

Maesteg Monthly

Agony Aunt
Christmas
feature

Tackling
schools post
Covid



**OSPREY
BOWL
FINAL:**

"WAS THE
CHALLENGE ACCEPTED? YES,
IT WAS."

FEATURING

'The Refugee
Crisis' from
a guest
writer

Including a
Christmas T.V Guide
and a festive recipe!

Contents page

Agony Aunt feature	3-4
Sport Fixtures	5
Is Behaviour Worse in Schools?.....	6-7
Maesteg Fall Short in Osprey Bowl Final	8-11
The Refugee Crisis	12-15
December T.V Guide	16-17
A Christmas Recipe	18-20
A Christmas Wordsearch	21
Marvel of the Month	22
Quote of the month	23



AGONY AUNT

Mental health at christmas

Christmas, for a lot of people, can be a joyful time to celebrate with family, however this is not the case for everyone, as a lot of people from all age groups, find this time of year to be one of the most stressful times.

Christmas can be a time that causes a rapid downfall in people's mental health, some reasons for this may be that they feel more alone than ever, meanwhile they are seeing, what feels like everybody else, spending time with people that they love. Individuals from other religions may be feeling overlooked, as Christmas seems to be such a big event, feeling like their own traditions are not appreciated enough.

Another common issue is to do with money. Recently, everything seems to be going up in prices, feeling pressurised to put aside money for presents, or panic stricken about the tasks that need to be completed for a perfect day.

These issues are very common, and are very real. If you ever feel like you need support, reaching out and opening up to somebody that you know can be beneficial, but if you cannot find support in any one around you, there are many places that can be called in order to find somebody who can speak to you and help you out.

Here are two helpful resources if you ever feel like you need to speak to someone.

-Mindhelplines, call 0300 123 339 to ask about mental health problems, or to find other helpful resources near you home,

they offer support Monday-Friday (exempt bank holidays) from 10.00-18.00.

-Call Helpline, call 0800 132 737, this helpline is open 24/7 to listen to your issues and offer support.

These are great places for if you ever feel stressed about anything at all, even if it is not Christmas time.

If you feel as if money is a large issue personally, there are plenty of places online where people are selling old items that they do not want for an extremely cheap price, the most popular places seem to be Facebook Marketplace, and eBay.co.uk.

Written by Holly Williams





SPORT FIXTURES

Maesteg school offers a wide range of sporting activities such as rugby, football, hockey and netball. November and December have been two very busy months with lots of different fixtures.

On Thursday the 24th of November our year nines took part in a rugby match against Byn Tawe and on the 28th of November the year tens took part in a rugby match against Llangynwyd. On the 29th of November the year sevens played against Treorchy – as written in our last edition- and the year seven and eight girls took part in a football match against CCYD. For the last of the November fixtures on the 23rd and 30th of November the year sevens

and year elevens took part in a cross-country school championship. Moving on to December, Friday 2nd December for year 8 rugby there was a development festival in Ysgol Bae Baglan and on Thursday 8th December there was a development festival in CCYD for Year 9 rugby. Finally, there was a Non dewar shield festival for year 10 rugby on Wednesday the 14th of December. We are very proud of everybody who took part. And encourage anyone who is interested in taking part in these activities to give it a go.

Written by Ellie Thomas

Is behaviour worse in schools post COVID?



Teachers across the UK are seeing a rise in poor and problematic behaviour after COVID. Members at the NASUWT teachers Union Cymru Annual conference are reporting a significant increase in poor attendance and attitude to learning, alongside a failure to follow instructions or demonstrate respect to teachers and their peers. Dr Patrick Roach, NASUWT General Secretary stated that;

“The disruption to normal routines caused by the pandemic appeared to have led to the deterioration in the behaviour of some pupils” he came to this conclusion as members of staff are reporting more incidents of pupils being abusive and disrespectful towards them. There has been a general sense among members of NASUWT that overall rudeness, verbal abuse, and disruptive behaviour has increased since the pandemic.

While students return to school after such an extended period away, it may be that their

anxieties around the pandemic changed their behavior. This could result in pupils failing to attend school or becoming unfocused on their studies. This will change behavior as it will affect grades and friendship dynamics. The result could prompt pupils to become short-tempered and aggravated.

All of us can say covid changed our lives. We got into an alternative routine of waking up later and going through our lessons at a leisurely pace. Sometimes we became unmotivated, sometimes we completed all the work provided. The lack of motivation is understandable. Students have gone from having the flexibility of no deadlines to doing a substantial amount of work in preparation for exams.

