

*Dear Cousin Terri,*

*Thank you so much for your Christmas card. It was lovely to hear the latest news from you and all the little Inklings. It was also good to see something addressed to my proper name, as everyone calls me "Old Man" in here. Do you remember me telling you why I hate that?*

*Things are difficult here, but I **am** doing my best to keep my nose clean. Someone in here told me that boredom is the root of all evil, so I've been keeping myself busy, studying for my BA, and producing a newsletter for my wing. I enclose a copy of the latest issue so you can get an idea of how we keep ourselves amused.*

*My biggest problem here is that everyone on the wing is in a gang, apart from me. There are three gangs and they all keep pressuring me to join them. Some of my fellow inmates cornered me the other day to lean on me a bit, but I told them I just wanted to stay out of trouble and make a fresh start. I left at once - I resist advances. My dedication's accustomed to peak when it is a busy time of year - nothing beats Xmas! I'm on target, God willing, for a new life.*

*I forgot to enclose card for Nick. I hope he had a jolly day - he's a good little lad. So not much news, which you'd expect as I am in the cells for hours designing and making the newsletter.*

*Now I had better let you go. With the big day looming I'm sure you are very busy with lots of tasks to do. I hope you manage to get it all done and find time for the traditional long walk in the countryside - or are you just going to drive to the pub instead?*

*Merry Christmas,*

*GW*

*P.S. Give my love to Gran.*



# X - Essentials

All the Latest News from X-Wing

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## Inspection Passed

As you are all aware, we had a council inspection on 1st October. The inspector had some concerns, but gave a good overall rating. Everyone on the prison staff is grateful for inmates' cooperation during the process, so wanted to say thank you. Except to the inmate, whoever it was, who drew a six-foot high phallus on the shower block wall.

## New Rules for Tools

Unfortunately, one of the points that was picked up in the inspection was the lack of security around our gardening tools, as they could be used in escape attempts. From now on, the pick and spade must be handed back to prison guards at the end of each shift. Smaller tools like the hand trowels are not currently affected, but we can consider ourselves on a yellow card with regard to those too, after a **search** of the cells revealed that one inmate was hiding a rock hammer.

## Guards v Inmates Football Match

The inmates were at a disadvantage in this annual fixture, having lost their regular goalkeeper when he broke one of his arms. The replacement's performance has been rocky to say the least. The inmates were down 4–1 at half-time, after a controversial decision to disallow what seemed like a perfectly good goal. But showing real spirit, they levelled the score in the second half to draw 4–4.

## Sign our Petition

X-Wing inmates are launching a petition to change the Faengsel Prison motto. The current motto: "*He hath the key, and he that shutteth no man openeth*" is **brutal**. It does not even have the weight of tradition behind it, as it was only adopted in 1998 by the previous Governor, whose tenure is generally considered to be an unfortunate episode in Faengsel's history. It was intended to set an example, but our view is that it does not contribute to the direction that both inmates and staff want to take. There must be further options that are more meaningful. Contact the editor *if* you have any suggestions for a new motto.

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## The Point of View



Seasons' greetings and my thanks to the esteemed editor for giving this featured column over to a guard rather than an inmate, for the very first time in the history of this newsletter. I have been permitted this honour because I have some important bits of news for you.

Perhaps the most common question I am asked by inmates is when we will finally be getting approval for the new library budget. I never met Fingers Fuentes, but the editor has told me about her and her bequest is gratefully received.

I know that many of you have been desperate for new reading material. Particularly the editor, who has often told me that he has read every book in the library at least twice; apart from one that he refuses to read on principle! You will be pleased to hear that we will soon be taking delivery of some new literature. The carefully curated selection includes:

- L'Imposteur by Molière
- A Tangled Web by Nicholas Blake
- A Pot of Money by Fabian Bland
- The Traveler by John Twelve Hawks
- The Long Voyage by John Christopher
- The Pursued by C.S. Forester.
- You Can't Catch Me by Rosamond Smith
- The Quest by Saki
- The Lifted Veil by George Eliot

I am delighted to be able to give you this news by way of an early Christmas present. But don't panic, I will also still be giving you all my usual Christmas present. My local has promised that its Christmas brew will be available soon, and I've placed my order.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to bid you farewell. Recently I have handed in my notice to the Governor, and will shortly be leaving Faengsel. I always wanted to travel and I've got exciting plans. I will never forget my time here, and best wishes to you all. I would invite you to keep in touch on social media, but the Governor says that guards are not allowed to share contact details with inmates. I'm sure you'll be able to find me if you want.

