFO Michael O'Reilly.

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5761 YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS DUBLIN REGISTER TO PARTICIPATE IN GAISCE – THE PRESIDENT’S AWARD

On the 25th October 2023, people across the country gathered together to celebrate Lá Gaisce. #LáGaisce is a day when

people come together to celebrate the achievements of young people, as well as to celebrate and thank all participants for their

commitment, resilience, and passion as part of Gaisce - The President’s Award. As part of the day of celebrations

support, the organisation is calling on people across Ireland to stand with young people in recognition of their commitment to personal

development.

Gaisce - The President’s Award is Ireland’s national youth award and is a self-development programme for young people aged 14-25. It is a direct challenge from the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, to all young people to dream big and fulfil their potential.

Young people in their thousands have already started and are actively pursuing their Gaisce Award journeys right across Ireland. In total, 485,000 young people have registered for Gaisce, with over 250,000 completing their award. Each year 25,000 young people register for their Bronze, Silver and Gold Gaisce awards.

These are young people across every county in the country participating in activities to develop and progress themselves. To achieve a Gaisce Award, participants need to complete activities for at

least one hour a week in each of the three challenge areas which include Personal Skill, Community Involvement and Physical Recreation.

Speaking in advance of Lá Gaisce, Avril Ryan CEO, said “A Gaisce Award is far more than a medal or certificate, it represents the personal growth of a young person and their commitment to the development of vital social and emotional competencies, from confidence and self-management to resilience and empathy - each Award representing an individual story for a young person to share and reflect on.

Those taking part come from communities the length and breadth of the country and from diverse backgrounds, all united in their commitment to self-development. We are immensely proud of all of those who participate. We want everyone to join us in celebrating their Gaisce achievements and journeys with us on October 25th and join in the fun!”



Pic Credit: Maxwells

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INTERGENERATIONAL CENTRE AT TYMON PARK SOD TURNING

Recently, the Mayor of South Dublin County Council, Cllr. Alan Edge officially turned the sod to mark the commencement of

works on the Tymon Park Intergenerational Centre. The Mayor was joined by Mr. Colm Ward, Chief Executive, Ms. Teresa Walsh,

Director of Services, Staff of South Dublin County Council and guests to celebrate this event. Speaking at the event Mayor Cllr. Alan Edge said "The works about to commence will include the creation of a new public building designed to provide flexible outdoor and indoor space for small to medium size events and activities for the local community. The building will also provide a small café, public toilets, outdoor seating overlooking the lake, improvements to the access and an upgrade of

the entrance area to the park with a new layout and planting.."

This project is funded by South Dublin County Council's 3-year capital budget. The Public Realm and Architect Section in South Dublin along with Cotter and Naessens Architects have carried out the planning and design work on this project to date. Construction work on site will be carried out by Oliver J Hearty and Sons Ltd.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES WELCOMES CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON DRUG USE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

People Before Profit TD for Dublin Midwest Gino Kenny and Cllr Madeleine Johansson have welcomed the recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use which has recommended that the state look at a policy change in favour of a health led approach when it comes to drug use. The Citizen's Assembly concluded last weekend with votes by the members on various recommendations.

legislates for these recommendations as quickly as possible. This is a once in a generation opportunity that must be grasped in order to save lives and to chart a different course in drugs policy in this country. A large number of Assembly members also voted for the legalisation and regulation of Cannabis, this is something that could be very easily done by legislation."

Gino Kenny TD said: "I want to welcome these progressive recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use. The recommendation that Ireland should change the status quo when it comes to drug use is progressive. While the recommendation does not explicitly state support for decriminalisation it is clear that the majority of people voted for alternative measures to criminalisation of drug use.

Cllr Madeleine Johansson added: "In my role as a councillor I sit on the board of the Clondalkin Drugs and Alcohol Task Force and I was delighted to see a recommendation from the Citizens' Assembly to increase investment into prevention and education. Local drugs projects work tirelessly with very little funding to provide services for people in addiction and recovery.

