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# Hello From The Editor

**Welcome to the September edition of the Gazette.**  
 This month, the Western Park Scarecrow Trail takes centre stage. This as fast becoming a must-see event in West Leicester. Along with last year's Christmas lights display, beer festivals and pumpkin races, a regular community spirit has developed - and long may it continue!

This month, Leicester's only pub theatre, Upstairs @ The Western reopens and we head to Splash in the Soar on Castle Park. There hasn't been a Riverside Festival for two years but now toes are being dipped in the water as things slowly get back to normal.

Regular features continue with a watery themed article from Roger Blackmore looking at the history of the Leicester Rowing Club based at Bede Island. Helen Knott asks for a bit of honesty from our leaders, Carey Tunstall has September's gardening advice, there's the latest local policing update and the fly-tipping anger continues on the letters page.

And the ever present Braintazing sudoku and crossword lurk on the inside pack page.

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# Events Diary

**Free Thurs Club:** 2pm. **Meet & Eat:** Weds 5pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narb' Rd.

**Hall @ St Anne's, Letchworth Rd: Knit & Natter:** 1.30pm, 4th Tues. **Tues Drop-in:** 1.30-3.00pm, 3rd Tues. **Weds Club:** 2.30pm, 1st Weds. **Pram Club:** Weds 9.30-11.00am. **Fri Coffee Morns:** 10.00am. **Responding To Change Workshop:** 9th Oct, Tel - 07763 785 808.

**Free Tea/Coffee @ Community Hub:** Weds, 2-4pm, St Paul's & St Augustine's Centre, Kirby Rd

**Free drop-in Coffee Morns:** Tues. 10-12 noon. St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Glenfield Rd East.

**Perfectly Edible UK's Community Shop.** Fri & Sat. Fri 11-2/3pm. West End Centre, Andrewes Street.

**Curve: Six (Musical) 28 Sept-3 Oct. Hairspray 4-9th Oct, Tell Me On A Sunday 12-16 Oct, Darren Brown 19-23 Oct.**

**Upstairs @ Western: How To be Amazingly Happy - 24 Sept. Artwalk - 28 Sept, Prix Rossello - 29 Sept, Love Fool / Mates - 4 Oct, To Pretty To Punch - 15 Oct, Doomscroll - 20 Oct.**

**Free Music Taster Day:** Sat 9th Oct. Woodgate Rec Centre. Booking - [office@woodgateresidents.org](mailto:office@woodgateresidents.org)

**@DM Hall: Russell Howard - 25/6 Sept, Rob Bryden - 28 Sept, Eddie Reader - 29 Sept,**

**Little Theatre: Blue Stockings. 27 Sept - 2nd Oct. 6 Feet Away 4-9 Oct. My Mother Said.. 18-23 Oct.**

**Y Theatre: Evening With Sean Rider - 1 Oct.**

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## SPLASH ON THE SOAR

After the dark days of lockdown, it felt like a return to normal, over the 11-12th September at Castle Gardens, as Splash on the Soar brought live music and street performance back to the city's canal side.

Local bands played acoustic sets, strolling street artists, including some balloon-modelling clowns, brought bags of fun to the festival, while a Bubble Fairy used her magic wand to entertain the kids and capture passers-by inside giant bubbles.



Youngsters were able to slide down an inflatable helter-skelter and check out their muscles on a 'test your strength' game or get themselves fully face-painted... so did one or two grown ups!

There was also the chance to watch archive footage of Britain's waterways in a pop-up cinema, while a petting zoo let children get close to rabbits, guinea pigs and meerkats, as well as to snakes, cockroaches and other creepy-crawlies.

Local artists displayed their work on railings by the canal and the bar and food stalls did brisk business as crowds of visitors meandered through the park enjoying the warm weather and activities.

Deputy City Mayor Cllr Piara Singh Clair said: "With Covid infection rates still high, all our events this year have been of a much smaller-scale to ensure they can be run safely".