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## In Memoriam

News has reached me that long-term resident of X-Wing, noted cat burglar Pilar “Fingers” Fuentes, passed away on 2 July. Fingers’ nickname came both from her light-fingered burglary skills, and the fact that she had six fingers on each hand.



Fingers never forgot her former colleagues on the inside, and she often spoke about her love of reading, as it helped her pass the time during her many stretches inside. She has left a donation with instructions that it be used to fund new purchases for the prison library.

She will be much missed by all of us X-Wing old-timers who knew her.

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## Doing Bird



Eagle-eyed members of our resident ornithology club, the Birdmen, have given me their latest report. These are the sightings that its members have made and written down in their

notebook, and it is their belief that this is a new record for the number of different species. The club meets every second Tuesday in the library, and I have no doubt they would be open to recruiting new members: please speak to one of the twins if you are interested. Whatever your age, background, or what your conviction was for, you will be made welcome. It can be difficult to know where to start, but trust me, you’ll get lots of pointers.

- Skylark 35
- Whitethroat 36
- Lesser Whitethroat 26
- Yellowhammer 62
- Linnet 36
- Buzzard 73
- Red Kite. 141
- Wheatear 12
- Whinchat 524
- Jackdaw 56
- Woodpecker 95
- Nuthatch. 292
- Treecreeper 32
- Swallow 12
- **House Martin** 272
- Sand Martin 57
- Hoopoe 36
- Mandarin 37

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## Fancy Dress Champions

A veritable cornucopia of fiends and devils and ghouls attended the prison-wide fancy-dress party last month. For the third year running, an X-wing resident won the prize for best costume. The winner of the trophy really transformed themselves into someone else. Relive the evening with some pictures from the party.



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## A Word from the Editor



It's that festive time of year again. Everyone else may be celebrating, but for those of us who are locked up away from our families it is a time for self-examination and not a little melancholy. At the end of the year, one reflects on another year spent incarcerated, and whether one has achieved anything more than being 365 days closer to the end of one's sentence. I will admit to feeling a bit below **par** myself.

But January is of course named after the Roman God Janus, reminding us that we should Face forward as well as back. It's the start of a new season and when we get our first glimpse of Dawn, we can look forward to the future instead of dwelling on the difficult circumstances of our present.

I'm looking forward to my own fresh start next year, after several postponements I will go before the parole board on 4 September. The very idea of freedom makes me a little dizzy and anxious. This could be the final Christmas edition of the newsletter under my editorship. Looking back over my time in X-Wing I am amazed how much I have changed as a person. At the start of my sentence I thought to myself – there are some strange characters in here. Now at the end of my sentence – I'm one of **them**!

So I don't want to count my chickens, but I should make plans **just** in case the parole board goes well. **Hopefully** one of you will be interested in taking over the newsletter, please let me know. Don't worry if you have no experience of this sort of thing, I can train you up. To misquote Hannibal: *"if I cannot find a successor, I will make one"*. Let me know as soon as possible if you are interested; it would be good to have plenty of time to explain things. There is a lot more to the newsletter than meets the eye.

And finally, apologies for any errors in this newsletter. As I say, I'm missing my freedom and fun. I had to miss the first date for my parole hearing. I'm feeling grumpy, and a cranky editor is a careless editor.

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## Theatre Review

The Faengsel Ex-Inmates Light Operatic & Networking Society treated us to their production “*Get Busy Singing or Get Busy Dancing*” – the latest in their series of musical versions of prison films. The FELONS certainly had something to sing about and had us all under their spell. The audience was absolutely Howling with laughter in the first half, but there wasn’t a dry eye in the house during the rousing final number *Going Through the Motions*. There will be another performance on 7 December, so come along and judge for yourselves!

The Artistic Director of the FELONS, Thomas L. Rolls, has a particularly fitting programme planned for next year, including *Barmitzvah Boy*, *The Singing Detective*, *The Madness of King George III* and *Copenhagen*.

