

## Mayor backs fete

MAIDSTONE Hospital's League of Friends will receive extra support from the town's mayor when he attends its annual fete. The Mayor of Maidstone, Cllr Eric Hotson, will join the fundraising team at the hospital, in Hermitage Lane, from noon to 4pm on Saturday, September 11.

## Time to give blood

THE National Blood Service will accept blood donations at the Maidstone Salvation Army Community Centre in Union Street on Monday, September 13, from 2pm to 4.30pm and from 5.30pm to 8pm.

## Join garden party

JOIN staff at a garden centre for coffee and cake and raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. Paddock Wood Garden Centre, in Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood, will take part in the World's Biggest Coffee Morning from 9am to noon on Friday, September 24.

## Book bargains

BOOKWORMS will find a bargain at Maidstone United Reformed Church's book sale. The church, in Week Street, will hold the sale from 10am to noon on Saturday, September 18, with hardbacks from £1 and paperbacks from 50p.

## CHEETAH GETS HOME AHEAD OF RALLY DRIVER IN UNUSUAL TIME TRIAL

# Four legs beats wings and wheels in speed challenge

by Angela Cole  
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IN A race between a rally car, a cheetah, a greyhound and two of the fastest birds in the sky, who wins?

Thanks to rally driver Louise Cook, from Aylesford, we now know the answer – it would be the cheetah.

But Louise and her Ford Fiesta came a close second to the fast feline Manny in a challenge held at Eagle Heights Wildlife Park in Eynsford on Sunday.

The 23-year-old, of Rochester Road, came in at eight seconds over 200m, just behind the cheetah who made the distance in a time of 7.8 seconds.

The peregrine falcon was third at 8.4 seconds, with a greyhound making a time of 11.3 seconds, and an eagle 18.3 seconds.

Louise said: "I thought the cheetah would win, and I'm glad he did. I was quite proud to have come second to him, especially as the peregrine falcon is pretty quick."

The race was a fun distraction from Louise's preparations for the British Rally Championship



Rally driver Louise Cook raced against a cheetah in a Ford Fiesta at Eagle Heights Wildlife Park

Challenge. She is competing in the final round in Yorkshire on September 24.

She is sixth and is third junior driver in a 27-strong field, 26 of whom are male.

Louise will be trying to raise the funds she needs for the final

round. It will also be possible for local businesses and owners to enter the Promotion 50 campaign on the day as Louise focuses on collating a 2011 budget to compete to win the British Rally Championship Challenge outright in 2011.

## MP: Curb the student scams

THE number of foreign students coming into the UK cannot be sustained, according to a Kent MP.

Immigration minister Damien Green, MP for Ashford, made the comments after it was revealed that a fifth of overseas students remain in the UK to work.

Mr Green was concerned the figures suggested that academic studies were being used to settle permanently in the country.

"Half of those who come here are not doing university courses, so they are not what most people would think of as students," he said.

"I want to look much harder at those who are using the student route to come here to make sure everybody who does come here is doing a legitimate and beneficial course at a proper institution."

## Triumph bikers in Garden raid

DOZENS of motorbikes, most of them Triumphs, will be making tracks to a Maidstone hotel.

The Maidstone Laguna RATs are staging the Garden of England Raid next weekend, Friday to Sunday, when bikers from across the UK and Europe will converge on the Ramada Hotel on the Saturday.

The aim is to promote Kent and to raise money for the RAT's charities, Kent Air Ambulance and Serve.

## Top speeds

- Cheetah - 70mph
- Greyhound - 45mph
- Peregrine falcon - 60mph or 200mph while diving
- Eagle - 60mph or 100mph while diving