It is a clear message to the government to change course in relation to six decades of the failed policy of criminalisation. "It is now imperative that the government

They also provide education and prevention services in schools and communities. It's time for the government to recognise this work and increase core funding for these services immediately."



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AN COSÁN CEO SCOOPS NATIONAL AWARD FOR CHARITY LEADERSHIP!

An Cosán CEO Heydi Foster scooped the Excellence in Charity Leadership Award at Charities Institute Ireland's Charity Excellence Awards 2023, which were held in the Round Room of the Mansion House recently.

The award is presented to an executive head of a charity who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and management skills in the effective operation of the organisation, whose vision permeates throughout the entire charity, and who has shown outstanding leadership in driving its success. In his preamble before announcing the winner at the ceremony, MC Anton Savage said the award was going to someone whose visionary leadership had not only transformed their organisation, but also left an indelible mark on the entire sector.

"They have set the standard for governance and management excellence,

fostering a culture of continuous growth and collaboration," he said. Mr Savage said that, under Ms Foster's guidance, the judging panel felt that An Cosán had expanded significantly, ensuring financial stability and making a profound societal impact. Specifically of Ms Foster, he said: "Their influence extends beyond their organisation, shaping national policies and contributing to vital societal conversations. Their exceptional leadership has opened doors to education and life-changing opportunities for countless individuals".

On receiving the award, Ms Foster said: "I am delighted to have received this year's Excellence in Charity Leadership Award. I'm humbled and proud of this recognition from my peers, having led non-profits in my native Guatemala, in Boston and, for the last 18 years, my home that is Dublin. "It

has been my privilege to work with - and grow - our outstanding team to build on the incredible vision of An Cosán," Ms Foster continued. "I've found a wonderful second family with them.

"Leadership is core to our work. We're committed to learning, leadership and enterprise and I learn from, and am inspired by, the leadership I see around me every day - my talented and determined management team and other colleagues throughout An Cosán who live our values and lead the way in each of their roles. But also in the learners, who lead in their own learning journeys, in their homes and families, and in their communities.

Ms Foster added: "It is this powerful everyday leadership that inspires me every single day to continue on the path to a better future that is the heart of our vision in An Cosán." Everyone at An



Cosán community education centre in Jobstown, Tallaght, was delighted to see their CEO recognised for her exceptional leadership with the awarding of the Excellence in Charity Leadership Award. Anna Durkan, Chair of An Cosán's

Board of Directors, said "This award recognises that, since taking up the CEO role four years ago, Heydi has proven An Cosán is an organisation of national importance, influencing policy and government practice, while cementing its place within

the heart of the communities it serves."

To find out about An Cosán's adult education, early years' education and care, counselling and parenting support services, see www.ancosan.ie.

SINN Féin CANDIDATES LAUNCHED FOR RATHFARNHAM AND FIRHOUSE



Sinn Féin have announced that four candidates will be running in the local elections in 2024 covering Rathfarnham-Templeogue and Firhouse-Bohernabreena areas. The four are Anne Dillon, Enda Fanning, Róisín Mannion and Sarah Holland. Sarah Holland and Enda Fanning both previously served on South Dublin Council and are eager to take the seats again this coming term. The Devlin Plunkett Sinn Féin cumann said "Sinn Féin is launching an ambitious and positive campaign to get four councillors elected covering Rathfarnham, Knocklyon, Firhouse and Greenhills areas. "We look forward to engaging with our communities on the big issues facing us - housing, childcare costs and access to health services that are really hitting our families hard. "Political change will start locally and we hope to get a strong mandate to tackle these issues."

Cllr. Charlie O'Connor PC Living in Tallaght ...Working for Tallaght



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HAROLD CROSS TALLAGHT MUSICAL SOCIETY (HXT) PRESENTS LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Following on from their 2022 heavenly production of "Sister Act", Harold Cross Tallaght Musical Society (HXT), are excited to take to the stage with their production of the 1960's classic film, "Little Shop of Horrors", this November in the Civic Theatre, Tallaght.

