

# THE DREAM SCENE

## Newsletter

Issue no. 29 1st of July 2009



Say 'Hello' to Sofia.

Sofia was born at 13:40 on the 26th of February 2009, to proud parents Alwyn and Cameron, who live in the 800's. Sofia was born three months early and weighed only 670 grams (1.4 lbs). She was so small, she could fit comfortably in the palm of her daddie's hand. Sofia remained in hospital for a further 11 weeks, defying the doctors' odds of survival. Sofia came home on the 14th of May 2009. She has settled in very well to Dream Hills, where she is thriving and surprising the doctors all the time with her continuing development.

Alwyn, Cameron and of course Sofia would like to say a big thank you to all the well-wishers during what were difficult times for the family.

(What wonderful news. All photos are in glorious colour in the email copies. Mick Editor)

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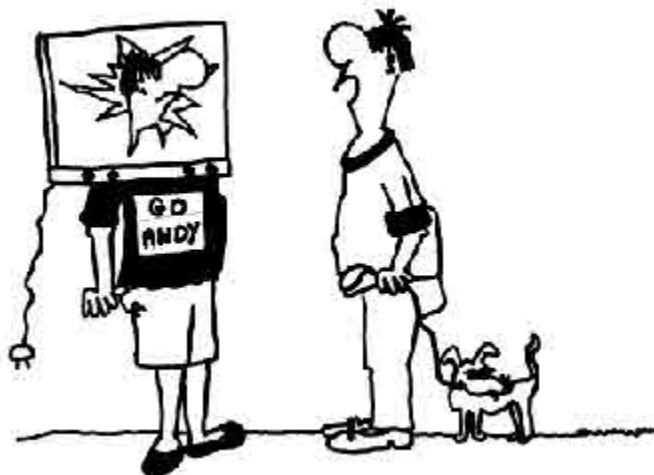
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'The wife not a tennis fan then?'

# WHAT'S UP?

The BBVA bank is offering five-year sabbaticals to employees who have been with them for more than eight years and who are more than 33 years old. They are being offered 30% of their wage during the five years, and are being guaranteed a job to return to. The offer is made only to employees of the bank in Spain.

Hundreds of bank users in Spain have been surprised to see with the yearly revision of their mortgage rate that their payments have gone up, even though the Euribor rate has gone down. The ADICAE, the Association of Bank and Savings Bank users, say they have received an avalanche of complaints, and describe many cases as outright fraud. It comes as the Minister for Tax and the Economy, Elena Salgado, has warned that there are too many savings banks in the system. She said such a number was fine in a time of growth, but now is excessive. Spain's central bank, the Bank of Spain, has been encouraging many of the saving's banks to amalgamate. However all the saving's banks are still subject to a certain amount of local political control and there is a lot of 'heel-dragging.'

The newspaper El Mundo reported the case of the Sevilla man who has spent 11 months in prison for domestic violence he never committed. His wife lied with 8 false complaints against him when in fact she had injured herself with a blade.

With 73% of telephone numbers beginning with 6 already used, the Ministry for Industry in Spain is reported to be looking at assigning new mobile phone numbers which will begin with a 7. The new numbers are needed as Spain currently has 110 mobile phones per 100 residents, an ever increasing number of them with broadband internet access.

House sales in Spain fell by 33% year on year in the first quarter. The biggest reductions in sales have been seen in the regions of Cataluña, Balearics and Asturias. The average mortgage credit at the end of March stood at 124,316 € 15.42% lower than the year previously, and the average monthly mortgage payment in Spain over the first quarter of the year was down 11% at 740.90 €

Visitors and residents in Marbella can now, in the case of theft or abandoned vehicles, etc, fill in a police report online. Information is available in several languages although the forms are in Spanish only. One still has to go to the police station within 72 hours to sign the report, but this saves enormous amounts of time and queuing etc. It would be excellent if they adopted this practise in our area as well.

The newspaper Público says that the Government is to authorise one pay per view channel on the TDT digital terrestrial television system to each operator on the system. The decision has upset the main pay per view company, Digital +. Prisa, the parent company of El País, Cuatro and Digital Plus, has said it will challenge the decision in court.

