

News Telegraph Comment Sun set to shine on Gathering

FORECASTERS have predicted a scorching weekend on Saturday and Sunday this week.

And while the prolonged hot spell has prompted various warnings about conserving water and looking after the elderly and the very young; there is one section of our community who must be viewing the weather forecast as a very real blessing.

After more than 25 years of hosting the biggest Highland Games outside of Scotland, the future of Ashbourne Highland Gathering was in serious doubt.

A run of bad weather left organisers with concerns about committing to the task of attempting to put the Gathering on again this year after losing thousands of pounds and facing the misery of months of hard work washed away in the rain.

Now though, the organising committee and the very many volunteers, trades people, competitors and visitors who make the event such a spectacular addition to our town's calendar, can once more enjoy the event in all its glory.

As always, the News Telegraph will be on hand throughout the day, with reporters and photographers capturing some of the very special moments the Gathering can bring.

And, as we celebrate the hot embrace of summer sunshine, the on-going effects of the weather on events big and small is sure to be positive.

It's difficult for us to trust the weather to provide us with actual seasons. Rarely in reality do we get to experience a real spring, summer, autumn or winter.

However, if we can believe that this hot spell will last beyond this weekend, perhaps for once we will truly experience a long hot summer.

And if the sun continues to shine on us for such events as Ashbourne Show and the very many village events which are planned throughout the summer months, for once we could be looking at a bumper year when it comes to fun in the sun.

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Cartoon corner



Your X-ray shows you have three broken ribs, but we've managed to fix them with Photoshop...



Message from Sir Richard

GIVING blood is one of the cornerstones of our take Five Minutes appeal.

Donating blood is a life-saving action which helps people suffering from a myriad of medical conditions, including cancer.

So, as part of our newly-launched Take Five Minutes appeal, the News Telegraph will be finding out what our readers think about it.

Sir Richard FitzHerbert of Tissington Hall backed the appeal.

He said: "I first starting giving blood about four years ago at the Empire Ballroom in Ashbourne having seen the huge banner poster inviting donors.

"I decided to go and give blood as I had had some recent medical problems and so wanted to give something back to the NHS.

"Fortunately I am not scared of needles and the nurses made the whole process so easy and trouble free. That first donation I was rewarded with coffee and wagon-wheels, a biscuit I had not eaten since prep-school. So far I have now made 12 donations and I get great pleasure in the thanks of the nurses and staff that attend the clinics.

"Three times a year is not a great sacrifice in my opinion and I do hope that more people will join 'our club' as a result of this campaign.

"We all can make that difference by giving blood."

DONOR . . . Sir Richard FitzHerbert, pictured with his wife, Fiona, gives blood three times a year.

Our Take Five Minutes campaign goes national

By Natalie Wakefield

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AN APPEAL launched in last week's News Telegraph has hit headlines across the nation.

Our Take Five Minutes Appeal was launched in a bid to promote blood and bone marrow donation, after our editor, Stephen Sinfield, revealed his wife, Katherine, urgently needs to find a bone marrow donor.

Our front-page story featuring Mr Sinfield's emotional appeal to readers, "help me save my wife," caught the interest of regional and national newspapers, many of whom appealed for support for the campaign.

The Daily Telegraph and the Sunday Express were among national titles to run the story.

Readers from Derbyshire, Staffordshire and further afield from areas including Loughborough and Sheffield, have contacted the News Telegraph with messages of support and pledges to enrol as blood donors.



Find more online at:

ashbournenewstelegraph.co.uk

Mr Sinfield, who is currently on leave caring for his wife, said: "The story going national can only have helped Katherine's appeal.

"It was the quirky angle of an editor using his front page for a personal appeal which clearly gripped the interest of the national press.

"I spent most of Saturday speaking to the Sunday Express as before anything could run, I needed Katherine's approval.

"We decided that going national can only help bolster the appeal, and so we agreed – but at the same time wanted to ensure that Katherine was not highlighted as a unique case.

"There are hundreds if not thousands of people across the country undergoing a similar torment at the hands of this truly destructive condition.

"The only difference between Katherine and all of these other people in need is that we have made our fight public for the benefit of everyone because of my position in the media.

"As an editor, I cannot expect my readers to reveal personal and sensitive stories if I am not willing to share one myself."

Our Take Five Minutes appeal is all about encouraging our readers and the wider community to research blood and bone marrow donation.

For Mrs Sinfield and the many other people who rely on donated blood to manage their conditions either long-term or while waiting for a donor, the three per cent of people who choose to donate blood are very real lifesavers.

A pint of donated blood can help up to three different people as the blood can be separated into component parts to help combat different conditions.

Researching blood and bone marrow takes about five minutes online. Taking blood from a donor also takes about five minutes.

KATHERINE KEEPS A BATTLE DIARY AS FIGHT GOES ON

AS school teacher Katherine Sinfield, wife of News Telegraph editor Stephen, waits for a lifesaving bone marrow transplant, her battle against leukaemia continues.

Mrs Sinfield, 32, has started a diary of her daily treatment in a bid to illustrate the on-going battle fought by doctors and nurses across the country against all kinds of cancers.

While she is hooked up to drips and suffering with a rash on her feet, her hair is starting to fall out as her body attempts to recover from the harsh effects of the hard-hitting chemotherapy she has just been through.

On Monday she wrote: "As my hair continues to shed by the handful, there is now no denying that I am losing my locks. My blood cell count hasn't increased since yesterday and so I'm no closer to being allowed out in the sun – but at least the doctors are pleased with my progress overall.

"I started my anti-fungal drip after lunch and this was followed by a bag of platelets."

Platelets are an essential part of her battle with leukaemia, which Mrs Sinfield fights from the ward she is confined to at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.



FIGHT GOES ON . . . Katherine Sinfield receives platelets intravenously as she battles leukaemia.