

Green-fingered team celebrate growing success

GREEN fingered pupils at Okehampton Primary School are celebrating, after scooping a top prize in a fruit and vegetable growing competition, launched at the start of the year by home-builder Persimmon Homes.

The pupils, who competed against 10 other schools from across the country, submitted diary evidence based on the vegetables they had been tasked with growing over a nine-month period.

In that time the children successfully grew everything from peas to parsnips and carrots to cress and were aptly rewarded with £1,500 in cash and £500 worth of gardening gift vouchers for them to continue growing in the future and investing in their garden.

Hazel Fox, headteacher at Okehampton Primary School, said: "We are thrilled to have won the competition and to have been rewarded which will help us to improve our garden no end."

"It was a great competition to get involved with. We hope to do even better next year."

Festive breakfast

CHILDREN from all over Devon are being invited to have a special breakfast with Father Christmas.

Jack's Patch Nursery & Garden Centre on Newton Road in Bishopsteignton will be hosting an extra breakfast with Father Christmas on Christmas Eve, from 9am until 11am.

College hails the success of its Jiu Jitsu champions

WITH Olympic medalists and other UK champions among its alumni, the good news just keeps coming for Exeter College.

It is boasting another sporting triumph after the Jiu Jitsu team returned home as Jiu Jitsu National Championship winners.

In total, 24 students aged between 16 and 18 from the college entered the contest held at West Exe College, which included 300 competitors aged mostly between 16 and 60.

Returning with medals were:

- George Greenwood, 18, of Exeter, who won gold in the Orange Belt male heavyweight class. George is taking A levels in physics, politics, maths, and history.

- International Baccalaureate student Jack Dowell, 18, of Topsham, who won silver in the Yellow Belt male middleweight.

- Sam Chamberlain, 18, of Exeter, who won silver in the Novice Male lightweight. Sam is studying for his AS levels in biology, psychology, chemistry, biology.

Rescued from lift

FIREFIGHTERS had to rescue people trapped in a lift in the city centre.

The crews were called to Eaton Drive at around 7.40am on Friday.

Two fire engines from Exeter's Danes Castle and Middlemoor fire stations attended the incident.



SURPRISE: Craig Milverton has bagged himself the accolade of UK Jazz Pianist of the Year

Jazz world honour for pianist Craig

BY FRAN MCELHONE

HE'S a regular at the most prestigious jazz clubs in the country, accompanied some of the most highly acclaimed jazz musicians in the world and established himself as a firm favourite among enthusiasts.

So it's about time jazz pianist Craig Milverton bagged himself the impressive accolade of UK Jazz Pianist of the Year in the competition known in the trade as the British Jazz Oscars.

"I didn't even know I'd been nominated," said the 43 year old from St Leonard's. "You don't go chasing these awards, and I'm so busy working you don't have time to think about it. So it was quite a nice surprise."

"The award has been going for over 20 years so it's well established."

"I understand that it's the first time any musician from the South West has won an award in the competition."

"And it's good that both members of the industry and the public get to vote."

Previous artists with the title include pop-jazz singer songwriter and pianist Jamie Cullum.

Nominations are made by a high-profile panel of jazz critics and jazz club owners and thousands of votes are then cast by members of the public before the winner is crowned.

But this isn't Craig's first award of this kind, although he says it's by far his most prestigious. One of the bands he's



PREVIOUS TITLE HOLDER: Jazz-pop artist Jamie Cullum

with, Digby Fairweather and his Half Dozen, has previously bagged the Best Small Jazz Group of the Year award.

Craig also plays with Paul Jones of Manfred Mann and has his own trio, aptly called the Craig Milverton Trio, and keeps busy teaching piano at Exeter College.

Craig moved down to the city aged 16 and got a job in Bill Greenhalgh music shop formerly on Fore Street. And after a series of gigs in the area it wasn't long before he started making a name for himself on the national jazz circuit.

He says it's never been a problem living so far outside the capital. Craig performed at London's legendary jazz club, Ronnie Scott's only last week and is off to New Orleans on a jazz

cruise as a soloist and member of the Chris Walker Quintet over Christmas.

He said: "I had classical piano lessons between the ages of seven and 11. But I was improvising right from the start."

"I've worked across the genre from traditional to modern jazz."

"I think my versatility as a player and broad knowledge of jazz styles has played a part in my success."

"I work with several South West singers including, Maggie Reeday and Louise Parker as well as international touring artists including saxophonist, Scott Hamilton, trumpet player, Kenny Ball and Acker Bilk."

"I travel about 40,000 miles a year - you have to if you're going to make a living as a professional player."

"I've had many offers to move up to London but it's never appealed to me. Devon's the most beautiful county in the country."

"And lots of musicians are choosing to move out of London. The path to London isn't always paved with gold and there's a great, thriving jazz scene in so many other places in Europe."

"I feel I've got the best of both worlds here."

"I love jazz because of the intellectual and artistic freedom of expression. It allows you to express any idea that comes into your head."

"It doesn't matter how many times you play the same song it's never the same and it never gets boring."

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