This can affect behaviour as these two expectations are vastly different and expected behaviour contrasts between each scenario. However, disrespectful behaviour is abhorrent, especially in schools.

Written by Elodie Hocking

MAESTEG

FALL SHORT IN OSPREY BOWL FINAL

By Jack Tozer



Maesteg's year 9 took on 'Ysgol Cwm Brombil' in a tense encounter on an impressive artificial ground in Llandarcy House of Sport. This match-up was worthy of its 'final' status as the teams left no blade of grass untouched in a fast-paced and exhilarating match up.

Initially, Maesteg took the ball forward with great intent as forward players,

Gethyn Richards and Luca Treharne' threatened with their bombarding runs. However, Maesteg's big hits were met with strong collisions from the Cwm Brombil defence which resulted in 4 turnovers in the opening stages due to a lack of supporting Maesteg players.

The impressive player number twelve of Ysgol Cwm Brombil's was threatening to Maesteg in all aspects of his game. His kicking from penalties and open

play combined with his ability to shrug off tacklers with the ball in hand made him a prominent issue for the Maesteg back line.

Brombil's team members with positions on the inside centre and fullback had impressive kicking ability that made it difficult for Maesteg to issue a threat early on as losing the ball would quite often force their back three to recollect the ball inside their own half and begin to break once more. Therefore, resulting in the game's first try going to Cwm Brombil. Their mounted pressure deemed too much for Maesteg who were turned over on their own twenty-two metre line and caught shorthanded on the blindside, leaving the alert winger to run in under the posts untouched.

The try only boosted

Maesteg's moral it seemed as they were forced to respond more urgently. Riley, on the right wing, sparked a sense of excitement into the Maesteg supporters who watched with encouragement and faith. His confidence to take on his opposing number led to many successful carries and led to Maesteg's first entry into the Cwm Brombil twenty-two and were consequently awarded back-to-back penalties, the second of which was kicked to the corner, received by the Maesteg's pack, and drove onwards by the strong and cohesive maul. The maul splintered off and was scored by a quick moment of thinking by Iestyn Ware, who spotted a gap near the Cwm Brombil line and dove to score, and Oscar, who plays as an 'outside half' with

his successful conversion, the boys in black and amber led at the break.

The Maesteg squad must have been left inspired by their end of half action and their coach's words as they came flying out the changing blocks, as though they wished the first half had not come to a close. An array of strong tackles, smart turnovers, and enthusiastic handling, they really started to project Maesteg as favourites to go on and take the game. Although, while receiving pressure on their own line, Maesteg were able to keep Cwm Brombil out, win the ball, and ship it along the line to winger, Rio Davies, who breathtakingly beat his man on the outside and dashed down the touchline to score an exceptional 60 metre run in try.

With Maesteg's tails up, Cwm Brombil were presented with a big challenge if they wanted

to snatch the game away from. Their opponents. Was the challenge accepted? Yes, it was. Three quick fire tries saw Brombil turn a five-point disadvantage into a twelve-point lead as they went from down and out to dominant and deserved winners. The first of the tries being a lapse of concentration by the Maesteg defensive line that saw a Brombil player weave his way through tacklers to score off a tap penalty. The second of the three was yet again down to the tactical use of the boot by Brombil as a kick to touch in hope to ease pressure led to an overthrow in the line out and possession being regained on the halfway to run in under the sticks to give them a 12-17 lead.

The final try of the game was a perfect depiction of the game's hectic atmosphere. Maesteg looked to break in the form of try scorer who

was backed to score another wowing try. However, the ball was stolen from him, and he was left to make an astonishing diving tackle on his fellow winger. The attack did not stop there unfortunately for 'The Steg' as the ball was recycled and whizzed along the line to see Cwm Brombil score in the opposite corner to which they had been attacking in moments before.

As the game finished 12-24, the Maesteg boys were left thoroughly disappointed but also proud of their efforts as, unfortunately, they just fell short on the day.