Two Poles have opened a bar in the coastal town of Cullera in Valencia, where they invite their clients to insult the waiters and barmen. Early signs are that the bar is a success, with the clients generally insulting the staff in Spanish, Polish, French and Romanian. Some locals have voiced opposition to the idea stating that 'what begins with an insult often ends up with violence'. If the insults are 'creative and fun' customers can win a free drink.

Alicante police anti-drug agents have confiscated a ton of cocaine found hidden inside a consignment of pineapples and yucca plants. The drug traffickers involved were based in Orihuela and intended to distribute the drug across the Valencia region and Europe.

The main opposition party, the PP, did well in Spain in the European elections. There was a fair bit of mud-slinging between the PSOE and the PP before the elections. The PP accused the PSOE of nepotism in Andalucia and corruption in Estepona; and what started off as an investigation into who bought the suits for Francisco Camps, the president of Valencia, (he says that he has mislaid the receipts) has now developed into a supreme court investigation of the PP treasurer, who is a member of the senate. In Spain, investigation of politicians depends on where they are in the pecking order. So a local mayor will face a different investigating body to that of a senator.

In relation to the UK, we hear that BNP leader Nick Griffin was outraged by a recent egg-throwing attack. He says they should have separated the whites first....

Air France are now offering a new tour to their transatlantic clients - See the Titanic.

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**New Numbers!**

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A teenage granddaughter comes downstairs for her date with this see-through blouse on and no bra. Her grandmother just pitched a fit, telling her not to dare go out like that!

The teenager tells her 'Loosen up Grams. These are modern times. You gotta let your rose buds show!' and out she goes.

The next day the teenager comes down stairs, and the grandmother is sitting there with no top on. The teenager wants to die. She explains to her grandmother that she has friends coming over and that it is just not appropriate....

The grandmother says, 'Loosen up, Sweetie. If you can show off your rose buds, then I can display my hanging baskets!'

Happy Gardening! (Ann Wightman)

Spain, on January 1 this year, had a total population of 46,661,950 according to a report just published by the INE, the National Statistics Institute. The number, based on those registered at their local town halls, shows a population growth over 2008 of 504,128, and reveals that 12% of the population is foreign. Now, I wonder how many are not registered at the local town halls.

The National Court has found the Izquierda Unida Mayor of Puerto Real guilty of serious slander against the King of Spain for comments he made last year in a speech to celebrate the anniversary of the second republic. He described the monarch as 'corrupt', 'weak', and the 'son of a drunk'. The court said in its ruling that José Antonio Barroso's words went beyond political criticism, deeming them a 'personal insult' and has fined the Mayor almost 6,500 €. The prosecutor in the case had asked for almost 11,000 €. The money must come from Barroso's own pocket and cannot be paid from Town Hall funds.

One of my favourite stories last month: A local goat-herder camped outside the Town Hall in Salobreña in protest at a 10,000 € fine for building an illegal shelter for his animals. The original fine, imposed four years ago, was 1,700 € but, with the surcharges added on over the years, now comes to more than 10,000 €. Santiago Alonso had been setting up camp in the Town Hall square every day with his herd of 200 goats, and, as fellow goat-herders brought their herds along to the square to support their colleague's claim, numbers swelled to more than 1,000 animals. Santiago's house was then embargoed because of the unpaid fine and then he faced another problem – the cleaning costs for the mess left by the goats, plus fines from the local police and Guardia Civil. The father of two was reported to have turned down a payment plan offered by the Town Hall. An extraordinary council meeting on Wednesday, June 3, agreed that the Town Hall itself will pay the fine they imposed. The fine cannot be cancelled, but the money to pay it, at the proposal of the Mayor, will come out of the budget set aside for the political groups in the local corporation. The Town Hall building was closed for two days for fumigation after the departure of its fragrant guests. Goat power!

While the political row continues in Spain over the Prime Minister using a small military jet to get to campaign meetings for the European elections, Queen Sofía has been setting her own example. She took a Ryanair flight (costing 15 euro) to Standsted one Sunday evening to visit her sick brother in London. Bet she never came back with them! Naturally Ryanair were ungracious and milked the publicity element. They later apologised to the royal family.

