

W O C A Q U A R T E R L Y

THE WEST OXFORD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER



Hello from WOCA!

This is our first newsletter since summer 2020 and we've had a makeover! We hope you like the results.

This issue has a wealth of local information, and a particular focus on food poverty, which was highlighted for us during the last 18 months. There are some great grassroots solutions going on locally which we want to publicise and support, and you can read more about them and how to get involved inside.

We're delighted that the community centre (which is entirely self-financing, and run by WOCA) is getting busier and closer to 'normal', and we'd love to hear from you. Are you part of a community group that is providing support?

Do you have an idea of how we can support people, recover collectively, or just a way to cheer everyone up?

Contact us! Details below:

Phone: 01865 245761

Email: info@woca.org.uk

Website: www.woca.org.uk

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The last year and a half has been a challenging one for WOCA. The centre was forced to close to the public in March 2020, and then had to manage the various levels of restrictions and lockdowns due to COVID ever since. WOCA is completely self-funding and our main income stream, room rental, was down to less than 50% in 2020 compared with 2019.

WOCA faces continuing uncertainties in 2021, as the government support schemes cease and rental income remains uncertain. We spent the early part of 2021 in lockdown and even as restrictions eased, groups and people made their own decisions which meant no return to the certainty and 'business model' of the old normal.

We are gradually welcoming back more and more of our regular groups and activities, as well as some new ones, including The Little Health Hub. We are operating the centre as safely as we can but the big test will be winter, and with the big drop in funds to run the centre and work for the West Oxford community, we are not out of the woods yet. The financial figures tell a practical story of the pandemic, but they do not reveal the anxiety or the level of attention and the commitment to do their best from staff, the café and trustees and local councillors.

Undaunted, as well as the wide range of ongoing activity at the centre, we have some great community activities coming up in the next few months such as the legendary West Oxford Pantomime (celebrating its 10th anniversary, albeit a year late!), the Christmas Arts and Crafts market, and a plan to run a 'Late Winter Community Supper' in February 2022.

We are asking that those of you who receive the Winter Fuel Allowance, and do not rely on it and do not already donate it to other charities that you support, to think of WOCA. While raising money is always hard work, securing funds to cover the day to day costs of running the organisation, e.g. salaries, services, cleaning etc, is the most difficult of all. Your donation will be a valuable contribution to our general funds and very much appreciated.

Below are the necessary details if you are paying either directly or by cheque, and a declaration to be signed if you are in a position to Gift Aid your donation.

Our warmest wishes to you and your friends and family,

The WOCA trustees

If you wish to donate, please make cheques out to WOCA CIO, or make a direct transfer to our CAF Bank Account:

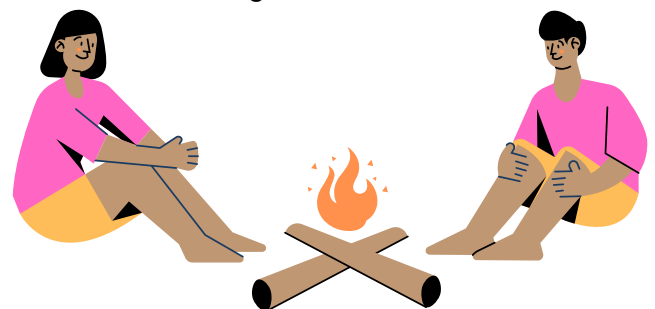
Account Name : WOCA CIO

Bank: CAF BANK

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Account Number: 00016045

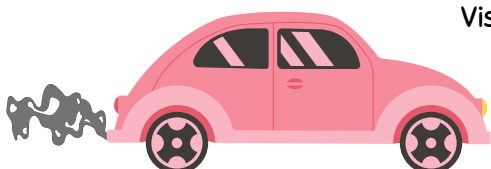
Address: 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ



CoHSAT

Traffic is back on the Botley Road – keep an eye on the Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel (CoHSAT) trying to improve our environment.

Visit www.cohsat.org.uk for more information.



Arts & Crafts Christmas Market '21

SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER
11AM – 6PM
&
SUNDAY 28 NOVEMBER
11AM – 4PM

The 'Handmade' Christmas Market will be back in the hall at WOCC again this year after a break last year because of the pandemic.