Howard Ashman and Alan Menken (Disney's The Little Mermaid, Beauty And The Beast, and Aladdin) are the creative geniuses behind what has become one of the most popular shows in the world. The meek floral assistant Seymour Krelborn stumbles across a new breed of plant he names "Audrey II" - after his coworker crush. This foul-mouthed, R&B-singing carnivore promises unending fame and fortune to the down and out Krelborn as long as he keeps feeding it, BLOOD. Over time, though, Seymour discovers Audrey II's out of this world origins and intent towards global domination!

Led by their talented and committed production team of Director, Ciarán Mooney, Musical Director, Dermot O'Callaghan, and

Choreographer, Erica Delaney, the cast are enthusiastically awaiting an audience and welcome you to join them in downtown "Skid Row" between the 7th and 11th of November.

Harold's Cross Tallaght are delighted to be back in their "stage home" at the Civic Theatre, Tallaght, and ready to share this deviously delicious Broadway and Hollywood sci-fi smash musical, which has devoured the hearts of theatre-goers for over 30 years.

Tickets are available from the Civic Theatre website www.civictheatre.ie, or by calling the Box Office on 01 462 7477, for €22, excluding a €2 booking fee. Why not make a night of it, and avail of the wonderful meal deal and ticket combo on offer available. Enjoy a pre-show dinner in the delicious Betelnut Café, and digest the delights of this musical comedy for a brilliant value of €45.

Join us "Somewhere That's Green", as we remind you not to "Feed the Plant", in "Little Shop of Horrors" at the Civic Theatre, Tallaght, from November 7th - 11th.



WIN WIN WIN - TICKETS TO LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS AT THE CIVIC THEATRE

Harold Cross Tallaght Musical Society (HXT) presents their production of Little Shop of Horrors at the Civic Theatre from the 7th till the 11th of November.

To win two to the performance on Thursday the 9th of November, please email your name, address and telephone number to info@newsgroup.ie by Monday the 6th of November 2023.

PURE MILE AWARDS NIGHT 2023

The Pure Mile Awards was back again this year in the Brooklodge Hotel in Macreddin, Aughrim, on Thursday 26th of October to celebrate the hard work and achievements of all the Pure Mile Volunteers in Cleaning Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. The Pure Mile is an environmental, community, heritage initiative, established by the Pure, which encourages communities and groups living in rural areas of Wicklow, South Dublin and Dun-Laoghaire, to adopt a mile of road, or miles of road, in their local area, or in the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands and organise litter picks, clean-ups, anti-dumping campaigns, research information about their local wildflowers, plants, trees, animals, and the built, cultural, and social heritage of an area. The awards night is an opportunity for all of the Pure Mile Groups to meet up for one night, in one room, and celebrate all of their hard work and achievements in Cleaning Up The Wicklow/Dublin Uplands, and for Pure to thank them all.

Certificates of Participation were presented to all Pure Mile Groups on the night by the Mayor of South Dublin, Cllr. Alan Edge, Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, and the Cathaoirleach of Dun-Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Cllr. Denis O'Callaghan.

2023 was the fourteenth year of the Pure Mile, with the largest number of groups and volunteers involved in the project since it was established in 2009. In the first year the Pure Mile had 5 miles of road (8.5 kilometres), and over the years the project has grown extensively to involve communities, groups, individuals, scouts, beavers, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, hiking groups, businesses and organisations, who have collectively improved and enhanced over 900 miles (1,450 kilometres), of road, mountains, woodlands, valleys, forestries, upland amenities, car parks, and even some coastal areas, with the removal of tonnes of illegal dumping and litter from the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. Over 2,600 litter picks and clean-ups were organised in 2023 and additional projects included, natural heritage, built heritage, community, biodiversity, and education.

On the night, Mayor of South Dublin, Cllr. Alan Edge, commented, 'I can't overstate the importance of the Pure Mile in South Dublin. The trojan work that Pure and its army of volunteers do in keeping our uplands clean represents the best in local environmental action and community engagement at its finest.'