In a rather poignant story, a mongrel bitch has been waiting outside the cemetery in Nerja since her Irish owner died and was buried inside two months ago. She spends the nights sleeping inside a niche. Some have tried to take her away, but she refuses to leave the body of her master, and the locals, who leave food out for it regularly, say that the animal is very docile and bothers nobody.

The Junta de Andalucía is hoping to encourage teenagers to stay on for further education after the age of 16 with a new grant which will be paid out for the first time this September. The teenagers will be paid 600 euro each month for ten months. The students must be out of work and not claiming unemployment benefit, and come from a low-income family. The junta has set aside 30 million euro for this. There are other eligibility requirements and the students academic performance has to be acceptable or the grant will be withdrawn.

The dreadful story of the Bolivian immigrant who lost an arm in an accident with a kneading machine while working illegally in a Valencia bakery got wide coverage in the press. He was working 12 hour days for 700 € a month. The employer is alleged to have thrown his arm into the rubbish after the accident, dumped him 200 metres from the hospital, asking him not to say anything. The bakery was eventually closed and the migrant's two bosses were arrested. They are two brothers who own the factory and are accused of infringing the rights of workers. The government have now granted residence papers to the injured man and his family on humanitarian grounds.

The arrival of Domino's pizza in Spain has prompted the market leader, Telepizza, to offer extra products. The Spanish firm feeds some 500,000 across the country between 9pm and 11pm on an average Saturday night in Spain, and gives jobs to 16,000. It has now introduced new lines including hamburgers, chicken, kebabs, pastas and salads with the intention of 'completing all the family tastes in a single order'.

Bank branches in Spain are closing at a rate of two a day, and more than 300 have shut their doors over the past six months.

The Government is reported to be considering giving a 400 € monthly payment to the unemployed who are not entitled to benefit. To be eligible for the scheme the person would have to take part in a training program. There are an estimated 1 million unemployed with no right to benefit in Spain currently. The measure would cost 120 million € a month.

#### Uhh Arrr!

A farmer was sitting on his porch one day when a young man drives up and comes to the door.

"I was driving by and noticed you had a lot of milkweed in your pasture. Would you mind if I went out and got some milk?" "You don't get milk from milkweed!" the farmer replied.

"Oh yes you do," said the young man, "I have a degree in Agriculture, I know all about it."

"Well, help yourself," said the farmer. He soon saw the young man coming back to his car with two buckets full of milk.

The next day the farmer was again sitting on his porch when the same young man drove up.

"Yesterday when I was getting milk, I noticed you had some honeysuckle in the hedge row. I wondered if you would mind if I got some honey?" "You don't get honey from honeysuckle!" said the farmer.

Again, the young man explained about his degree in agriculture, so the farmer agreed to let him collect some honey. Soon the young man came back to his car with two buckets full of honey. The next day the same young man drove up to the farmer's house.

"Yesterday when I was getting the honey, I noticed you had some pussy willow down by the river."

The farmer said, "Let me get my shoes and I'll go with you!"

### Guest Restaurant Review. Casa Alfonso Restaurant by Vivianne.

Located in Dehesa de Campoamor, Alfonso's is the only restaurant in this area which boasts a Michelin Star. As we were celebrating a special occasion, we decided to 'splash-out' for the evening.

When you approach Alfonso's, you see that it is a purpose-built almost circular one-story building. After leaving the entrance hallway, you enter a beautiful circular garden with lots of flowers and a fountain. Then through another hallway and into one of two dining rooms, which are beautifully decorated and furnished with large windows overlooking the garden.

In the restaurant, they offer the choice of an express menu for 40 € per person and a tasting menu for 70 €. Alternatively you can choose from the a la carte menu. This features a range of starters such as a salad for 12 €, a rice dish for 16 € or if you are feeling really extravagant, caviar at 175 €

Mains on the a la carte range feature steak or lamb at 26€ with desserts ranging from 9 to 12 €

We choose the express menu at 40 € a head. This comprised around seven small courses or dishes.