Come and buy special Christmas gifts – of all sorts – direct from the makers!

Put the dates in your diary and look out for more details on our posters nearer the time!

We hope to see you there.

Tile Mosaic & Goodbye Roisin

Have you seen our new tile mosaic? It was created over the course of two weekends by local children and is now on display outside the centre.

A big thank you to our resident artist Roisin, who has now moved on to new pastures, for organising the sessions and for leaving us with a permanent piece of art.

Good luck in your future!



WOPA IS BACK!

1001
ARABIAN
NIGHTS

19 - 22 JANUARY

WWW.WOPA.ME

Artweeks 2022

Are you an Artist in the making?

Tired of going solo?

Would you like to participate in Artweeks 2022 as a guest Artist with wocART?

We are an established group who have exhibited at W.O.C.C. on a regular basis.

If you would like to find out more, please email info@woca.org.uk and mark it for Artweeks.



Complementary and talking therapies for children, teenagers and their families.

My name is Rebecca Avern. I am an acupuncturist with over 20 years' experience and I specialise in the treatment of children. I am the author of two books on the subject and teach paediatric acupuncture in the UK and internationally.

I am excited to have taken over the Geoff Franklin rooms at WOCA to start up a centre dedicated to supporting children and teenagers. The Little Health Hub is a group of practitioners and therapists, of different disciplines, many of whom have a special interest and expertise in treating children. I also recognise that to look after young people, their families need support too. So, there are also practitioners who work with adults at The Little Health Hub.

Twice a week, we will be running a low-cost acupuncture clinic for children and teenagers.

Many people are unaware that acupuncture does not necessarily involve the use of needles, and is an effective and well-tolerated treatment for a wide range of conditions which are common in young people. For example, acupuncture is often used to treat anxiety, digestive issues, allergies, sleep problems and bedwetting – to name but a few!



R e b e c c a A v e r n

We want acupuncture to be available to children from families on all incomes. We have therefore set up a sliding scale so families can choose to pay whatever they can afford.

If you would like any more information then do visit our website at: www.thelittlehealthhub.com

If you know any young people who are in need of support at the moment – please spread the word. It is my hope and vision that The Little Health Hub will be a valuable addition to the West Oxford community for many years to come.

Become a member of WOCA!

West Oxford Community Association is made up of local people and it runs the West Oxford Community Centre, for the benefit of all.

Although the building is supplied by Oxford City Council, all running costs must be met by WOCA. As we are completely self-financing, your support can really make a difference.

We provide a high level of service to the local community including: an affordable & high-quality venue/meeting place for a huge range of individuals & local groups, Tumbling Bay Kitchen & Cafe, The Little Health Hub – offering affordable acupuncture to children & young people along with other therapies for all ages, subsidies to groups & activities, and lots more.

Becoming a member entitles you to benefits such as: Reduced room hire rates, the WOCA Weekly email newsletter, discounted entry to selected WOCA events, free entry to the Harvest Supper and Spring Meal (inc. AGM) and more!

Membership costs just £6 for people living in West Oxford and £12 if you live outside West Oxford.

To join, please contact info@woca.org.uk or via the website <https://www.woca.org.uk/pages/17-become-a-member>

It feels like more than 18 months since our last collection of West Side Stories popped through your letterboxes. Below is a report from Henry Road:

From small beginnings in mid-March 2020, the Henry Road WhatsApp group grew to include nearly all houses on the street. We are lucky enough to have two musicians, so our weekly 'clap for key workers' also became a singalong and a chance for a socially distant chat with neighbours – as were birthdays and other events like *May Morning* and *VE Day*.

We shared information such as which shops had essential items or small queues, books, gardening stuff, surplus food, DIY equipment, etc – as well as more lighthearted stuff. We had requests and offers of help for all sorts of things.

Our lockdown photography project pictured households outside their homes, each writing a bit about themselves and their life in lockdown. It was a lovely way to get to know each other a bit better! Check out some of the portraits below.



West Side Stories would love to hear more from the people of West Oxford. Do you have a funny story to tell? Something you'd like to plug? Any issues?

Who else is out there? Send us your news!