All groups received a Pure Mile Certificate of Participation, native Irish trees, and all are included in the popular Pure Mile Calendar, which was also launched on the night. There were a number of Certificates of Recognition presented on the night with cash prizes reaching over €6,000 distributed to groups which will further assist them in their local projects to improve and enhance the Wicklow/Dublin Uplands. A number of walking groups and businesses were recognised on the night for their work to 'Clean-Up The South Dublin Uplands' with regular litter picks and clean-ups of South Dublin Upland Roads, Mountain Trails, Woodlands and Forest Entrances. Litter picks / clean-ups were organised throughout the year and areas covered included,

Glenasmole Road, Cunard Road, Piperstown Road, Glassamucky Road, Castle Kelly Road, Ballymorefinn, Kilakee Car Park, The White Road, Seehan Road, Stone Cross, and all sections of the R115 Military Road.

Certificates of Recognition and cheques for €250 were presented to, Trekkers Walking Group Pure Miles, Wayfarers Walking Group Pure Miles, Átha Cliath Clean Up the Uplands Team Pure Miles, Glencree Walking Group Pure Miles, The Bog Trotters Hill Walking Group Pure Miles, and Friends of the South Dublin Uplands Pure Miles. Daiichi Sankyo Pure Miles were also presented with a Certificates of Recognition for Corporate Engagement.

The Pure Mile is the perfect opportunity for communities and groups who want to make a positive contribution to the South Dublin Uplands environment, and assists people in improving and enhancing the place they recreate in. Special interest groups such as, walking groups, cycling groups, running groups, hiking groups, businesses, and organisations, adopt a mile, or miles of road, in the South Dublin Uplands and help Pure to 'Clean Up The South Dublin Uplands'.

Pure provides all groups with Pure Mile signage, Pure Mile high-vis vests, Pure Mile bags, gloves, and litter pickers, and Pure also removes all of the rubbish collected by the groups.

Ian Davis, Pure Manager commented on the success and growth of the 2023 Pure Mile in South Dublin, 'The South Dublin Uplands is a unique landscape and environment and although Pure has removed tonnes of illegal dumping from this beautiful scenic landscape, we only have one truck and one driver, so we are unable to remove the unsightly small-scale litter from the area. The Pure Mile Groups make a huge difference to the appearance of the South Dublin Uplands and I would like to congratulate all of the Pure Mile Volunteers involved. Pure want to engage with all types of groups and businesses who are interested in 'Cleaning-Up The South Dublin Uplands' and we will assist in any way they can. Pure was launched in 2006 and since that date it has proven extremely successful, in both reducing illegal dumping, and engaging with all demographics in society. It's the first project of its kind in Ireland involving a multi stakeholder approach collaboration with, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, Wicklow County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, Coillte, National Parks & Wildlife Service, and the Wicklow Uplands Council.

If any groups, communities, individuals, schools, walking groups, cycling groups, scouts, businesses, ANYONE, want to get involved in Pure Mile, they can contact Pure at info@pureproject.ie or download an application from www.pureproject.ie/what-we-do/the-pure-mile/. You can also write to; Pure Project, Unit 6 B, Riverside Business Centre, Tinahely, Co Wicklow, Y14 R978, and they will post out all the information, or request an application form and information pack by phoning Pure on 0402 28662.

Further information on Pure can be found on www.pureproject.ie

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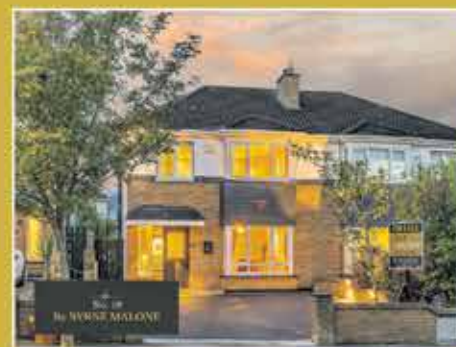
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MOTORING LIFE WITH