The Refugee

crisis:

AND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

Is the UK really doing enough to support refugees and asylum seekers? Regardless of your statistics numbers and facts, what are the experiences of real people who have come to the UK seeking help? For starters, these refugees must come on dinghies, that are not at all suited to travel in the conditions that these refugees are travelling in. Tragically, many women, men and children lost their lives last year whilst trying to cross the channel to safety. The government failed to provide safer alternatives for these desperate refugees, meaning they must place their lives in insane danger just to have hope to start a new life. If the government is serious about

The UK is failing to meet its obligations and refugees are speaking out about how there is little to no help settling into the UK when they first arrived. A Guardian article, written from the viewpoint of a refugee named Reem Salih, stated that even though she is now settled into her new life, when she and her family first arrived there was little to no help. When she arrived at the airport and explained to the staff that she was a refugee with no money, the staff brushed her off stating that it “was not their problem.” Reem stated “We never imagined the endless challenges that we would face, for the most part,

on our own.” Endless challenges such as finding her footing in an unfamiliar place, registering for a GP and even learning English, a language that seventeen per cent of the world population speak, resulting in 1.35 billion people. The UK Asylum System is extremely complex and is strictly controlled. It is difficult for people seeking Asylum to provide the required evidence to be granted protection. The Home Office can take from months to even years to decide on whether to grant Asylum or not. The National Refugee Council stated that; “In the year ending June 2022, there were over 117,000 people awaiting an initial decision on their asylum case”. The first thing we should be doing as a nation is to make sure these people have a safe passage into the UK as we are all too familiar with the horrific stories and images

of tragedies on the channel. The UK must do more to meet its obligations, this is becoming increasingly obvious as the UK is falling behind other countries in the EU, such as France and Sweden, in terms of how it helps its refugees. Out of 42 European countries, the UK is far behind the likes of Greece and Germany. In fact, it is 21st in its number of refugees and asylum seekers per capital. The UNHCR statistics highlight this as only there were only 132,304 refugees registered in the UK during 2020, compared to other countries such as France had a much higher total of 436,055 refugees registered. The UK's statistics were also a 0.59% decline from 2019's statistics, while France had a 6.9% increase in refugee statistics compared to them in 2019. The population of the UK itself also realizes this as charities, such as the.

Red Cross, are taking it into their own hands to support refugees fleeing into the UK. Returning to the Guardian article, while the Home Office did provide Reem and her family a house and gave them £230 a week to provide for their living costs, if it wasn't for the charity 'Upbeat Communities' supporting the family with trips, providing them with free English lessons, telling them where the local shops were and how to register for a GP and other families inviting them into their homes, the family would have likely never have been able to have settled into the UK due to the UK government providing no more support outside of what was stated above. While the UK government has created some schemes to help refugees such as the Mandate scheme, which resettles people who are recognised by the

UNHCR as refugees and have a family member close by to accommodate them, the government has also brought in the UK Nationality and Borders Bill. This bill would penalize most refugees seeking asylum in the country as those arriving irregularly would be seen as unworthy and unwelcome and be denied access to public funds and family reunions would be restricted. This removes the Mandate scheme's point, which works to reunite refugee families in the UK. The UNHCR UK representative Rossella Pagliuchilor said, "This is likely to damage mental health and hamper interrogation for those recognized as refugees." This bill is based on the premise that refugees should claim Asylum in the first country they arrive in, meaning families that are forced to

stop in other countries, this bill will make it extremely restrictive and difficult for them to be able to claim Asylum in the UK and be reunited with the rest of their family.

In conclusion, the UK is falling behind other countries in terms of helping refugees and is failing to meet its obligations due to extreme restrictive Asylum system with issues such as its inability to provide a safe entry into the UK. My point is the most valid as it contains an experience from the eyes of an actual person with feelings, along with many statistics and pieces of crucial evidence that work together to highlight how the UK government must do more to support refugees seeking asylum inside of the UK.

Written by Gethin Williams

December T.V GUIDE

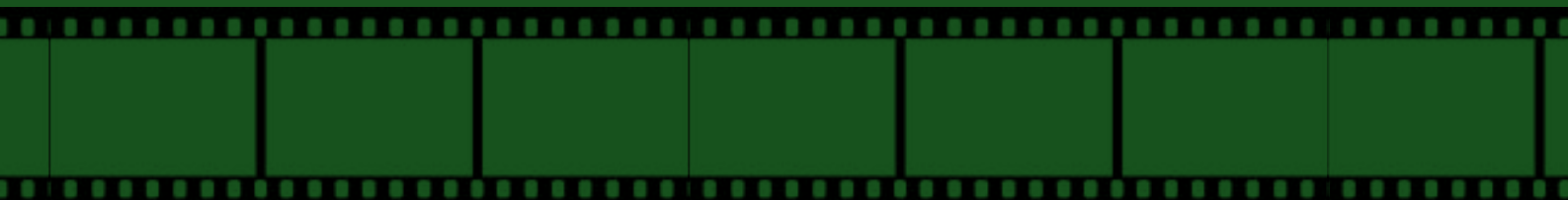


The season of Strictly Come Dancing is ending with less than one week until the final. However, the BBC one show returns for its annual festive special, with a lineup of celebrities taking to the dance floor. This show airs at 5:10 on Christmas day.