Email us: westsidestories@woca.org.uk

News from St Frideswide's - All Change and Climate Change:

After 4 years as Mission Priest at St Frideswide's, Rev Kate Seagrave has moved on to a post with the Winchester Diocese. Her replacement, the Rev Rachel Cross, started at St Frideswide's on Sunday 12th September – a warm welcome to Rachel and her family!

On 15 August, John Clements talked to the congregation about the Christian response to Climate Change. On the same day, the Young Christian Climate Network pilgrimage from Truro to COP26 at Glasgow passed through Oxfordshire – good to know that young people are taking action!



Rev Rachel Cross

More info here: www.yccn.uk

8 THINGS WE CAN ALL START DOING RIGHT NOW:

We are facing hard facts about the impacts of human actions on the world around us.

We've been told, in no uncertain terms: *"this is the moment and we must act now"*¹ if we want to prevent ever more dangerous climate change and stop mass extinction.

The latest report from the International Panel on Climate Change is *"code red for humanity"*².

Extreme weather events - heat waves, wildfires, floods, storms – are turbo charged by climate change and affecting all regions of the world. For some consequences, there's no going back.

As world leaders meet at COP26 this November, you might be feeling overwhelmed, numb, disinterested perhaps? We're not surprised. This stuff can bring up a whole host of emotions and leave us feeling scared and disempowered. But there is some good news. There ARE things we can do individually and collectively, which WILL make a difference, and LCWO is here to help us all take effective action today in West Oxford and beyond.

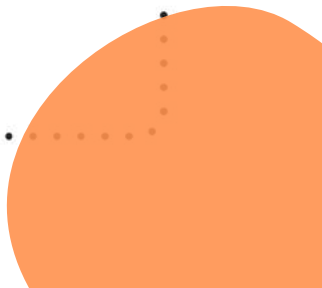


HERE ARE 8 THINGS WE CAN ALL START DOING RIGHT NOW:

1. TAKE COLLECTIVE ACTION – Be ambitious and demand that politicians and business leaders, make the necessary big changes NOW rather than later. Join and support organisations like LCWO³, take part in letter writing campaigns like our COP26 one, lobby local and national politicians. Find your MP via theyworkforyou.com⁴.

2. FOOD – Reduce or eliminate meat and dairy in our diets. Eat seasonal, locally sourced food, and cut food waste. Come along to our Beet the Waste food fest at Tap Social and get inspired! Get new skills with Good Food Oxford⁵ and bust food waste with Replenish⁶. Consider climate-friendly diets for pets too.

3. TRANSPORT – Cycle, walk or use public transport rather than driving, and avoid flying whenever possible. Get your bike fixed up at our next Repair Café and check out what the Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel⁷ is working on. Join a car club like Co-Wheels⁸. Going further afield? www.seat61.com helps you get all over the world by train.



4. MONEY – Make your pensions/savings/investments power positive change. Watch our video on how to green your money⁹. Look up which banks are financing fossil fuels and deforestation. Shift your pension with Make My Money Matter¹⁰. If you switch accounts, let the account provider you are leaving know why you're off. Check the Low Carbon Hub¹¹ and Ethex¹² for investment opportunities starting at £50.

5. HOMES – Make our homes as energy efficient as possible. Move to a green energy tariff, get a home energy assessment, join our carbon busting workshops and find out if you're eligible for support from Better Homes, Better Health¹³.

6. STUFF – Think before we buy to save money and emissions. Repair broken items at Repair Cafés¹⁴; pass on unwanted items and find new treasures for free at our Bring & Takes and charity shops; and if you really need something, maybe you could borrow it from a friend or Share Oxford's Library of Things¹⁵. Refill when you can and avoid plastic packaging.

7. WILDLIFE – Actively care for wildlife locally and think about how our shopping choices impact biodiversity. Plant trees with us; mow less and grow insect friendly plants; make a hedgehog hole in a fence; follow the West Oxford Tree Trail¹⁶; help us maintain local green spaces; join the West Oxford Naturehood¹⁷ whatsapp; enjoy Kingfisher Corner and Hogacre Common Eco-Park¹⁸ - can you spot our local otters?