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## Leicester Rowing Club

As the 19th century progressed, many towns with waterside frontages held regattas featuring the riverside activities of their area. These grew in popularity and scope, with Henley-on-Thames emerging as the place of the premier regatta of the national season.

Leicester Rowing Club was formed in 1882 on the north side of Leicester, initially using the canal stretch at Belgrave. Like many of its kind, it developed at the same time as commercial canal traffic.

The club's first competition was three years later at the Loughborough and District regatta, with the boats being transported on a specially adapted horse drawn dray, and the first Leicester Regatta was held that same year on a river course ending in Abbey Park.

By the early 20th century, with the River Soar as its home water, the Club had moved to the south east of the city, benefitting from a newly constructed, purpose-built boathouse, partly funded by local businesses. People from other towns marvelled "that anyone in Leicester should be able to do anything in the way of rowing."

In 1940, the base was changed to the present site on the tip of Bede Island.

By the middle of the 20th century, many boat clubs had begun to decline but there were flickers of light in this city with Leicester's Rally of Boats.

This interest in water sport activities has continued with the annual Riverside Festival; a firm favourite on the Leicester calendar.

The club's colours are black and white, with the wyvern as the club insignia. Their custom built boathouse, built in 1996 and partly funded by the UK Lottery, also houses the fleet of De Montfort University Rowing Club and University of Leicester Boat Club.

Leicester Rowing Club, currently has around 100 enthusiastic members and represents the City of Leicester in Regatta and Head Races around Great Britain and worldwide.

The Leicester Regatta is held annually at the start of the regatta season with the event known in the rowing community as the "Henley of the Midlands."  
Roger Blackmore



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## TINY THEATRE - BIG IDEAS

The Upstairs at the Western, Leicester's only pub theatre is back! With a new look, new website and a brand new season of excellent shows.

After a rocky time with uncertainty over new landlords and a pandemic shutting the entire live entertainment industry, Upstairs has survived with the help of an emergency grant from The Arts Council. Upstairs opened its doors again on September 10th with the first show of the new season.

Company director, Alison Dunne, said 'It's been a tough time for many people over the pandemic and we weren't sure we'd survive. Many theatre companies didn't. But we're thrilled to be back with a great season of new work.'

The first show of the season was I, AmDram by Hannah Maxwell - 'One queer Londoner's hilarious and touching tribute to family, hometown and amateur dramatics.' There are more shows to follow including Brazen by local artist Lorna Meehan and a comedic 90's Nostalgia-fest double bill Lovefool & MATES. You can even find out How To Be Amazingly Happy

Alison said: 'I'm really looking forward to Too Pretty To Punch, fabulous multi media spoken word show by Edalia Day in October. And our Wednesday nights with local artists.'

Upstairs is also running a community project called LEFREE - a pun on the pub's LE3 post-code with a flurry of free activities for locals. There are three strands to the project - Crafternoons are craft workshops; Art Walks see guided walks around the West End area each with an LE3 based artist, and there's a free tickets scheme all funded by Everard's Community Excellence Fund.

See [upstairsatthewestern.com](http://upstairsatthewestern.com) for more information about LEFREE and the great shows coming up. If you want to get involved as a volunteer, or for anything else, please get in touch at [hello@upstairsatthewestern.com](mailto:hello@upstairsatthewestern.com)

Alison Dunne - freelance writer, creative writing workshops & bibliotherapy  
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Macrame Crafternoons - Pic Kit Fordham



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## A GREAT CROP OF SCARECROWS

Project Hive is run by the WWCE, a group of local residents raising funds to provide a new community space in Western Park.



When we started to plan this year's Western Park Scarecrow Trail, we all hoped that it would recapture the magic of last year's event. We certainly believed that with life returning to normal, and most things reopened, there could be a negative impact on our event. How wrong we were! Not only was the lovely buzz evident around our streets again, as we chatted to visitors along the route, but the event also raised more than £2600 over the weekend.

We asked trail-goers to vote for their favourite scarecrow and they chose the beautiful Lion, Witch and Wardrobe that resided on a driveway on Letchworth Road.

