

The Quiz Of The Year

1. In May 2021, Elizabeth Armstrong of Palm Springs organised a petition among residents. She collected 40,000 signatures objecting to... what?

- (a) The City Council's refusal to fund construction of a series of comet deflection shields around the city.
- (b) Extension of the Octopus Sanctuary.
- (c) A statue of Marilyn Monroe being placed outside the Art Museum.

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2. Also in May, a Belgian farmer accidentally did... what?

- (a) Changed the Belgian / French border by moving a rock.
- (b) Ordered 24 kilos of waffles, instead of just 24 waffles, which were duly delivered from a city centre manufacturer's bakery via a series of deliveries over six days. Every effort he made to correct the mistake only seemed to make things worse.
- (c) Asked his former wife out on a date, 15 years after they got divorced. Neither of them recognised the other on a dating website because they had both changed their appearance significantly *and* used filters on their profile photos *and* were using fake names.

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3. The Swansea Bay News reported on which ingenious innovation in June?

- (a) A hospital junior doctor created a ventriloquist duck puppet, Ducky The Doc, that could be surgically sterilised so it was safe to use in an operating theatre when youngsters came in for operations.
- (b) A fire safety officer, inspired by traditional sea shanties, composed a series of 'land shanties' for fire fighters to sing while learning various drills and operational procedures.
- (c) A police constable devised a way to build potting sheds and greenhouses from old, recycled police riot shields.

4. Which of these was the title of a song in the official UK Top 40 singles chart for June 25th?

- (a) Pirate Noises.
- (b) Astronaut In The Ocean.
- (c) Sugar Frown Fairy.

5. July brought some exciting science and technology news. Someone managed to invent... what?

- (a) The 'T-See', being a T-shirt featuring a flexible, digital screen that could display animated sponsor and advertising videos.
- (b) 'Fintats'. A way to apply tattoos to fish so that, for example, aquariums could put sponsor logos on some of the fish.
- (c) A phone charger powered entirely by human sweat.

6. Here at The Fun Pack Quiz Of The Year, we always like to feature inspirational stories of achievement and endeavour. So, in July, what did Carole Taylor do at the age of 83?

- (a) Got her 25th university degree. She got an honours degree in 'Design for Stage and Screen' from the Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, having gained her first degree (in 'Modern History') in 1959 from the University of Dublin.
- (b) Gained her fifth-degree blackbelt in karate, the award being presented to her by Chuck Norris.
- (c) Completed a hand-stitched tapestry of Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh, measuring 19 yards long by 6 yards wide, that she started working on in 1991 as a gift to the town of Cadiz, Ohio, where Gable was born.

7. Continuing the theme of outstanding achievements, in August 2021 Samantha Ramsdell was officially recognised by Guinness World Records. What is or was her claim to fame?

- (a) Performing on the world's tallest set of walking stilts, at 15.4 metres, in an outdoor 'Cirque Du Soleil' show in Toronto.
- (b) She became the first female soldier to work as a sentry outside Buckingham Palace.
- (c) The woman with the world's biggest mouth.

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8. Which of these was a real documentary released in August 2021?

- (a) Snails, Zips And Candy Horses: Brian Wilson's Unfinished Songs And Beach Boy Memories.
- (b) Dracula Nazi Hunter: How I Learned to Love Christopher Lee and Drink Atomic Bombs.
- (c) Bogart, Brandy And A Broken Boat: Hepburn's Hell And 'The African Queen' We Never Saw.

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9. September brought several major advances in the world of scientific research, including which of these stunning headlines?

- (a) 'Ostriches can be trained to recognise photos of different golf courses from around the world'.
- (b) [After a two-year research competition said to have cost the equivalent of \$1.3 million] 'Subaru announce new 'perfect' wheelbarrow is 3% more efficient than any previous design'.
- (c) 'Scientists have recorded the first known instance of a duck that has learned to mimic human speech'.

10. Also in September, what opened in Dubuque, Iowa?

- (a) The Museum Of Perished Products. “In person or online, visitors can browse our extensive collection of brands, items and products that are sadly no longer available and/or, in some cases, never should have been.”
- (b) Dubuque Dogski. An indoor skiing and skateboarding park for dogs.
- (c) A telepoem booth. “People can dial a number on the old-fashioned rotary phone and hear a poem read aloud.”