Sue Perkins is fronting another special. Channel 4's snow building competition. Celebrities will travel to a snowy mountaintop to build a series of snow creations. Which then will be judged by Swedish sculpting sisters Emilie and Sara Steele. Alongside, renowned British artist Taslim Martin. The Greatest Snowman airs on Boxing Day at 7:30 on Channel 4.



After 8-year-old Kevin misbehaves the night before his family vacation, his mother makes him sleep in the attic. To his surprise the next morning he finds himself to be home alone. He is excited to finally get the house to himself. However, he must protect his family home from a pair of clumsy burglars.





As a toddler, Buddy was mysteriously transported to the North Pole and raised by Santa's elves. He is now on a mission to find his real dad in New York City.

The story of siblings, Kate, and Teddy Pierce. Whose Christmas Eve plan to catch Santa on cameras turns into an unexpected journey with Santa himself.



Frozen follows the story of siblings Princess Anna and Queen Elsa. Elsa has secret icy powers which become apparent at her coronation. Elsa then flees and hides in a snow palace in the mountains. Princess Anna teams up with an iceman, reindeer, and Olaf the snowman to find her sister.

Christmas tree chocolate pastry



Ingredients

- 2 Chilled Ready Rolled Puff Pastry Sheets
- 4 tablespoons chocolate-hazelnut spread
- 1 egg, beaten
- Icing sugar, for dusting

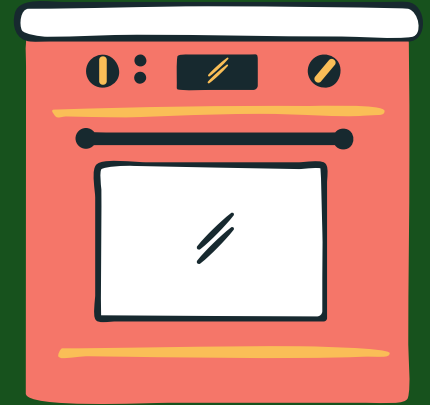
Equipment required

- Baking sheet
- Baking paper
- Sharp knife
- Small palette knife
- Star-shaped cookie cutter around 6-7 cm
- Pastry brush





1. Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C for fan assisted ovens), Gas Mark 6. Line a baking sheet with baking paper.



2. Unroll one of the puff pastry sheets and place on the baking sheet. Spread the chocolate-hazelnut spread over the puff pastry sheet. Unroll the second puff pastry sheet and place on top of the first one.



3. Use a star-shaped cookie cutter to cut out a star from one corner of the layered pastry and set aside. Cut the remaining layered pastry into the shape of a Christmas tree (triangle) with a wide base and trunk. Pull away the excess pastry.





4. Lightly score 2 lines down the middle of the triangle to form a tree trunk approximately 3cm wide. Using the trunk as a guide, cut branches into the sides of the triangle, approximately 2cm wide. Leave the top 5cm as this will be covered with the pastry star.

5. Starting at the top, twist each branch away from you, giving two turns to each branch.



6. Place the pastry star on top of the tree, securing with a little beaten egg. Brush the star and tree with beaten egg.

7. Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until risen and golden brown. Cool for a few minutes before carefully transferring to a wire rack to cool. Transfer to a serving plate or board and dust with icing sugar to serve.





CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

young reporters wordsearch



DECEMBER
CAROL
CHRISTMAS
ELF
HOLLY
SNOWMAN
SNOWFLAKE
BAUBLE
TREE
PRESENTS
SANTA
REINDEER

MARVEL OF THE MONTH



Evie Fear

December's Marvel of the Month is Evie Fear. Since September, Evie has tirelessly worked compiling, designing and editing the Maesteg Monthly to much acclaim. Miss Anthony and Miss Baines would like to wish Evie 'good luck' in all her applications and future journalistic endeavours. We thank you for your dedication and commitment to our school's monthly publication. Diolch a da iawn, Evie!



Quote of the month

"Christmas works like
glue. It keeps us all
sticking together." –
Rosie Thomas