First we were served an assortment of home-made breads with a small dish of extra virgin olive-oil. Delicious. In the past you were also given a glass of cava, but not unfortunately this time, possibly cut-backs. The night we were there, there was only one other couple dining. Next came a ball of cod mixed with squid, which was followed by a mixture of onion and black-putting type sausage. This was followed by a *fois gras*, which was served on a sweetened bread with a small glass of sweet wine – gorgeous! Then we were served with a small pizza slice with anchovies and fish, which was followed by the main course, cheek of beef. The beef was served on its own without an accompaniment. Finally for dessert there was a lovely soufflé. Coffee was served later at 3€ a cup.

Alfonso Egea, one of Spain's rapidly rising chefs, leads the team. The menus are changed regularly and the following are just a few of his other creations, clams with cream of potato and Iberian ham, wild sea bass in mustard and cockle sauce, pink pigeon with rice, wild mushrooms and pear, pineapple tart, coconut ice cream.

The service was excellent, with the waiters polite, attentive and as quiet as mice. All the wine and water was kept at a central table with the waiters topping up your glasses promptly when required. As well as our wine we had two glasses of water each – which the waiters just kept filling up – and we were surprised to see on the bill that we were charged 10€ for the four glasses of water! We thought the water was free as there were no prices for it in the menu. Wine is of course extra and they have a very extensive wine-list which would please the most demanding, with prices starting at 20 €. We settled for a pleasant red at 22 €

Good food, good wine, excellent service, surroundings and ambiance. A lovely experience for the special occasion, but not if you are on a tight budget!

Casa Alfonso is located at Garcilaso de la Vega, C1. in Dehesa de Campoamor, on the coastal side, just behind the petrol station by the roundabout on the N332. They can be contacted on 965321365-965322717. They also have a web-site on [www.casaalfonso.es/](http://www.casaalfonso.es/) which is less than helpful, but it does give a couple of views of the restaurant's interiors.

I bumped into my mate who's only got one arm.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To change a light bulb" he replied.

"Won't that be a bit difficult?"

"No" he said, "I've still got the receipt"....

#### Hello Sailor

A depressed young woman was so desperate that she decided to end her life by throwing herself into the sea. When she went down to the docks, a handsome young sailor noticed her tears, took pity on her and said, "Look, you've got a lot to live for. I'm off to Australia in the morning and if you like, I can stow you away on my ship. I'll take good care of you and bring you food every day." Moving closer, he slipped his arm around her shoulder and added, "I'll keep you happy and you'll keep me happy." The girl nodded yes, after all, what did she have to lose? That night, the sailor brought her aboard and hid her in a lifeboat. From then on, every night he brought her three sandwiches and a piece of fruit and they made passionate love until dawn.

Three weeks later, during a routine search, she was discovered by the captain.

"What are you doing here?" the captain asked.

"I have an arrangement with one of the sailors. He's taking me to Australia and he's screwing me."

"He sure is love, this is the Isle of Wight ferry."

#### Tough Cookie

A little old lady decides to join the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang. So one day she knocks on their clubhouse entrance.

A big, hairy, bearded biker with tattoos all over his arms pokes his head round the door.

"I want to join your club," she says.

Amused, the biker humours her, claiming she needs to meet certain requirements to be part of their gang.

"Do you have a motorcycle?" he says.

"Yup," she replies. "It's parked right over there."

Both of them look round to see a flamed, black Harley chopper in the driveway.

"Do you drink?" he continues.

"Oh yes, like a fish," she says. "I'll drink any man in your club under the table."

"Do you smoke?" "Smoke?" she hoots.

"Damn right I smoke. I smoke like a chimney. In fact I smoke three packs a day, as well as three joints, and a couple of cigars in the evening, just before I raise hell on the pool table."

"Wow," says the biker, impressed. "You sound like one bad momma. But tell me: have you ever been picked up by the fuzz?"

"Nope" says the old lady, "but I've been swung round by the nipples a few times."

## Spanish Vignettes - Baby Jumping!

The Catholic festival of Corpus Christi is celebrated all over Spain with processions, mystery plays and a wide variety of popular celebrations.

A small village in Burgos province, in the north of Spain, is home to what is probably one of Spain's most bizarre festivals. It takes place every year in June as part of the Corpus Christi celebrations in the small village of Castrillo de Murcia, 41 km's from Burgos, in the north of Spain. Here, a character representing the Devil, known as '*El Colacho*', protects babies from his evil influence by leaping over rows of infants born during the previous twelve months, who lie on rows of mattresses in the street. (See images below.)