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## Lecture Series 2023

The Faengsel Lecture Society is now in its fourth year offering a fantastic programme of events to hold our interest. This year we welcomed speakers on a wide range of subjects. The series included four wonderful and varied lectures.

- A History of Colchester Castle by surgeon Trevor Onion was my personal favourite of the four.
- Lilies of the Field and Birds of the Air by Paddy Foot. I saw that one gang was a little disappointed to find the content was religious rather than ornithological.
- Abbie Bussony who returned to X Wing for the first *time* since her release after 14 years inside to share the benefit of her experience since getting out. Reflecting on her years inside, she did not pull her punches regarding the people she blamed for her incarceration. The first ever lecture from a returning inmate, it clearly was a cathartic experience for Abbie.
- Opposites Attack! Knowledgeable speaker Martin Oxen was full of good advice and anecdotes about sharing a cell with someone you might find extremely irritating. It seemed that everyone in the audience had a story to share. A straw poll found that the most irritating behaviours included: forgetting that someone else is present when doing things like trimming toenails, playing the same song over and over, and rudely borrowing clothes without asking.

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## Carol Concert

Our annual carol concert will take place on 8 December at Saint Leonard’s. *Rendez-vous* at 6pm in the canteen. We will be escorted to the churchyard by Father Stephen Randall.

*Any*one with a musical instrument, such as an accordion, is welcome to bring it to the church. Rehearsal time *has* been very limited this year, so any practice you can squeeze in would be a good idea. So that you can warm up your vocal chords in *advance*, I enclose copies of the sheet music.

## Poetry Corner

### Ode to a ...

I search for the words my story to tell.  
I’ve had to bid my freedom farewell.  
Now I’m just a number stuck in a cell.  
At sixes and sevens, trapped in this Hell.

These bars on my window make me feel ill.  
The wind blows through them and gives me a chill.  
Nothing but the cold and time to kill.  
I search for the words, I search for them still.

*By the Editor*





## Puzzle Pages

### Unleash Your Inner Detective

Five criminal gangs are planning five different heists. Each has a different number of members from one to five, and a different colour getaway car.

1. The gang that targeted the casino has one less member than the Edware Evildoers.
2. Of the Pembury Pirates and the gang that targeted the post office, one has the black car and the other has one member.
3. The gang with one member doesn't drive the yellow car.
4. The gang that targeted the bank has one less member than the gang with the silver car.
5. The Tilbury Troublemakers have one more member than the Nuthurst Nutters.
6. The gang that targeted the jewellers has more members than the Nutters.
7. Of the Pirates and the Nutters, one has one member and the other has the red car.
8. Neither the gang with the black car nor the gang with five members targeted the jewellers.

What colour getaway car do the Ascot Abominations drive?

### Sudoku

		6	9					3
	9					4		
	1	2			8			
				2			7	
		3				1		
	6					5		
1		8		3	4	7		
	3	4		6	7			
				1				

### Quiz

I know everyone hates my crazy brain teaser quiz, and I was going to retire it from the newsletter. But Dagger persuaded me to give it one last outing because he enjoys it: sharp by name and sharp by nature, that lad. He loves it so much he even bribed me by promising me his Christmas dinner - extra roast parsnips for me!

1. The BORG Six of One Hundred and Nine: what is found before hunted?
2. He escaped from students once, and prison how many times?
3. There are 8 in 8, 9 in 9, and 10 in 10.
4. Rebel and Warrior perhaps, who escaped using kitchen implements.
5. The Great Escape started on this day, but it would have been good if they had waited two weeks.
6. What is occasionally well-balanced in Copenhagen?
7. Scooby Doo character, or the escaped prisoner in the Hound of the Baskervilles?
8. Proudful character based on someone who hired inmates.
9. She wrote about SD's time in a women's prison.
10. Lexicographer's namesake who was held prisoner by some terrible poets.