ORA puts the 'Funky Cat' among the pigeons



By Breda Corrigan

Great Wall Motor (GWM) is the largest manufacturer of SUVs in mainland China, and their sub-brand ORA has made inroads into Europe recently with its all-electric Funky Cat. According to GWM, ORA stands for 'Open, Reliable and Alternative', and their mission for Funky Cat owners is that it will "accompany you through the rich experiences of life and share the joy of discovery and connection". The Funky Cat will be joined by a four-door saloon (to rival the Tesla Model 3) later this year, and a compact SUV is due to reach our shores next year.

Impressive Standard Equipment

The ORA Funky Cat is available in Ireland in two trims: 300 PRO and 400 PRO + (plus) with an electric range of up to 310km and 420km respectively. Standard equipment is hugely impressive across both trim levels, with key standard features such as quilted leatherette seats, electric driver and passenger seats, automatic LED headlights with High Beam Assist, Blindspot Detection, Adaptive Cruise Control, Traffic Jam Assist, Lane Keep Assist, Lane Centering Function, Rear Traffic Cross Alert & Brake, keyless entry & start, power-folding door mirrors, auto air-conditioning, voice ("Hello ORA") and face recognition system, rear central armrest with cupholders, auto dimming rear view mirror, 360-degree surround HD camera, reversing camera, rear parking sensors, satellite navigation, internet radio, wireless phone charging, 18-inch alloy wheels, and a 10.25-inch digital instrument display, along with a 10.25-inch touchscreen display. Additional standard features in the 400 PRO + include an opening panoramic sunroof, power tailgate, heated & ventilated front seats, heated steering wheel, massage function on both front seats, memory function on electric driver seat, rear privacy glass, front parking sensors, and Auto Park Assist.

For buyers looking to personalise their car, the Funky Cat can be ordered with a contrasting roof colour, while optional

interior colour options include cream/red or green/beige. Buyers of the entry-level 300 PRO can specify heated front seats, a heated steering wheel and privacy glass (Option Pack 1) if they so wish.

Spacious Cabin.

Powering the Funky Cat 300 PRO is a 48kWh Lithium Iron Phosphate battery with a claimed consumption of 16.7kWh per 100km, and a 0-100km/h acceleration time of 8.3-seconds. The 63kWh Ternary Lithium battery in the 400 PRO + model has a claimed consumption of 16.5kWh per 100km, and a 0-100km/h sprint time of 8.2-seconds. Both models produce 171PS (169bhp) and 250Nm of torque, with power being sent to the cars' front wheels in both cases. Measuring in at 4235mm long, the Funky Cat is similar in length to a Mini Countryman, VW ID.3, MG4 and an Opel Crossland, and its 2650mm wheelbase ensures that up to five occupants can enjoy good levels of leg, elbow and head room. The standard 228-litre boot capacity behind the rear seats can be expanded to 858-litres when the rear seats are folded down.

Charging Options.

The Funky Cat is compatible with single phase AC charging up to 6.6kW, three phase AC charging up to 11kW, and DC charging up to 64kW. This means that a 15-80% charge at a three phase charger can be completed in 3.2 hours (300 PRO) or 4.3 hours (400 PRO +), with a 20-80% charge at a DC charger taking just 39 minutes and 45 minutes respectively. The Funky Cat comes with a Type 2 charging cable as standard, along with a 3 pin domestic charging cable.

Five-Star NCAP Rating.

The Funky Cat comes with intuitive voice and face recognition software so that all you have to do is slide in, fasten your

seatbelt and begin your journey. To keep occupants safe on their journey, the Funky Cat is packed with next-generation driver-assistance features as standard, and it has achieved a five-star NCAP safety rating as a result. The cabin is dominated by a slick twin-screen layout, with the stylish rotary gear-selector located where you would traditionally find the gearstick in a manual car. The suede-effect dash top looks and feels plush, and the faux-leather seats are comfortable and supportive in equal measure. Finding a suitable position behind the steering wheel is easy, as there are plenty of adjustment options on offer, and the exposed stitching on the doors and dashboard creates a relatively upmarket look.