It's an event which dates back to the 1620's, and is organised by 'the *Cofradía del Santísimo Sacramento*' – 'the brotherhood of the Holy Sacrament'. The brotherhood, a very sombre bunch wearing black cloaks, have been organising the festival since the 1600's. They run a 'very tight ship' with the organisation and running of the festival, shepherding, badgering, harassing and corralling the locals and tourists. They also select the babies, for what is considered an honour. Every year, the fittest members are chosen for the honour of playing the part of *El Colacho* in the village's Corpus Christi festival.

Another takes on the role of *El Atabalero* who, dressed in a black suit and hat, beats on a massive drum as the processions wend their way through the streets of Castrillo de Murcia. *El Colacho*, his face covered with a grotesque mask, is dressed in a bright yellow and red outfit, and accompanies the beat of the drum by banging on an enormous castanet with a stick tipped with a tail of horse hair.

The most important day of the festivities is the Sunday, when locals decorate their homes with flowers and some set up small altars outside their houses, where those taking part in the procession will stop to partake of water and wine. It's in the afternoon procession that the symbolic defeat of evil takes place, when *El Colacho* rips off his mask and flees by leaping over the babies who then receive the blessing of the Holy Sacrament from the local priest. After the '*salto*' (jump or leap), the babies, now cleansed of evil, are showered with rose petals by children from the village who have received their First Communion.

The origins of this strange festival are somewhat obscure, but it's believed to date back to pagan times before it was Christianised with the twinning in 1621 of the *Cofradía del Santísimo Sacramento* and the *Cofradía de Minerva*. It's been held every year since then and now has the status of National Tourist Interest, this despite Pope Benedict asking the priests in Spain to distance themselves from the event.

(I see no reason why Dream Hills could not have its own festival of say... Mother-in-Law, annoying neighbours or politician jumping. The *Colachos* though should weigh more than 18 stone!)



### Try these.

A dinner speaker was in such a hurry to get to his engagement that when he arrived and sat down at the head table, he suddenly realized that he had forgotten his false teeth. Turning to the man next to him he said, 'I forgot my teeth.'

The man said, 'No problem.' He reached into his pocket and pulled out a pair of false teeth. 'Try these,' he said. The speaker tried them. 'Too loose,' he said. The man then said, 'I have another pair - try these.' The speaker tried them and responded, 'Too tight.' The man was not taken back at all. He then said, 'I have one more pair. Try them.' The speaker said, 'They fit perfectly.' With that he ate his meal and gave his speech. After the dinner meeting was over, the speaker went over to thank the man who had helped him. 'I want to thank you for coming to my aid. Where is your office? I've been looking for a good dentist.'

The man replied, 'I'm not a dentist. I'm an undertaker.'

### All Bar Nun

Just after World War 2, a reporter was interviewing the head nun of a convent in Italy regarding her experiences during the war.

"Oh it was terrible, terrible." She cried, "First the Italians raped us all except Sister Matilda. Then the Germans raped us all except Sister Matilda and then the Americans raped us all except Sister Matilda."

"Oh I'm so sorry, it must be very difficult for you." replied the reporter, "But I'm curious, you said they all raped you except Sister Matilda. Why didn't anyone rape Sister Matilda?"

"Oh Sister Matilda," said the nun, wiping her eye, "She's not interested in that sort of thing."

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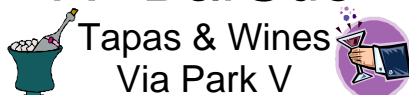
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### Ronaldo

Ronaldo arrives for his first practice  
game at Real Madrid, and the man-  
ager is giving the pre-match team  
talk.

'Christiano', he says, 'I want you to  
play through the middle, make pen-  
etrating runs, and shoot when ever  
you can. I want you to head the  
corners, take the free kicks and  
take on the center-backs, and if you  
do well, we'll pull you off at half  
time.'

'That's fantastic,' says Ronaldo,  
'when I was at Man Utd, all I got was  
a cup of tea and half an orange!'