In our eyes, each and every one of the scarecrows that entered the trail was a winner. It is thanks to the community's willingness to have a go and join in that the trail continues to go from strength to strength. That alongside their insatiable desire for cake and ice cream.

We are currently playing around with ideas for a Christmas event but in the mean time, if you don't hear from us, it's because we have a lot of bid writing to do...

*Kristian Naylor*

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## DE-STRESS YOURSELF

It is fantastic to see the local community opening up and enjoying life. The Hall at St Anne's for example, on Letchworth Road, is now back to a busy programme of activity, and the recent Scarecrow Trail had many of us venturing out and back into the neighbourhood.

It is understandable, however, that we may be feeling emotionally fragile, worn down and uncertain about the changes, particularly with autumn approaching. It won't surprise you that The Office for National Statistics found feelings of loneliness, stress and anxiety have significantly risen during the pandemic, as people have had to adjust physically and emotionally to numerous changes or loss.

Local resident Emma Harrison-Thompson, a therapeutic yoga teacher and Recovery Practitioner suggests: 'It is important to stay as connected as possible, and to practice self-nurturing habits that alleviate stress during these



unpredictable times.' Emma has recently teamed up with ex West End neighbour, Rachel Hayden, Occupational Therapist and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT Tapping) practitioner. Together as 'RAE Training and Therapies', they provide various workshops, courses and one to one programmes to support and empower individuals, company employees and even busy NHS staff. 'Our programmes aim to respond to people's needs - many feel weary and fragile, worried and worn out. We offer compassionate empowerment - giving people space to consider how they feel, and provide gentle yoga sequences, tips on ways to de-stress and some EFT Tapping, to take the edge off any sense of being overwhelmed.'

Emma and Rachel are holding their first joint workshop locally at The Hall St Anne's on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October from 10 - 12.30. It is called 'Responding to Change - Exploring adaptation, resilience and well-being post lockdown.' It is suitable for people of all abilities, but places are limited so early booking is advised. Future events covering other topics are scheduled on 6<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November and 8<sup>th</sup> January. Visit their website at 'RAE Training and Therapies' or contact them on 07763 785 808 for more information.

(Advertorial article)

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# HISTORIC EYESORE

Look closely above the entrance to one of the most beautiful yet dilapidated buildings in the West End, and you will see the initials J R F. Hillborough, as this house was once known, was the home of John Russell Frears, one of Leicester's most successful entrepreneurs of the nineteenth century.

The large red brick house, on the corner of Westcotes Drive and Sykefield Avenue, was built in 1902, and John lived there with his wife and five children until his death in 1937. He was part of the family that started Frears Bakeries. His father (also John) was a grocer based in Osborne Street, in 1864. Sometime later he began to bake and sell bread and moved into new premises at Frog Island.

John Russell joined his father in 1899 and from there, the business flourished, becoming a household name in Leicester and way beyond the city boundary. In 1962, the company was bought by Nabisco,



an American outfit and then traded as Nabisco Frears until 1983. The factory in Woodgate, where my mother worked for many years, was later demolished, and the land is now occupied by an Aldi store.

I have no idea what is happening to the house, which for me, is one of the most stunning pieces of architecture in the whole district. **Tony Shelley**

## FAMILY FRIENDS

**Family Friends is a new informal group for parents to meet and make friends.** It is hosted by Leicester Western Ward Linking Lives. The group meets twice a month during school term times only.

2nd Saturday of the month – New Parks Methodist Church, Battersbee Road, LE3 9LD.

4th Monday of the month – St Paul's Centre, 2 Kirby Road, off Fosse Road Central, LE3 6HS.

Refreshments and children's activities provided.

**Contact Sarah on 07465431585.**

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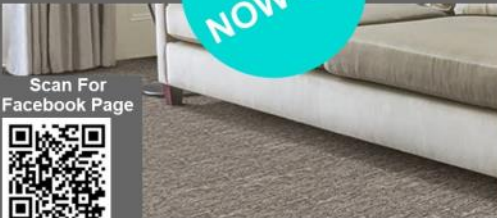


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The aim of the service, which operates across Leicester and Leicestershire, is to support residents who may be struggling with debt or have money management issues. Clients can also access budgeting help and advice on energy, housing, and welfare.