8. FEELINGS – Notice and talk about what we're feeling. When did you last talk about what you're feeling about climate change? Talking enables us to process feeling and move to action, and it's a form of action in itself. Chances are, someone else is feeling some of the same things as you. Talk to a friend, join a local or online group/workshop/climate café for a chance to chat, or check out the work of the Climate Psychology Alliance¹⁹. Find out about Active Hope through this free online course²⁰.

WWW.LOWCARBONWESTOXFORD.ORG.UK

1 IPCC Special Report, October 2018

2 UN Secretary-General António Guterres in a statement on the IPCC report AR6: "The alarm bells are deafening [...] This report must sound a death knell for coal and fossil fuels, before they destroy our planet."

3 <https://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/>

4 <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/>

5 <https://goodfoodoxford.org/>

6 <https://replenishoxfordshire.com/>

7 www.CoHSAT.org.uk

8 <https://www.co-wheels.org.uk/oxford>

9 <https://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/5-things/money/greening-your-money-new-video-resource-online-now>

10 <https://makemymoneymatter.co.uk/21x/>

11 <https://www.lowcarbonhub.org/>

12 <https://www.ethex.org.uk>

13 <http://www.bhbh.org.uk/>

14 www.repaircafe.org

15 <https://shareoxford.org/>

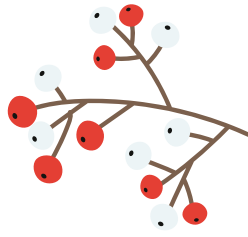
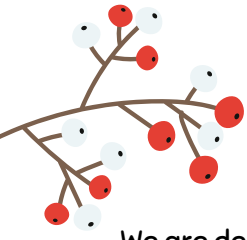
16 <http://oxford-tree-trails.org/>

17 <https://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/west-oxford-naturehood/>

18 <https://www.hogacrecommon.org.uk/>

19 <https://www.climatepsychologyalliance.org/>

20 <https://activehope.training>



Winter Wonderland

A Community event for EVERYONE!

Part of the Oxford Christmas Light Festival (19th–21st November, 2021)

We are delighted to be bringing this fantastic event to West Oxford once again, and with your help, we will transform the streets into a magical outdoor gallery for all to enjoy!

Taking part as a Windowmaker is FREE, and everyone is welcome. You can make a display in the windows of your flat, house, business, school, nursery, car, campervan, shop – or your front garden!

A map showing the locations of illuminated window displays is created to form an after-dark walking trail and community event, transforming local streets into galleries.

Please don't feel intimidated – It can be as simple or spectacular as you like. Anything goes... as long as it's family-friendly!

Look out for more information at: <https://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/>

Hogacre Harvest Festival

Hogacre Harvest Festival Sunday October 31st
12–4pm
@ Hogacre Common

For more details, visit our website: www.hogacrecommon.org.uk



Got apples to spare? We're collecting apples to make *more* West Oxford Apple Juice!

After the success of our delicious West Oxford mix in 2020, we're doing it again for 2021.

Drop off your apples and we'll do the rest - or if you need help to harvest, get in touch and we can help.

For full information including details of upcoming drop-off lots, see www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/apples





OXFORD'S CHRISTMAS LIGHT FESTIVAL

Oxford's Christmas Light Festival has been held annually since 2009. Originally a one-day event it has, over the years, extended to a weekend involving more than 25 local cultural partners, more than 27,000 participants and giving 100,000 experiences to over 40,000 people over the weekend.

In 2020, Oxford's Christmas Light Festival shifted its focus from the city centre to become an event based in our local communities and online with more involvement from residents, schools and community groups than ever before. This year the programme expands further into the city's neighbourhoods and celebrates the Art of Connectivity over the weekend of 19th and 20th November.