### Young Thespian

"Dad ! Dad!" says the lad, terribly excited, "I'm in the school play!"  
 "Great stuff," replies Dad "What part did you get?"  
 "I get to play a 43 year old married man"  
 "Well better luck next year son, you might get a speaking part....."

### Wacko

Whats the difference between Alex Ferguson and Michael Jackson? Fergie will be playing Giggs in August.  
 He touched the hearts of thousands, and the parts of a few.  
 Los Angeles police went through Michael Jackson's Neverland ranch after his death . It is being reported that they found Class A drugs in his kitchen, Class B drugs in his bathroom...and Class 4C in his bedroom.

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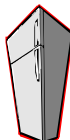
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## Out & About

A serious **assault** took place between Via Park 3 and the green gates at the top of Dream Hills. A 62-year-old man was allegedly assaulted by a number of British males in the early hours on the 21st. The police have said that assaults by British males make up 80% of the assaults on the Orihuela Costa and that they are 'fed-up' with these incidents.

After what was a long cool winter, summer has arrived with a vengeance. June was warmer than normal and we can expect July and August to be two degrees warmer than average, according to the forecasters. TG for **air-con!** One of our advertisers, Affordable Aircon, offers a range of installations to suit all budgets. We had a number of units installed by Keith and we were very pleased with the prices and performance.

Even though it is summer, you will still find that most of our advertisers are still giving some very good **deals** in the food and drink range, with many good breakfasts available from around 3 euro, steak specials and bottles of beer for only 1 euro! Check out the adverts for the special offers.

The **Via Park V Fayre** was held in beautiful weather on June 13. It was a resounding success. The ground and first floor trading levels were packed, the top floor less so. There were a number of charity stalls, tombola stall etc together with a range of games such as putting, fishing and shooting. Stefan 'squared it away' with the town hall and police and it was fun to see the kids in the police car setting the sirens going - well at least for the first half hour! I have never seen so many people there. As you can see from the announcement's page of this issue, a considerable amount of money was raised to go to six local charities. It is also good news that there may be another 'fayre' later this year.

You may know Johan, Marcia and of course their lovely daughter Tanisha, who live in the 500's. Well, Johan and Marcia have acquired Bar International next to the Indian restaurant ASK 31 on the back road to Playa Flamenca, Calle Pirena. They will be changing the name to **Bar Ebony Ivory**. They plan to have an opening party on the evening of the 16th July, starting at 8 pm and finishing at midnight. There will be live music, food and some free drinks. **You are all invited to the opening so put it in your diary!** Johan, as you may know, is a gifted musician (he can make a sax talk) and live music will thankfully play a large part at Bar Ebony Ivory. There will be regular jam sessions with professional musician and, for the musically challenged, there will also be bingo and quiz nights. It is also planned to have a Caribbean Party once a month with live music and Caribbean snacks. See [www.airbrushstudio.eu](http://www.airbrushstudio.eu) for updates.

Conrad from Dream Hills 2 tells me that he has set up a **new message board**. He has included a special section in it for Dream Hills (1). It can be accessed at [www.dreamhills2.ipbhost.com](http://www.dreamhills2.ipbhost.com)

The Spanish government, as governments do, waited until the European Elections were over to bring in some **extra taxation**. The normally cheap ciggies are now up by at least 35 cents a pack, while rolling tobacco has come in for a real hammering with 50 gram packs increasing from €3.20 to €4.60, a 43.75% increase! The tax on petrol has also gone up by 3 to 4 cents a litre. It is also likely that the government will withdraw the additional rebate/allowance of 400 euro introduced last year.

The liberalisation of **power suppliers** in Spain on July 1 has arrived without hardly any offers to make our monthly power bill any cheaper. The reason why most of the power companies have not issued any new offers to attract new clients is because they were waiting for the Government to fix a new maximum price. There was a 3.5% increase at the start of the year and the government have just announced a 2% increase from July 1. The price will be reviewed every quarter in line with the cost of raw materials and demand.

**Carrefour**, who have a three for two offer on many goods at the moment, plan to do away with plastic carrier bags at their hypermarkets. It will be done over a period of time. In Spain the average use of plastic bags per resident is 238 a year. These bags take 400 years to decompose and only 10% of them are ever recycled.