Money Max will provide intensive support for clients involved with CitAL's specialist Money Advice Service, helping them to take the necessary steps to deal with their debt.

Project Workers can support clients throughout their journey with CitAL, from identifying their benefits entitlements right the way through to the confirmation of outcome. This support will involve applications and form filling, speaking to third-parties on behalf of the clients and challenging decisions, as well as building financial capability through financial education.

Money Max Service Leader Jason Angelo said: 'It's already supported 25 clients with over 100 issues since its launch in late July. Over the course of this support, we have provided clients with the appropriate money management skills and advice that will support them long-term. Our trained and experienced project workers have been giving advice to our clients on a variety of issues including housing, energy, and benefits and our support has already proven to be a real lifeline from the feedback that we have received.'

Anyone needing advice can ring **0800 2787970 (City)** and **0800 2787854 (County)** between **9am and 4.30pm on weekdays**. Non-urgent or out of hours enquiries can be made by email from the CitAL website or via:

[moneymax@citizensadviceleicestershire.org](mailto:moneymax@citizensadviceleicestershire.org)

In addition to their generalist services, they also offer the following specialist advice:

### **Macmillan Welfare Benefits - 0300 456 8400**

Citizens Advice and Macmillan Cancer Support are working together to provide welfare benefits advice to people affected by cancer.

### **Mesothelioma Advice - 0800 169 2409**

Benefits advice and compensation support for people with asbestos cancer, delivered in partnership with Mesothelioma UK.

### **Money Advice - 0116 464 7239,**

[moneyadvice@citizensadviceleicestershire.org](mailto:moneyadvice@citizensadviceleicestershire.org)  
Specialised debt and money advice service for County residents, supported by The Money Advice Service.

### **Pension Wise - 0800 134 3944**

Free and impartial government service for the over 50s about the different ways you can take money from your pension.



# WHAT'S ON

## WOODGATE RESOURCES CENTRE



### Music Taster Day

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> Oct 10.00am to 1.00pm. Instruments include keyboard, violin, guitar, cello, drums, singing and possibly others. Children must be booked in. Ring 0116 253 0717 or e-mail [office@woodgateresidents.org](mailto:office@woodgateresidents.org) Thanks to Leicester City Council for funding this event.

### Music Lessons for Children

For five to seventeen year olds. Guitar, Keyboard, Violin, Cello and Drums. Possibly other instruments. Various times depending on instrument, ability and numbers.

Contact Centre for prices and to book

### Free Under Fives Music

Tues 1.30 – 3.00pm. A fun, relaxed music session for babies, toddlers & under fives with their parents/carers. Thanks to Children in Need. Donations to the charity are invited.

### Adult Music

**Violin.** Ring 07443417613 for details. **Guitar.** Ring 07958542564 for details. **Keyboard.** E-mail [rosie\\_music@yahoo.com](mailto:rosie_music@yahoo.com) **Cello.** Contact Centre for details. Possibly other instruments.

### Amika Choir

Meet on Saturdays 2.00 – 5.00pm. Cost £30 for six weeks or £7.50 per week. Ring 0748 667 0745 for further details.

### Senior Citizens Lunch Club

Mondays and Thursdays, 12.30pm. Cost £3.00 for 2 course meal plus tea/coffee.