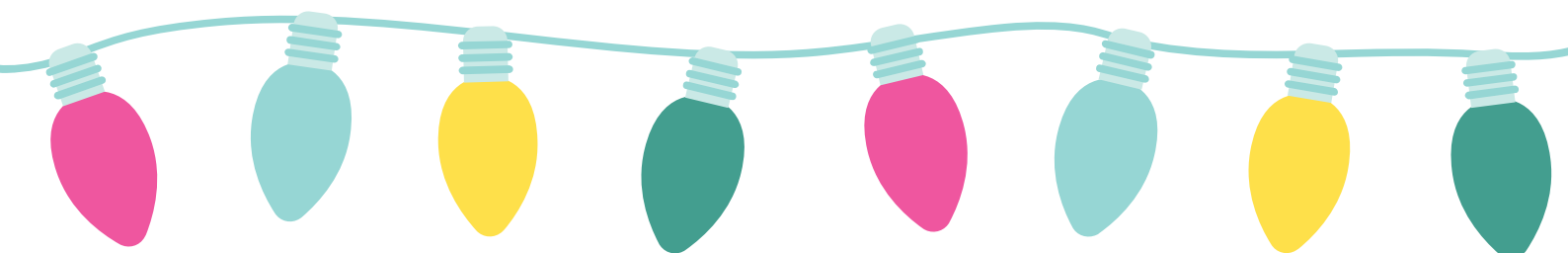
In central Oxford, the weekend will kick off with the Christmas Light switch-on including a large-scale illumination and a Victorian market on Broad Street. TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities) will be celebrating the 950th anniversary of Oxford Castle with a full-scale son et lumière projection. Oxford Contemporary Music in partnership with Arts at the Old Fire Station will be presenting a specially commissioned immersive dance and sound performance spread across the city.

Local creative hubs will highlight partnerships between Oxford's leading cultural organisations, community groups and residents. Together they will share ideas and responses about our connections with each other, with our environment and with the season. Many buildings, parks, streets and houses will be illuminated with light creations accompanied by sound, movement and interactive play.

Festival Directors, Karen Starr and Lois Muddiman, have taken the reins of the festival for the first time this year. They say: "We're very excited to be working on Oxford's Christmas Light Festival, one of the city's key, annual cultural events. The ideas that Oxford residents and creative organisations are working on together for the festival weekend will light up the skies, as public spaces and neighbourhood streets become the canvas for a weekend of illuminations. Having the festival take place in the city's residential areas allows so many more people to be able to actively take part or simply stroll around their neighbourhood to see sculptures, light trails and displays. There's lots to look forward to and lots of ways to get involved. We're looking forward to seeing everyone out and about enjoying the spectacle."

The full programme of events, workshops and trails will be published on the festival website from mid-October.

<https://www.oxlightfest.com>



Oxford Food Hub is an award-winning charity at the centre of surplus food redistribution in Oxfordshire. You might have heard of us as the Oxford Food Bank – in 2020 we changed our name to reflect the much broader work we do – in food redistribution and tackling food poverty.

We take food that might otherwise have been wasted and redistribute it to over 150 charities and community groups and thus help tackle poverty. You might have seen our volunteers in vans like this one picking food up from supermarkets and wholesalers and dropping it off.



In 2020, we supplied more than 600 tonnes of food – which is as heavy as 500 Ford Fiestas – and equivalent to an incredible £1.5 million. With help from donors and over 100 volunteers, we did all this without charging suppliers or community groups a penny.

Last year as many charities were closed, groups collected food from the OFH base to support those within their community. Sadly, the need for this grew significantly in 2020 and has more than doubled over the past five years.

The OFH worked throughout COVID lockdowns and other than a couple of weeks to get safety procedures in place, were running throughout. We use donations from the public to support many, many people in need before, during and after COVID. We buy additional food where necessary, and we give financial support to charities in Oxfordshire whose aims align with ours.

If you'd like to get involved, make a donation or find out more, take a look at our website:
<https://oxfordfoodhub.org/>



Recycle at the Co-op

Love Crisps? Love Recycling?

Save those Crisp Packets! Recycle them at the new, swish, Co-op in Botley!

Their bank of recycling bins now includes one for Crisp Packets – as well as Batteries – plastic bottles – tetra paks and cartons.

Turn left when you go in and the recycling bins are at the end.



'Best before' doesn't have to mean 'Landfill'.

That's the message I like to get across to my community when people mistake us for a foodbank. Do we offer free surplus food to anyone who contacts us?

Yes we do, but that's not our main objective.

Our members/users pay a weekly direct debit of £3.50 to a Didcot-based charity (SOFEA), who are part of a wider network called Fareshare.