The local sporadic **bus service** now stops at Dream Hills 2. The reason why it does not come down Dream Hills is apparently because, wait for it, .....they cannot turn around! I know! Don't tell me, tell them!

## The Oracle of Dream Hills



Whoever said the pen is mightier than the sword obviously never encountered automatic weapons.

If you think nobody cares if you are alive, try missing a couple of car payments.

Bills travel through the post at twice the speed of cheques.

Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines.

### No we can't!

After numerous rounds of "We don't even know if Osama is still alive," Osama himself decided to send Barack Obama a letter in his own handwriting to let him know he was still in the game. Obama opened the letter and it contained a single line of coded message:

370H-SSV-0773H

Obama was baffled, so he sent it to the FBI.

No one could solve it at the FBI so it went to the CIA, then to Mossad and finally to GCHQ in the UK; all failed to decipher the message. Fortunately an Irish tea-lady passing the desk with the message at GCHQ was able to provide the solution.

Within a minute, MI6 emailed the White House with this reply ...

"Tell the President he's holding the message upside down."



### Motoring - Changes in the Law

The DGT traffic authority in Spain is to hand out 40 million extra licence points to some 21 million good drivers from next month. Those with a clean record since the points system was introduced will get two extra points, taking them to 14, and if they continue for another three years they will get an extra point to reach 15. The most common fine remains for speeding, followed by not wearing a seat belt, and not having the correct measures in place for the protection of children. Driving over the limit and using a mobile phone comes next.

Congress is now debating, and is expected to approve, new changes as part of the new Highway Code – *Ley de Seguridad Vial*. This is a whole raft of new measures and of course fines. Parking in a disabled area will cost you a 200 € fine, as will driving while programming the GPS system. Points will no longer be taken from drivers who break the speed limit but who go no faster than 130 kms/hour on motorway access roads to cities, and it also will no longer be obligatory for drivers to carry all their car's documents in the vehicle. The term 'negligent driving' remains but no longer results in the loss of points.

Radar detection systems will be legal in Spain under the new rules, but installing electronic apparatus which makes the DGT speed traps ineffective is now prohibited. Current insurance cover is to be required as an additional point of the ITV/MOT test. Money generated by traffic fines will now be ring-fenced to finance more road safety, and discounts of up to 50% will be available for the 'pronto pago', with on the spot payment with a credit card introduced for the first time. Another section of the new law includes setting fixed quantities for traffic fines: 100 euro for minor infractions, 200 euro for serious and 500 wuro for very serious offences.

One of the ideas behind the new law is to unify the criteria set out by the different administrations which penalise the same offence differently. More on this when it comes to light.

### What time is it?

There was a tour bus in Egypt that stopped in the middle of a village square. The tourists are all shopping at the little stands surrounding the square.

One tourist looks at his watch but it has stopped, so he leans over to a local who is sitting next to his camel, "What time is it, please?"

The local reaches out and softly cups the camel's genitals in his hand and raises them up and down.

"It's about two o'clock effendi," he says.

The tourist can't believe what he just saw and runs back to the bus and sure enough, the dashboard clock shows it is 2:00 p.m. He tells a few of the fellow tourists his story, "That man can tell the time by the weight of the camel's balls!"

One of the doubting tourists walks back to the local and asks him the time, the same thing happens!! It is 2:05 p.m.

The bus driver still doubts the story and asks the local how he knows the time from the camel's genitals.

The local says, "Sit down here and grab the camel's bollocks. Lift them up in the air and look underneath them to the other side of the square, where that clock is hanging on the wall."

### Malaga Madness?

In the province of Malaga, citizens report as many as seventy 'minor thefts' a day. The offence appears on the Spanish police report as "*hurto*", a term used to describe minor theft, pick-pocketing or shoplifting carried out without violence or intimidation and normally without the victim noticing.

Between June and September the Costas attract crowds of tourists and they in turn attract the pickpockets. "Some manage to get away with a fortune", said one chief inspector of the National Police. "They tend to operate in coordinated groups and travel round the country 'doing the fairs', started with the 'Fallas' in Valencia in March and coming down through the Costas to the Andalusian coastline and others in the summer".

