

PAUL BUNKER

It's a dad's life



What happened to all my party days?

LOST: My social life. Reward offered if found.

There has been an enormous social shift in our household over the past few years and it's only just occurred to me that I do the least socialising out of anyone.

A few moons ago, the calendar would be chock-a-block with events and parties.

One minute I'd be playing rugby, the next there'd be a party at a salubrious establishment to attend.

Occasionally my wife and I would head off to a music festival or visit old friends in distant lands, enjoy a few responsible drinks and talk gibberish.

There were even times when we'd do all of the above in a single weekend and get home in time to watch *Antiques Roadshow*.

As the years have passed the socialising has been slowly grinding to a halt.

If I was a little less confident I may have questioned whether my friends

had just tired of the piffle I recant (there may be some truth in this). Undoubtedly, there is one main factor that has changed the 'scene' – children.

The truth is, until you've had kids you have no understanding about how much time they take up.

I don't mean this in a negative way, as they are brilliant (most/some of the time).

These little energy vortex's never stop sucking energy and entertainment from anyone or anything. From the moment they wake up, until you finally drop your backside on the sofa at 9.52pm, it's all go go go.

To feed their insatiable appetite for fun, their days are rammed with all manner of activities. Each week is loaded with swimming, dancing, gymnastics, a sleepover, a party or three – it makes me tired just looking at the calendar.

Now my daughter has just started school, I'm priming myself for the

start of some new clubs and associations – I know Brownies/Rainbows are just waiting for me to be at my weakest before they pounce.

The results are very worthwhile. We all end up with social, confident and active children who learn a wide range of life skills. I get it.

What really scares me is that I currently only have one child with a Paris Hilton-styled social calendar and multi-tasking has always been a major issue for me (I have to turn the TV off/down if I'm talking to someone as my brain gets overloaded).

How parents with two or more children deal with organising the team is an utter mystery to me?

If you have one child swimming, another at a party and they both need picking up at five, how do you decide which one to fetch first?

Even women can't be in two places at once.

The solution? I would probably pick up my favourite one first.



To feed their insatiable appetite for fun, their days are rammed with all manner of activities

Gloop's turned Jack into Buggy

Brace yourself, we're moving on to solids.

Baby Jack is a tad under five months and he's a big boy. Therefore, the time is right to progress from milk straight on to a nice tender Porterhouse steak.

Sadly for him, his fleshy little gums aren't quite up to the job in hand so, for the time being, he's making do with baby rice (a semi-solid ricey/milky gloop).

It is carnage. How can such a bundle of giggling innocence manage to rub, flick and spray food so far!

I knew it was getting out of hand when even the dog was walking around with a dollop of milky puree in his eyebrow.

Our house has become like a scene from the classic 1980's movie *Bugsy Malone*.

The mess has become such an issue we've resorted to feeding him in the garden. When the frenzied feed comes to a close, a light power-hosing brings him (and the dog) up like new.

■ Catch Bunker on Heart Breakfast on 96.7 & 97.5 FM, 6-10am, Monday-Friday.

You can read and react to Paul's previous columns by logging on to portsmouth.co.uk/paulbunker

The News

TXT2WIN COMPETITION

WIN A PAIR OF TICKETS TO SUPER IRISH SATURDAY

We've teamed up with Fontwell Park Racecourse to give away this great prize, worth £34.

Our winner and a friend will get to go to the races on Saturday October 2 for this special event.

Super Irish Saturday features seven great jump races plus live music from The Saw Doctors.

Gates open at midday with the first race at 2.15pm. The last race takes place at 5.50pm and the live music will start from 6.15pm.

For more information log onto fontwellpark.co.uk.

For your chance to win, simply answer the following question: Ireland is known as what Isle? A) Ruby B) Emerald C) Diamond

You can enter by text. Simply send a text message starting with tncomp race, the answer to the question plus your name, house number (or house name) and postcode to 63333. The total message must not exceed 155 characters.

All text messages cost 50p plus standard network charge. The closing date for entries is midnight on September 30, 2010. Messages received after the closing date will not be counted but may still be charged.

Normal News competition rules apply.

Example of message: tncomp race answer john smith 1 po2 9sx

SUPER IRISH SATURDAY
AT FONTWELL PARK
SATURDAY 2 OCTOBER
Gates Open 12 noon First Race 2.15pm
Last Race 5.50pm Live music from 6.15pm

TICKETS FROM £17

Seven great jump races & **The Saw Doctors LIVE**

Charity Race day raising money in association with Southern Water

Fontwell Park Racecourse Tel: 01243 543335 www.fontwellpark.co.uk

Normal News competition rules apply. Terms and Conditions apply – see entry form for details. By supplying your telephone number you are happy to receive SMS/MMS messages from Johnston Press and its approved business partners. Johnston Press (or via its agents) and its business partners may contact you about new promotions, products and services. Please add the word EXIT at the end of your message if you do not wish to receive these. For quality and training purposes we may monitor communications. Service Provider: JMedia UK Ltd. 0844 800 1188. PEN 1039COF

TEXT IN BY MIDNIGHT ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Wedding Show
Marriott Hotel, Portsmouth
Sunday
October 3, 2010
10.30am - 3.30pm

Marriott PORTSMOUTH

The News

For stand information please contact **David Hoggarth 023 92622201**

Admission is only £2 or simply go to www.portsmouth.co.uk/offer to get your 2 for 1 voucher

Mum and baby will be protected by simple steps

New guidelines to help protect mums and their unborn babies against pre-eclampsia have been introduced.

Pre-eclampsia affects around 10 per cent of first-time pregnancies and can prove fatal to both mother and child.

Despite its prevalence, until last month there was no official national guidance on how to care for women at risk of, or with, hypertension during pregnancy.

Now NICE has issued guidelines and the measures have been adopted as national good practice for health professionals – it includes pregnant women at risk of developing pre-eclampsia being advised to take a low dose (75mg) of aspirin daily, and being offered delivery from 34 weeks if their blood pressure is under control.

In its early stages, pre-eclampsia is symptomless and is only detectable by regular antenatal checks on the mother's blood pressure and urine. The importance of such regular checks is highlighted in the new guidance too.

Stephen Walkinshaw, a consultant in maternal and fetal medicine at Liverpool Women's Hospital who chaired the development group for the NICE guidelines, points out that the way hypertension during pregnancy is treated and managed can vary from region to region.

He says: 'What the NICE guidelines do is set out a clear pathway of care to guarantee that women are looked after in the best way possible, no matter where they live.'

'It will also ensure mums-to-be are given clear information by their doctor or midwife about their risks of developing such a condition.'