### Riddle

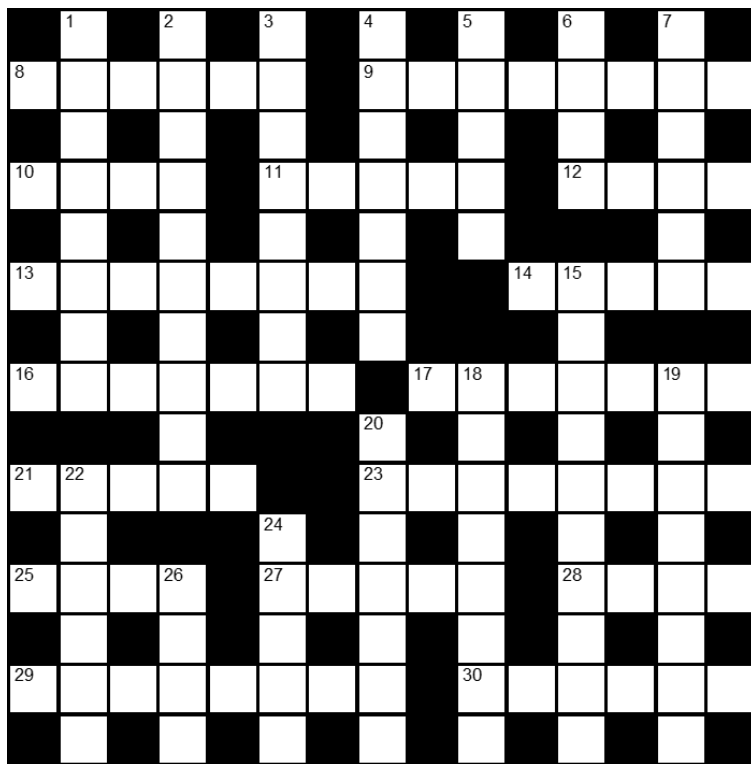
♪ Happy Birthday to You ♪

When our heroine turned 10 and he turned 36, they were 35.

When she turned 16 and he turned 42, they were 23.

Who is he and who are they?

## Crossword



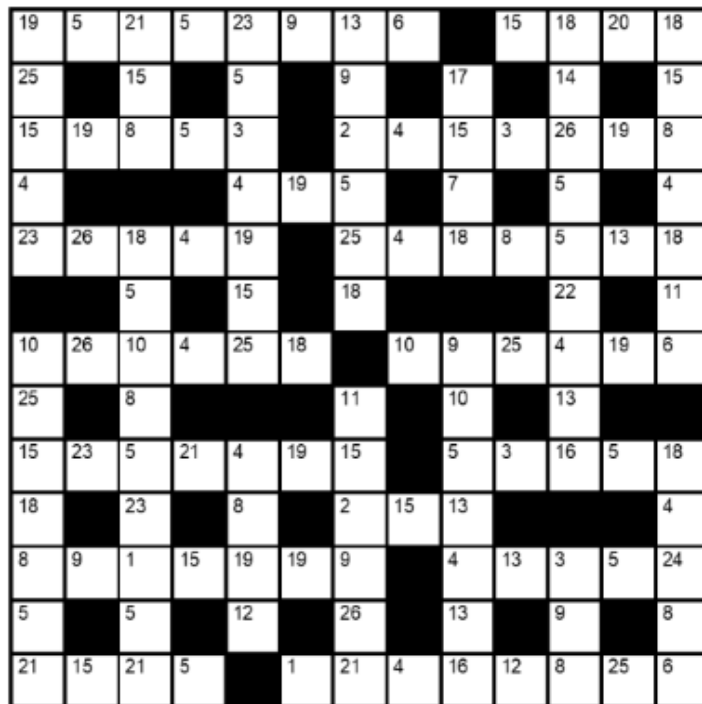
### Across

8. Sack lawyer mid-rant (6)
9. Seafood found in 1/3 of Calais marina (8)
10. Moe perhaps hidden in international organisation's computer department (6)
11. Nothing left over after last bit of stamina exhausted (9)
12. Nonogram only half finished? That's unacceptable (2-2)
13. Succeeded putting thieves behind bars (8)
14. e.g. the Brontë Sisters' work always begins with this - it gives a sense of foreboding (5)
16. Criminal - mad as he is guilty (7)
17. Leaders of mob are former inhabitants of Southern Italy (7)
21. Get rid of killer ultimately incarcerated in facility (5)
23. Bit of all right working for the Spectator (6,2)
25. Initials written on bottom of French letters (4)
27. For a group like S Club Juniors, once twenty, regulars must be itched (2)
28. Conspirators hold back tears (4)
29. That'll teach you to freak out in middle of court hearing (5)
30. Copper said "Catch you later" (3,3)

