

Irish Examiner Tomorrow

Solitary survivor  
Sunny Jacobs spent 16 years in prison — five on death row — for a murder she didn't commit. She talks about her extraordinary life

Weekend



A house of character  
The Irish home of the late actor and great character, Oliver Reed, has been put up for sale

Property



Monageer tragedy  
How the national system failed the family of four

News



Make or break  
Liam Mackey on Sunderland's crucial promotion game

Sport



RIB RUN: The flotilla leaves Kinsale yesterday en route to Aberystwyth on the 2007 Rib Run in aid of the South Coast Fishing Tragedy appeal and the RNLI.

Picture: Sheena Jolley

Grades at steak for chunky Chinese

CHINA: Good grades alone may not be enough to earn a place in Chinese universities — students also may have to prove their physical fitness under an Education Ministry proposal, state media reported yesterday.

The proposal comes after a ministry survey showed there was an overall decline in the physical strength of high school students in recent years, Xinhua News Agency said.

The Education Ministry is considering recording the results of physical tests in students' academic files.

"The results can then be reviewed as an important reference by universities and other higher educational institutes in enrolling students," Liao Wenke, a vice director with the ministry, was quoted as saying.

The ministry is considering using the physical test as a way to split university applicants who have the same score on written tests.

It also plans to raise the physical test standards for students who wish to enrol in senior high schools.

The 2005 survey, involving 380,000 students, revealed a sharp increase in the number of students aged

7 to 18 who were overweight.

It also found Chinese students jumped an average of 1.18 inches less in long jump compared with 2000.

BRITAIN: A grandmother has been fined £75 (€109) after failing to pick up a piece of litter she claims she did not even drop.

Bridget Molyneux, aged 75, was walking along a street near her home in Anfield, Liverpool, when she spotted what she thought was a £5 note.

She bent down to pick it up and discovered it was actually a discarded supermarket receipt.

As she walked away Ms Molyneux said two council wardens approached her and told her she had committed an offence.

She said: "I they were joking. I explained what happened but they said I should have picked it up anyway. Why should I pick up someone else's litter?"

"I thought it was over the top, they could have warned me but instead they had me down as a hooligan."

Ms Molyneux said she was not a litterer.



She added: "I am very particular and have taught all my grandchildren about not dropping litter. I am being penalised for not picking up somebody else's mess, it is ridiculous."

A spokesman for Liverpool City Council said: "Our wardens are highly-trained professionals and only issue penalty notices when they believe they have witnessed an offence."

BRITAIN: A large English cheddar

cheese has become a star of the internet, attracting more than one million viewers to sit and stare at it as it slowly ripens.

First placed in front of a webcam in late December, the Westcombe cheddar from West Country Farmhouse Cheesemakers leaped to public attention in February and has since attracted viewers from 119 countries.

"The hits went over one million this morning," a spokesman for the company running the website, www.cheddarvision.tv, said on Wednesday.

Watchers have tuned in from as far afield as Albania and New Zealand, although most are from the US.

"The whole idea was to show people how real food is made — and it seems to be working," cheesemaker Tom Calver said. "It takes a year for the cheese to mature. This is not fast food. It is slow food."

SAUDI ARABIA: The legs are long, the eyes big, the bodies curvaceous.

Contestants in this Saudi-style beauty pageant have all the features you might expect anywhere in the

world, but with one crucial difference — the competitors are camels.

This week, the Qahtani tribe of western Saudi Arabia has been welcoming entrants to its Mazayen al-Ibl competition, a parade of the "most beautiful camels" in the desolate desert region of Guwe'iyya, 120 kms (75 miles) west of Riyadh.

Camels are also big business in a country where strict Islamic laws and tribal customs would make it impossible for women to take part in their own beauty contest.

Delicate females or strapping males who attract the right attention during this week's show could sell for a million or more riyals. Sponsors have provided 10 million riyals (€1.9 million) for the contest, cash that also covers the 72 sports utility vehicles to be will be awarded as prizes.

"Bedouin Arabs are intimately connected to camels and they want to preserve this heritage. The importance of this competition is that it helps preserve the pure-breds," said Sheikh Omais, a tribal leader. "We have more than 250 owners taking part and more than 1,500 camels."

As an ex-smoker, I'm a nightmare

AFTER 24 years of boozing and smoking, I am a 'reformed hoor'. Alcoholics Anonymous, without which I would still be drowning in supermarket plonk, talks of a 'psychic change', which all sounds a bit Mystic Meg until you realise that all it means is a shift in consciousness. As in, the idea of drinking becomes anathema. You'd rather drink brake fluid. For recovering alcoholics, this is exactly where you want to be, obviously, rather than sitting in a restaurant with your mates, sobbing into your napkin because you can't have a glass of whatever's in the ice bucket.

However, because I quit smoking the same day I quit boozing, the psychic change kicked in with tobacco as well. This I was not expecting. I always thought I'd be quite a mellow, tolerant ex-smoker, with ashtrays and lighters strewn around the house for visiting smokers. Not a bit of it. Instead, after decades of sucking down rollies and Marlboro Lights, when I see people smoking in the street now I want to run up to them, snatch the ciggie from their lips and stamp on it like Rumpelstiltskin, screaming, "How much do you hate yourself to do that?"

I don't, obviously, but I have to fight the urge. Smokers detest coming to my house now. Best Friend, who smokes two packs a day and books holidays around smoker-compatibility (she would never visit Ireland), has to go outside; she grumbles that I never made her do this before.

I stare at the cigarette dangling from her lips — once, we'd been dubbed the Fag Ash Lils — and bite my reformed tongue to a bloody pulp. Meanwhile, she threatens to have a dinner party where all the non-smokers are booted out to the garden between courses, as the smokers light up indoors. She's serious. By July 1, when Britain follows Ireland with a



Suzanne Harrington

The Last Word

smoking ban, I suspect she'll have relocated somewhere smoker-friendly.

But this reformed hoor mindset doesn't automatically equal sense-of-humour failure. Not always, anyway. News of Keith Richards snorting his father's ashes, some of which he'd sprinkled into more traditional nasal refreshment, would engage even the stoniest former hedonist.

Never mind that he denied the story almost instantly, saying instead he'd scattered his dad's ashes on an oak tree (or whatever face-saving spin his PR people suggested): what a story. There are a lot of reformed rock hoors, but Keith Richards isn't one of them. He may no longer inject himself with horse-felling quantities of drugs, but, really, we don't want our rock stars reformed. Unlike cleaned-up mortals, we like them added and dad-snorting all the way. It's only right and proper.

3 RULES OF HEALTH

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- **The right Gym exercise is seriously good, but most gyms promote the wrong type.** If your exercise is not improving your metabolism then you are damaging your health.
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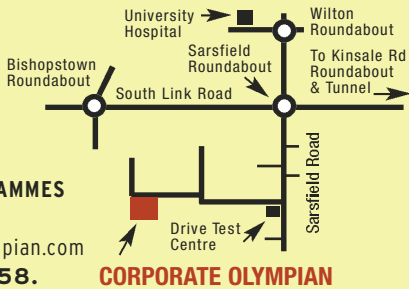
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