It is the value of the goods or cash stolen that establishes whether the theft is considered by the Spanish legal system as a "*falta*" (misdemeanour) or the more serious criminal offence of "*delito*". Only when the amount stolen is worth 400 euros or more can the suspect be arrested! The thieves know the law better than most. The gangs specialising in shoplifting rarely take anything worth more than 400 euros. If they are caught and the police are called, they cannot be arrested. "Only if they've been caught four times in a month", clarifies the inspector.

Still in Malaga, a transsexual serving a sentence for raping a woman in 1998 is being allowed to move to the women's unit at Alhaurín de la Torre prison. The Malaga Provincial Court has defended the move by pointing out that the convict is down on the civil registry as a female. However, the public prosecutor's office has criticised the "illogical" decision, pointing out that the rapist is a pre-op transsexual (he still has male genitalia) and his victims are always female. The prisoner had wanted to undergo a sex change operation but several preliminary medical and psychological tests deemed him to have a personality disorder.

The Malaga Provincial Court considers that to keep the prisoner among male inmates would be to "discriminate" against him.

(And who says that the inmates haven't taken over the asylum?)

### What's up Doc?

A mechanic was removing a cylinder-head from the motor of a Harley motorcycle when he spotted a well-known cardiologist in his shop. The cardiologist was there waiting for the service manager to come and take a look at his bike when the mechanic shouted across the Garage, 'Hey Doc, want to take a look at this?' The cardiologist, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working on the motorcycle. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag and asked, 'So Doc, look at this engine. I open its heart, take the valves out, repair any damage, and then put them back in, and when I finish, it works just like new. So how come I make \$39,675 a year and you get the really big bucks (\$1,695,759) when you and I are doing basically the same work?'

The cardiologist paused, smiled and leaned over, then whispered to the mechanic...

'Try doing it with the engine running!'

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**BE AWARE!**

**SUPPORT YOUR  
SECURITY GUARDS &  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
WATCH**

**Pay-Up Time!**

Please note that your urbanisation fee payments were due this June if you live in Dream Hills. If you have not paid by now you are in default. Also note that they no longer accept cash at the administrator's office due to a burglary last month. Details of where to go to pay are of course still available at the office. Also, if you pay Spanish Income Tax on a deferred year basis, you should have made your first payment by the end of June. The second is due in early November.

**SIP Cards**

According to the Leader, you can now get your SIP cards from the Ayuntamiento in Orihuela Costa. At the town hall, the desk is manned by Abraham, who speaks perfect English and will tell you what is required depending on your circumstances.

**Phone Tariffs**

The European Council of Ministers has formally approved the reduction in mobile phone tariffs when travelling across the continent. The new prices come into effect on July 1.

Calls made from one country to another in Europe must now cost no more than 43 cents per minute to make, and no more than 19 cents per minute to receive when you are out of your native country.

SMS text messages have been pegged at a maximum price of 11 cents, plus IVA/VAT.

**Costa Blanca SAMARITANS****902 88 35 35**

The HELPLINE on 902 88 35 35 for the Samaritans is now available Monday to Friday evenings from 8 p.m. until midnight. The intention is to deliver a 7 day service as soon as possible.

**Via Park V****Fayre & Fun Day.**

A quick word of thanks to all who visited and supported our event. With the income generated from the charities own stalls, the proceeds of all the various events and activities and the generous contribution from the Dreamhills Petanquers Charity Game, the grand total raised on the day has exceeded 1,750.00 euros.

We would like to offer further thanks to the many volunteers who helped clean, plant flowers, blow up balloons, fetch and carry etc. Too many to name, our sincere thanks all the same.

We hope to hold another event later in the year and look forward to seeing you all there.

**Community of Business's Via Park V.****PETANQUE FUN DAY**

The members of the Monday Petanque players thought that it would be fun to join in on the Gala Day that was organised by the proprietors of the businesses on Via Park 5 by holding a knockout competition. Knowing that the fun day was to raise money for charity, all participants were asked to donate 1 euro to play and the losers of each leg had to donate 2 euro's for the privilege of being beaten. The winners of the competition were Marjory and Allan. A raffle was held after the game and between that and the money raised at the game we were able to donate 94 euros towards the charity funds for the day.

Thanks to all that took part in the fun competition for their support.

(Mike Duncan)

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