Test Car Details.

My ORA Funky Cat 400 PRO + test car was finished in Celestial Blue with a black roof and door mirrors. Thanks to an instant surge of torque, the car feels brisk and willing to power ahead in a fuss-free manner, while the overall ride quality is impressive. Driving through city streets is an easy task, and the car takes motorway journey's in its stride too. The car feels well planted on the road, and its pliant suspension works in its favour too. The new ORA Funky Cat successfully blends retro design, futuristic tech, and an impressive array of standard equipment with affordability and low running costs. It is an extremely capable small EV that is sure to appeal to motorists looking to make the transition into EV motoring.

Warranty & Pricing.

The ORA Funky Cat comes with a 5-year unlimited mileage warranty, a 5-year roadside assistance package, and an 8-year/160,000km battery warranty as standard. Currently the 300 PRO and 400 PRO + are priced at €31,995 and €39,995 respectively (inclusive of a €5,000 SEAI Grant & VRT relief, where applicable).



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LOCAL GYMNASTS BEND OVER BACKWARDS FOR BARNARDOS AT OLYMPIAN 'CARTHWEEL-ATHON'

Over 1,900 young local gymnasts in Dublin have helped to raise €4,435 for Ireland's leading children's charity Barnardos. Olympian Gymnastics held their annual 'Cartwheel-a-thon' over an 8 week period over the summer months and involved gymnasts ranging in age from 3 to 16 years old. Since 2016, the group has fundraised for the children's charity, raising over €99,000.

Olympian Gymnastics is a non-competitive, gymnastics-based movement club that prides itself on social development and interaction through gymnastics programs for children between 18 months to 16 years old. They conduct over 100 classes a week across 5 clubs in south Dublin, based in Templeogue, Knocklyon, Ballinteer, Milltown, Greenhills and Rathgar.

Lucas Rodrigues, General Manager at Olympian

Gymnastics said "We love fundraising for Barnardos and the amazing kids they support through our annual Cartwheelathon. The values Barnardos uphold perfectly resonate with ours - prioritising the well-being of children, fostering community support, and promoting inclusivity regardless of background or ability. The kids get super pumped for the fundraiser every year, and they go home excited, telling their families about it and how they're raising money for a good cause. Every Friday at our GymCAMPS, it's a blast with music, clapping, and fun moves - cartwheels, forward rolls, you name it! Our community is awesome; everyone is always up to support Barnardos and their work. It's a real source of pride for all of us!"

Mary Gamble Barnardos Director of Fundraising said "Olympian Gymnastics' Cartwheel-a-thon is always a

really exciting fundraiser for us and the ongoing support from the group ensures we can be there for vulnerable children to help them achieve their full potential.

At Barnardos we believe childhood lasts a lifetime. We are very grateful to everyone Olympian Gymnastics and to the children and families involved with the group for their valued support.' Barnardos works with children affected by childhood trauma, including the impact of: poverty; domestic violence; child abuse or neglect; parental mental health issues; separation; bereavement; and parental addiction. They provide practical support like food and fuel vouchers and other basic necessities, as well as vital emotional and therapeutic family support.

How donations help: €10 provides a child with a nutritious breakfast for



one week at a Barnardos Breakfast Club €30 helps children and families attending Barnardos'

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TEENSPACE IN TYMON PARK OPENS



Pictured at the Opening of the Teenspace in Tymon Park (Limekiln) were (L to R) Councillor Carly Bailey, Councillor Mick Duff, Mayor Alan Edge and Councillor Lilian Gueret.