Every Thursday afternoon, a group of volunteers, based in St. Peter and Paul church hall, receive a delivery of surplus food. We then put out all the many items, ready for our members to stop by after 3pm. Our aim is to reduce food waste. From my experience more than 80% of items are still in date, though some are past their 'best before' (not expired).

We don't have a wide enough selection to replace your supermarket shopping. However, we do bring the feel-good effect: doing the right thing for our environment, making food accessible, and increasing community involvement. While we do also help towards reducing food poverty, it's just a by-product of our waste-reduction ambitions.



So, whether you are wealthy or not, please stop by on a Thursday and say 'Hi'. I'll show you around, you can join us as a member or you can volunteer to set the tables or drive parcels to those who can't get out to us.

Either way, we all belong to our Botley community. If you want to get in touch, you can phone me on 07887 902412

Dr. Saman Jamshidifard – Botley Community Larder Lead

Cumnor Choral Society

Cumnor Choral Society are happily rehearsing Handel's 'Messiah' in Cumnor Old School at 8pm each Friday.

New singers are very welcome and the only requirement is that you enjoy singing in sociable company.

The concert is planned to take place in the church of Saint Peter and St Paul, West Way, Botley on the 27th of November 2021 at 7:30pm.

Tel: 07961900670 or email: cockman.caroline@gmail.com

If you would like more information, please contact John May via email: johnmay@btinternet.com

Oxford Mutual Aid

OMA is a volunteer-based community action network. We always have work that needs doing both on the ground in Oxford and remotely. We welcome all types of skill sets and experience – if you want to help, we will be glad to see you!

www.oxfordmutualaid.org

Don't be afraid to ask for help

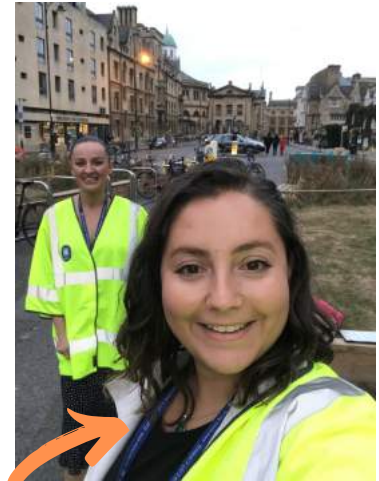
Oxford City Council's locality hubs continue to offer support to vulnerable residents or those that find themselves in need of additional support. Bringing together the skills and experience of City Council staff and partners the hubs are here to help by supporting residents, responding to local needs and reducing inequalities.

In West Oxford, the Central Locality hub has been supporting individual residents access employment opportunities and benefit advice, as well as continuing supporting them with essential items. Working alongside Botley Community Larder, the hub has been able to grant fund them to increase their weekly offer and storage. The hub team also ran the consultation on the replacement community picnic benches at Oatlands Rec and led the consultation at Broad Meadow.

On-going work with West Oxford Community Association looks at ways to address local issues and closer working with Botley Community Larder to address food poverty.

The next few months may be even more difficult for some residents and the community as whole, so the hub team is encouraging residents to get in touch either if they need some support around food, energy or essential items or if you have any project ideas on how it can further help residents this winter.

You can access support by visiting www.oxford.gov.uk/communityassistance, call Oxford City Council on 01865 249811 or email hub team directly on centralcommunityhub@oxford.gov.uk.



Azul who heads up the Central Hub team and Alexa at a Broad Meadow consultation session.

Your Local Democratic Representatives

Your city councillors are:

Colin Cook, 12 Riverside Rd, OX2 0HU Email: cllrccook@oxford.gov.uk Phone: 721844

Susanna Pressel, 7 Rawlinson Rd, OX2 6UE Email : cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk Phone: 554001
Susanna is also your county councillor.

Susanna holds a Ward Surgery on the third Saturday of each month from 11:00am – 12noon at the community centre.

Your MP is Layla Moran:

House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA
Phone: 020 7219 3905 Email: layla.moran.mp@parliament.uk

A big thanks to the WOCA staff, trustees, members, users of the centre and people of West Oxford - for making it such a lovely place to live.

We'll see you in the next edition. Thanks for reading!