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11. In October, the Norwich Evening News ran a story involving Louise Chapman. How does she refer to herself and what was the story about?

- (a) Freeze Louise. The story was about her attempts to set up a stall on Norwich Outdoor Market selling vegetable-based savoury ice-cream (that hadn’t proved to be as popular as she’d hoped).
- (b) Queen Louise. She believes she can prove that she is the rightful heir to the throne and should be the reigning Queen of the United Kingdom.
- (c) Lady Mole Catcher. The story was about an unusually high level of moles being found on people’s lawns in the Norwich area.

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12. On October 15th, a news story said that Yorkshire had officially been declared to be... what?

- (a) The Spade Capital of England, according to research carried out by B&Q. “More spades are bought and used per household in Yorkshire than any other county.”
- (b) The ‘epicentre’ of Garden Gnome Kidnapping. “It does happen elsewhere but nowhere near as often as in Yorkshire.”
- (c) The UK’s UFO Hotspot, “with over 200 encounters being logged over the past two decades”.

13. November brought a news story with an ironic twist. What was it?

- (a) Someone stole two bins from outside a community centre in Wakefield that is often used as a bingo hall, prompting the headline, 'Bingo Bins Go'.
- (b) 'Insulate Britain' activists, having glued themselves to a road in Westminster, blocked a lorry belonging to an insulation company.
- (c) 'Style and fashion' Instagram influencer Julia Berolzheimer mistook a tube of glue for lipstick and actually stuck her lips together. Her video about the incident has now had about 2.3 million views.

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14. Also in November, something was put up for auction that was expected to fetch about \$600,000. What was it?

- (a) Neil Armstrong's left glove, as worn when he first stepped on to the lunar surface. The whereabouts of the right glove is unknown.
- (b) A 45-year-old original Apple-1 computer.
- (c) The original negative of Margaret Bourke-White's famous photograph of Gandhi and his spinning wheel, from 1946.

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15. December brought us the story of Simon George, aged 53. His girlfriend knew he leased a mill with a large basement that he *said* was for his business as a wine merchant. But he actually used it for something else. What?

- (a) He had converted it into a mock-up of a TV studio, with two chairs set up as if for a chat show, and made videos of himself pretending to interview celebrities. Sometimes he used shop mannequins made to look like someone famous using masks or at least photos of their face stuck into place. At other times he got friends or actors to 'stand in' and assist the process.
- (b) He used it to house his collection of 553 Ladybird Books, the largest such collection known to exist and more complete than the company's own archives of their published titles.
- (c) He used it to build Britain's biggest model railway.

16. December also brought us which of these desperately important news stories?

- (a) Shauntee Osei, from Agona Swedru in Ghana, was arrested and cautioned for discreetly placing small parcels of rotting meat and cheese under the seats of the town's buses and trams. She claimed this was her way of protesting about fare increases.
- (b) Saudi Arabia banned 40 camels from the King Abdulaziz Camel Festival, a beauty pageant in which camels compete for prize money and the title of 'Miss Camel', after it emerged that they had received botox injections and facelifts.
- (c) A man from Whitley Bay was convicted of stealing cash from the homes of people near where he lived or from public charity boxes. It was estimated that he had stolen about £75 in total. He explained that he was simply trying to get enough money to afford plastic surgery. He felt driven to despair because he bore more than a passing resemblance to Ed Sheeran and was utterly fed up of being unable to go anywhere without being mistaken for the popular singer. He added that he can't stand Ed Sheeran's music, "which just makes it worse." He said he had written to Mr. Sheeran asking if he would pay for the surgery, "but I didn't get a reply."

17. One of Italy's most wanted men, Gioacchino Gammino, escaped from a Roman prison in 2002. In January this year, he was caught. What happened?

- (a) Though he had always been good at 'lying low', he couldn't resist entering a ballroom dancing competition held in Bologna. Dancing had been one of his passions since he was a child and he danced semi-professionally into his 20s. He used a false name but a keen ballroom dancing fan recognised him — as much by his dancing style as his appearance — and alerted the authorities.
- (b) He was spotted on Google Streetview talking to someone outside the restaurant in Spain where he worked as a chef. Even though his face was partially blurred, he was sufficiently recognisable for the police to find him and re-arrest him.
- (c) A retired police officer, who had been involved in his original arrest, met him entirely by chance in a bar in Guadalajara. He managed to trap Gammino under a table until the local police could get there to formally arrest him.