TALLAGHT MARTIAL ARTS TAKES THE BRISTOL OPEN BY STORM

Tallaght Martial Arts (TMA) were out in force for the recent Bristol Open taking home 28 Medals of the 108 taken by the Irish in multiple disciplines. TMA recorded 3 first place finishes, 13 silvers and 12 bronze! Jodie Browne taking to the mats in the invitation only 5K Challenge culminated in a nail biting final where Jodie was narrowly beaten. Cheered on by a tiny but raucous TMA crowd. Jodie showed true champion spirit in her attitude on losing out on such a huge prize. She is up again this weekend in the World Combat Games, the only Irish Athlete to qualify for the event.

Outstanding Gold Medal performances came from Reece Doyle in the -42kg Light Contact section. A clash of team mates in both Junior Kick light and -37kg OC Light Contact

sections seeing 1st and 2nd place on the podium going to a TMA Athlete. Callum O'Connor and Naman Shrivastava fought it out in the -69kg Junior Kick Light section with Callum taking the Gold. Similarly in the -37kg OC Light Contact Edward Comerford and Dara Kelly-Clarke went head to head in the final with Edward taking the Gold. Edward also went on to win a Silver in -37kg OC Points and a Bronze in -42kg Points.

Ellen Mc Caughey took Silver in 5 different sections, sharing 2 with Team mate Lisa McCabe in the Junior and Senior Tag Team Challenge. Lisa also took home a bronze medal in her single points fighting section. Amy Comerford and AnnMarie O'Grady taking a silver and bronze a piece in their respective sections. AnnMarie's scintillating final had the whole crowd behind her. She focuses now on Senior WAKO World Championships in November.

Isabel Golding took 2 Bronze in two sections on the Saturday after some tough fights in the -47kg and +47kg Light contact sections, Gar Ryan & Eryn Birkhead also taking bronze in -94kg Senior Men's Point fighting and -50kg Junior Light Contact sections respectively. Anna White and Sarah Cassidy coming up against clubmates Ellen McCaughey and Lisa McCabe in the Semi Finals of the Junior Ladies Tag Team with a TMA Jersey filled Tatami. The girls put their best foot forward with Anna and Sarah narrowly losing out taking the bronze in the section and Ellen and Lisa progressing to the Finals where they ended with a Silver medal.

Naman Shrivastava alongside Team Ireland and BMA Tajus Kruminis also took a Silver medal in Junior Tag Team. Naman also taking a bronze in the -69kg Light Contact. Overall a fantastic turnout for the Tallaght Martial Arts Team. With



Silver for Ellen



Gold for Reece

World Combat Games and Senior WAKO World Championships on the horizon it will be a busy few weeks for the club.

JODIE BROWNE - ONLY IRISH KICKBOXER IN THE WORLD COMBAT GAMES

Jodie Browne is one of the most decorated Kickboxers not only in Ireland but in the World. Jodie has been kickboxing since she was 4 in Tallaght Martial Arts running in the footsteps of her sister Keri (another talented kickboxer). Alongside a talented team of athletes and world class coaches Dave Heffernan and Martin Bannon in Tallaght Martial Arts, Jodie has grown into a true Champion.

She balances the demands of college, where she attends Maynooth University along with a rigorous training schedule of 6 days a week, multiple times a day. Regardless of this Jodie has always continued to help her team mates from the youngest to the most experienced with a motivating speech or a consoling hug. She pushes her team mates to better while always learning herself.

Jodie is a multiple World and European Champion at the highest level of Kickboxing with World Association of Kickboxing Organizations (WAKO). Jodie has transitioned from Champion Junior to Champion Senior in the last 6 years holding her titles and continues to outshine the competition. Jodie will be once again defending her World Title in the WAKO World Championships in November of this year.

Most notably of Jodie's immense accolades, representing Team Ireland, Jodie took home a Bronze Medal from the recent European Olympic Games - the first time Kickboxing has ever been included in an Olympic event. "To wear the rings as I've said before is a dream come true. My childhood self would be crying right now. Not only to wear the rings but to secure my first ever Olympic medal brings so many emotions, some I've never experienced before."

Up Next! Jodie is once again representing her country in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - the only Irish Kickboxer to qualify for the prestigious Sport Accord World Combat Games. She competes at the highest level in the World.



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