### Senior Citizens Club

Mondays 2.00 – 4.00pm. Cost £1.50 per session

### Senior Citizens Keep Fit

Thursdays 11.00am – Noon. Cost £1.00 per session. Includes tea & biscuits

### Our Co-op Friendship Group

Tuesdays 10.00am – Noon. Cost £1.00. Learn craft skills and make new friends

### Yoga

Mondays 6.00 – 7.15pm and 7.30pm – 8.45pm. £4.50 per session, unwaged £4.00  
Must book in advance

### Salsa Classes for Beginners

Tuesdays 7.30 – 8.30pm. Cost £6.00 per session or £40 for eight sessions  
No need to bring a partner. Ring 07414 596 481 for further details

### Tetsudo

Martial Arts. Sundays 11.00am - 1.00pm. Adults & children from 11 years. Cost £4.00  
Children £3.00. Ring 01509 260 875 for further information

### JKS Shotojuku Karate Club

Saturdays 9am-10.30am. Sundays 0.15-10.45am Ring 07886 504 516 for details.

**The Centre is also available for bookings.** There are three rooms. The main room is suitable for children's parties & family events. The small rooms are suited for meetings and training events. Contact Centre for rates and availability. Special rates for community group block bookings.

**For more information contact the Woodgate Residents Association**

**Woodgate Resources Centre, 36 Woodgate, Leicester LE3 5GE**

Tel. No: 0116 253 0717 e:[office@woodgateresidents.org](mailto:office@woodgateresidents.org) / [www.woodgateresidents.org](http://www.woodgateresidents.org)

# LETTER BOX



**August's main story focusing on the sheer amount of fly-tipping in West Leicester elicited the following responses from fed up residents. (Edited)**

**Dear Editor: The fly-tipping situation is getting out of hand.** I

cannot believe how disgusting some people really are. They clearly have no pride in their area, or shame about their crime - they know fly-tipping is a crime - that's why it mainly appears after dark! I have reported it to the council twice in the last 12 months, I have even sent photos of the person doing it and the house where they live but have still not received any update from them. I can only assume they are extremely busy.

It really upsets me and my neighbours. We live on Minehead Street and most of us take pride in our properties, but there are a few who don't and, quite frankly, couldn't care less! I wish there was more we could do. Maybe I need to contact our local Councilor so they can get some flyers printed to send out.

**Follow on email:** So it's 10 days since my 1st complaint was sent to the council and the fly tip pile has multiplied as usual; almost giving the thumbs up to all the other 'can't be arsed types' out there! I've sent complaint no. 3 in the vague hope the council will act some time before Christmas!

**WG**



**Dear Editor:** I too live in the Westcotes area and have noticed a massive increase in rubbish left on the streets, particularly big furniture items. People put out large appliances, fully expecting metal collectors to pick them up. This then seems to encourage others to leave all sorts of rubbish on the street. I am assuming that this is, in part, due to the increasing number of properties being turned into rentals. Is this tipping down to the property owners or tenants?

There's an obvious issue here as these items require large vehicles to transport. Some years ago the Council provided large skips and crushing trucks, every so often, which proved to be a perfect solution. I'm guessing here, but wouldn't the cost of providing this provision once again offset the current £374k that the Council spends on cleaning up?

I can understand, to a certain degree, why fly tipping is getting worse. It seems to be getting more difficult to visit the recycling centre at Freemans Common, particularly with shifting opening times and the long traffic queues. I have also suffered tyre punctures so try and limit my own visits.

I fully appreciate that National Government and its imposed cuts is where the real problem lies but perhaps the local council could develop some cost-effective strategies that encourage communities to self govern/police. Another area to look at could be how garden allotments could have an impact: allotmenters can use wooden pallets, timber, metalwork as well as cardboard and non-cooked food waste for composing.

**AB**

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## Sept Police Update

**A 27-year-old man, charged with manslaughter following the death of a man who died after he was assaulted in Leicester city centre, has appeared at court.**

Joe Baldwin of no fixed address appeared before Leicester Magistrates' Court on the 2nd September.

He has been remanded into custody to appear at Leicester Crown Court on 11 October.

The charge relates to an incident on 27th August where Charles Neeson was found unconscious on Braunstone Gate, outside Natterjacks, around 10.30pm. The 49-year-old from Leicester died in hospital three days later.