### Down

1. Grannies cooked read (3)
2. Heavy-set guy can assault grievously (5,5)
3. Whereas: (a) the "Lease" (as amended) is pursuant to (b); (b) the lower limb (including but not limited to the thigh, knee and calf) (8)
4. Doctor Who can make you odd looking (1)
5. Starts to cover limbs with tattoos in prison (5)
6. Writer inserting self into article - I agree with that (4)
7. Music made country switch from foxtrot to tango (6)
15. Sailor's girlfriend married murder suspect, a shady type (5,5)
18. For act of infidelity you need a place to go and stay without a hint of suspicion (8)
19. Stingy fellow offers  $16 + .14... + 0.66...$  (7)
20. Globally everyone is related (3,4)
22. Indiscreet prisoner is questioned about... (6)
24. ...capital I found stuffed inside settee (5)
26. Kitty droppings on top of litter (4)

### Codeword



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Codeword:

3	5	19	9	6
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## Wordsearch

I was inspired by a much-loved and much-missed friend to include a wordsearch amongst my usual puzzles.

N	T	O	L	I	G	H	T	Z	N	S	O	T	N	E	V	D	A
R	B	O	H	G	P	A	R	J	H	N	A	T	A	L	N	M	K
F	O	W	B	K	E	P	T	O	C	Y	O	T	I	K	P	L	T
O	G	Z	U	H	E	O	M	L	T	K	E	P	U	C	L	I	A
D	N	A	H	O	E	G	A	I	B	D	D	R	A	A	O	R	L
Q	T	K	E	D	Y	C	V	W	P	S	I	R	E	P	C	Q	L
H	P	T	E	H	E	I	F	D	N	S	M	S	I	P	D	W	L
E	K	K	P	E	T	S	L	Q	U	L	B	H	H	E	K	B	D
M	E	A	A	A	T	M	T	M	B	H	B	P	I	S	K	N	E
R	R	E	N	S	N	S	A	V	V	I	A	L	A	O	R	K	D
K	S	R	N	N	D	S	A	N	O	N	I	M	G	R	E	R	P
P	F	B	A	D	U	A	B	M	S	M	T	L	S	H	F	O	E
A	E	G	I	F	T	C	T	R	P	S	L	F	O	G	U	R	T
R	E	C	O	I	S	M	E	A	I	M	B	E	P	U	T	B	W
W	S	K	I	D	F	G	H	R	N	C	E	U	G	I	S	I	H
N	P	F	N	S	N	Y	H	I	I	G	O	U	P	N	D	K	R
U	P	M	Q	I	D	C	N	A	V	I	D	A	D	L	A	L	E
E	B	H	G	O	N	G	G	E	I	P	M	S	L	E	I	G	H

That is the last puzzle for this edition. If you still have time on your hands, why not take a leaf out of the Alcatraz boys' book and do something inventive with a concertina.

Colouring Competition: Submit your young visitors' entries to the Editor for a special prize








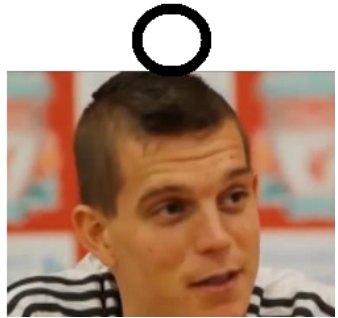




How many rabbits are at the Christmas party? How many mice? How many cats? How many sheep?

# X - Wing Class of 2023

		
XW 190	XW 147	XW 112
		
XW 175	XW 158	XW 203
		
XW 192	XW 150	XW 208
		
XW 206	XW 148	XW 162

# X - Wing Class of 2023

		
XW 178	XW 202	XW 196
		
XW 218	XW 214	XW 197 / 210
		
XW 194	XW 198	XW 108
		
XW 86	XW 200	Editor

# Faengsal Christmas Carol Service

The first part of the carol consists of seven staves of music. The first two staves are in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The third, fourth, and fifth staves are in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The sixth staff begins in 3/4 time and changes to 4/4 time. The seventh staff is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The melody is primarily composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests and a final half note.

The second part of the carol consists of seven staves of music. The first two staves are in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh staves are in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes, including a red eighth note in the third staff and a final half note with a fermata in the seventh staff.