18. January also brought us which remarkable scientific discovery?

- (a) Artefacts found in 1897, but dating from Sumerian culture over 5000 years ago, are probably the world's oldest straws and were apparently used to drink beer.
- (b) A South American silkworm caterpillar, *Ionomia obliqua*, can somehow detect the presence of mobile phone signals and will attempt to move towards whatever seems to be the nearest source.
- (c) Some chimpanzees use cherries as a form of mouthwash.

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19. February (the month of Valentine's Day and romance) saw the publication of which of these books?

- (a) 'Love, Toothaches And Tedium' by Xaviera Muñoz.
- (b) 'My Marriage, My Chains, My Losses, No Gains' by Terri Jackson.
- (c) 'Foreverland: On The Divine Tedium Of Marriage' by Heather Havrilesky.

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20. Also in February, a government agency called Nuclear Waste Services issued an apology. For what?

- (a) Regarding the possible building of a nuclear power station near Ruthwell, Dumfries, they released a press statement saying "the accidental leakage of radioactive waste is highly likely". The word 'likely' was of course meant to be 'unlikely'.
- (b) A spokeswoman for the agency, Catriona Allan, was on a Zoom call with BBC Radio Scotland. Unaware that the broadcast had already started, she was seen and heard to refer to Boris Johnson as "Boris Pointless".
- (c) In a document about the potential location of a high level radioactive waste dump in Lincolnshire, they spelled 'Skegness' as 'Skegross'.

21. In March 2021, why was the Raglan Road Irish Bar in Nottingham in the news?

- (a) The owner, Grygoriy Pavlyuk, whose family came from Ukraine, declared war on Russia.
- (b) Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who once performed in a comedy show in the pub's basement, named it as one of his favourite pubs.
- (c) They placed a photo of Vladimir Putin in each of the urinals and encouraged their customers to express their opinion of the Russian leader in the most natural way.

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22. Saturday, March 5th, was also officially designated as...

- (a) Multiple Personality Day.
- (b) Tortoise Appreciation Day.
- (c) 'Stop Inventing New Celebration Days' Day.

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23. In April, scientists from the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm announced the world's favourite smell. It was:

- (a) Freshly baked bread.
- (b) Vanilla.
- (c) Antique books.

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24. Also in April, a British company announced their intention to...

- (a) Create and sell a range of realistic pets, using AI and advanced animatronics, including dogs, cats and parrots.
- (b) Develop the world's first lab-grown caviar.
- (c) Sell insurance policies to comedians and other entertainers specifically regarding the threat of anyone hitting them while they're on stage.

THE ANSWERS ARE ON THE NEXT PAGE

So don't look any further until you've made a list of
your answers.

Quiz Of The Year Answers

1. (c) Marilyn Monroe statue. The statue was 26 ft tall.
2. (a) Redraw the border with France. He moved a large rock on his land, unaware that it was one of the official markers of the border with France. The issue was eventually resolved and he put the rock back where he'd found it.
3. (c) Greenhouses from recycled police riot shields.
4. (b) 'Astronaut In The Ocean' by Masked Wolf. I've listened to it and it's rubbish. Don't bother.
5. (c) A phone charger powered by human sweat.
6. (b) Fifth-degree blackbelt in karate.
7. (c) The woman with the world's biggest mouth. Worth a look on Google images but brace yourself first.
8. (b) Dracula Nazi Hunter.
9. (c) Duck that has learned to mimic human speech.
10. (c) Telepoem booth.
11. (c) Lady Mole Catcher.
12. (c) The UK's UFO Hotspot.
13. (b) 'Insulate Britain' activists prevented an 'Insulation' lorry from getting through
14. (b) A 45-year-old original Apple-1 computer.
15. (c) Britain's biggest model railway.
16. (b) Saudi Arabia banned 40 camels from the King Abdulaziz Camel Festival.
17. (b) He was spotted on Google Streetview.
18. (a) The world's oldest straws.

19. (c) 'Foreverland: On The Divine Tedium Of Marriage'.
20. (c) They spelled Skegness as Skegross.
21. (c) They placed a photo of Vladimir Putin in each of the urinals.
22. (a) Multiple Personality Day.
23. (b) Vanilla. (I disagree. It's obviously bacon.)
24. (b) Develop the world's first lab-grown caviar.