**Officers investigating an incident in which a woman was assaulted in a car in Narborough Road are appealing for witnesses.**

It happened between 1pm and 2pm on Sunday 22 August. The car, a white BMW X3, was stopped at traffic lights near the junctions with Danvers Road and Imperial Avenue. A person inside the car pulled the victims hair.

A 46-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm and has since been released on bail.

Investigating officer PC Tom Baker said: "I know there were people walking along Narborough Road who saw what was happening inside the car. Please cast your mind back – are you able to provide any further information regarding this incident?"

"Any details you have, no matter how insignificant you think they may be, could help my investigation. You can pass on information by visiting [leics.police.uk](http://leics.police.uk) and quoting reference 21\* 481969."

**Three men have been jailed following an investigation into county line trafficking gangs and the supply of drugs in New Parks.**

Ayden Dixon and Shane Williams were sentenced to three years and four months and Martin Watson received two years and three months. All pleaded guilty on two counts of being concerned in the supply of class A drugs.

Investigations uncovered that Dixon controlled a supply of class A drugs that were distributed to vulnerable people to sell on.

Further enquiries led to the execution of warrants at several addresses in Leicester.

**Officers from the Fosse Neighbourhood team raided a property on Bosworth Street off Tudor Road on Sept 5<sup>th</sup>.** Inside, a cannabis farm was discovered with heating provided through a bypassed electricity meter. One male was arrested and 184 plants worth £128,800 were seized.



# CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



**During September, I really like to concentrate on my lawns and rejuvenate them after all the wear and tear of summer.** Now is a good time to do this whilst there is still enough heat to encourage new seed growth.

If your lawn hasn't taken a beating during the summer, now is the time to apply autumn lawn feed which will help to green up your lawn and promote root growth, giving the grass the best start for next year. I will be scarifying my lawns before aerating them, which reduces compaction. This basically means raking out any dead moss and grass, which can go straight on the compost heap, and forking in holes. Then, I'll incorporate topsoil into the holes I've made, followed by a nice scattering of seed. I'll water the seed in and continue to do so; especially if we have dry weather. I will also neaten any scruffy edges using a half moon.



Once I've cut back unnecessary growth, I'll be

dividing any herbaceous perennials that have got too large for the space they are in, and transplanting them, keeping the new plantings well-watered or donating them to friends. Doing this each year or biannually keeps your plants strong and healthy. I am continuing to feed and water my bean plants to keep them producing, although once they stop, it's a good idea to cut them at ground level, leaving the roots in the soil. This helps to release nitrogen back into the ground during the rotting process. The same applies to peas. Additionally, I'll be harvesting my apples; I love a good crumble! You know when apples are ready to pick if you give them a little tug and they come away easily. I enjoy adding a few blackberries to my apple crumble too and any which are left over I'll freeze to use throughout the year. I'm



also researching which fruit bushes to buy as it's best to plant them when they are dormant.

As ever, please keep your bird and bee baths topped up and watch out for hedgehogs! It's safe to put water out for them and specialised hedgehog biscuits or dry dog or cat food.

**Carey Tunstall**



# Martin Page

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# BRAIN TAZERS

|   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| 1 |  | 2 |  | 3 |  | 4 |
|   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 5 |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 6 |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 7 |  |   |  |   |  |   |

**1 Across:** Not analogue **1 Down:** Unfreeze **2D:** Supermarket produce **3D:** Queen of the Fairies **4D:** Musical **5A:** Up in the air **6A:** Far away from coastal waters **7A:** Attempt at boating © Paul Towers 2021

Answers at [w:westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://w:westernparkgazette.co.uk)

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 |   |   |   | 5 | 8 |   |   |
|   | 8 | 6 |   |   | 4 |   |   |
| 7 |   |   |   | 8 |   | 3 |   |
|   |   |   | 2 |   | 7 |   | 3 |
|   | 4 |   | 8 | 9 |   | 6 |   |
| 1 |   | 5 |   | 4 |   |   |   |
|   | 1 |   |   | 9 |   |   | 4 |
|   |   | 8 |   |   | 1 | 9 |   |
|   |   | 7 | 5 |   |   |   | 2 |

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