

THE DREAM SCENE

Newsletter

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Bienvenido a todos!

With Autumn officially now started, the long range weather forecast from the Spanish Met Agency says that we are in for a milder autumn and winter than normal, particularly in the south of the country. Average temperatures in October, November and December are forecast to be 0.5 degrees higher than normal. Rainfall is expected to be less than normal during Autumn (but don't blame me if you find that you are up to your neck in *Gota Frias* this month), but it should be noted that follows the current hydrological year to the end of September, which has seen rainfall 20% above normal. The mild winter prediction also follows the fact that July, August and September have been the hottest, in general terms, since 1970. August was the third hottest month this century, with temperatures on average 1.5 degrees higher than normal.

The perimeter of Via Park V was looking like a dump last month with discarded and broken bottles, paper, tin cans, dog poo etc. Alan & Pat and John Kerr from Dream Hills, together with Alan from Inspiration, did a great job in cleaning it up recently. It should have been the Via Park tenants who cleared it up, but credit to Rick & Kath of Galadriel, who provided the volunteers with a well earned breakfast afterwards.

Now that the very hot weather has passed, there is renewed activity in improving the look of the waste ground bordering the south and south east of the urbanisation. John Kerr and Terry have been doing some truly excellent but back-breaking work in tidying-up the area and planting new shrubs and trees. It is really taking shape now and is a vast improvement compared to the wasteland it was in the past. However, they are in need of more help but in particular they need some digging equipment such as a pickaxes, etc. If you would like to donate an old pick-axe, or if you are feeling particularly 'flush' and would like to donate one or help with the landscaping, then please contact John or Terry at either no's 495 or 503 in Dream Hills. Also if you have plants or trees you want to donate, please contact them.

Similarly on the waste ground by the new phase (which was originally scheduled to be a kindergarten), and in the dip behind it, David and George from the new phase have been doing a lot of hard work in improving those areas. I have also noticed Roger doing the difficult and probably painful job of planting lots of cacti in the area. Their achievements to date are admirable and when some of the plants are in bloom the area is even more attractive.

Now all this work is being done spontaneously and without funding or whining! These are residents who are contributing towards the community and their unselfish work is benefiting the urbanisation as a whole. It begs the question - If they were given some funding what could they achieve?

Following on from the Pissed Mattress Theory last month, the above has helped me to arrive at what I feel is the First Law of Urbanisation Living. It states that the level of whining and whinging from a resident is inversely proportional to their contribution to the community. That is, the greater the complaining, the less of a contribution they make.

I have included a lengthy article on the Basques and ETA this month, so I have postponed the article on the History of Spain, to avoid some of you getting history-overload! I have also included an up-to-date article on the latest developments on TDT, as a lot seems to be happening now in that area. Besides Mo H. asked me to write this several weeks ago and fluttered her eyelashes, so how could I refuse!

Have an enjoyable month and take care of yourselves. Mick, Editor.

THANK YOU!

KEVIN & JULES WOULD LIKE TO INVITE EVERYBODY TO ONE LAST R-BAR / ALL BAR SUE BASH ON SAT OCTOBER 2ND AT ALL BAR SUE. WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK EVERYBODY FOR THEIR KINDNESS, FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT OVER THE YEARS. REMEMBER - SAT 2ND OCTOBER AT ALL BAR SUE.



Angela's Cartoon



So I said 'Now you've pruned, you can paint the house.'

What's Up?

The General Strike on the 29th had little effect locally. Other than the bins not being emptied and the lack of local transport, it seemed to be business as usual. We took a drive 'round and although traffic seemed lighter, everything was normal. There was some picketing and intimidation on some local industrial estates and there was a picket outside Carrefour. Nationally it was mainly Madrid and Barcelona which were targeted by the unions. If you read the left wing press you will be told that the strike was a moderate success, with transport and industry paralysed. However the right wing press has headlines of 'General Failure' and 'Failure of the hooligan strike.' The big unions are claiming that it was hugely successful with 70% support, while the employers report only between 3 and 10% support for the strike depending on the industry. As one would expect, the unions have overstated the numbers of demonstrators saying that there were half a million protesting in Madrid. The EFE news agency took 850 high resolution photos of the demonstration and reported that the number was closer to 17,300. The worst violence from the demonstrators was in Barcelona, where some businesses were wrecked and there were running battles with the police. The government have been very weak and tolerant with the unions over the whole issue. The Minister for Employment, Celestino Corbacho, praised the unions for their 'responsibility' in meeting minimum services, stating that the incidents that happened as what you would expect during a General Strike.

All is reported to be practically ready for the opening of the new terminal at the El Altet airport in Alicante. I was able to drive very close to the new buildings last week and they are very impressive. The new facility will double the capacity of the airport to be able to handle 20 million passengers a year, and is due to come into full operation in the first quarter of next year. The total cost of the Alicante works between 2004 and 2011 is 570 million € of which 384 million have gone on the new terminal. It has a new line of boarding gates parallel to the runway, and a processing building which is at right angles. It covers 333,500 square metres, some six times the area of the current terminals 1 and 2. It will have 16 airline 'fingers' compared to the five at present. A 15,500 square metre departures hall will have 96 check-in desks compared to the 52 currently, while in arrival passengers will now be able to get lost among the 14 luggage carousels. Currently a series of tests of the different facilities are underway, including the luggage system which is capable of handling 7,680 suitcases an hour. Also being tested is a new car park which will add 4,200 spaces to the 2,000 available now. New access roads and new power facilities are also being completed to serve the new terminal. Although this is good news, it is sad to see that the nearest airport to us, San Javier, continuing its decline. The new airport in Murcia will probably finish it off completely. I hope not.

It has been revealed that the recession in Spain has now seen some 125,000 companies close down since 2007. It represents 10% of the business fabric of the country. The regions have fared differently according to the latest statistics. The Balearics have seen more companies form, up nearly 6%, while in Valencia 22,830 companies have closed down.

House sales increased in July by 16.4% compared to the same month last year, the seventh consecutive monthly increase. 51.5% of the deals were for new property, and 48.5% were from the resale market, according to the National Statistics Institute, INE. More houses were sold in the month than in any other month of the year, with the transactions benefiting from being before the IVA/VAT increase applied to new properties. However three regions of the country saw a fall in house sales, Navarra, Extremadura and Murcia. 57.8% of the sales were concentrated in Andalucía, Cataluña, Valencia and Madrid. Sales to foreign buyers were up 46% on the same period last year.

The state budgets for 2011 scraped through congress thanks to the pact arranged by the Socialist Government with the PNV, the Basque Nationalist Party. By achieving this pact the government have avoided an early General Election. The price? The socialists have had to devolve Basque employment policy to the Region, together with a payment of €472 million 'to help create employment' in the Region.

An ecologist action group, *Verdemar-Ecologistas en Acción*, has asked the European Commission to intervene in the Straits of Gibraltar. It seems that the Royal Navy are exploding out-of-date ordinance underwater. The environmental group claims that the explosions are killing numerous aquatic species which are protected under the Red Natura 2000 scheme, and complain that no information is forthcoming from the Rock, as the excuse of 'military secrets' is used. There continues to be occasional 'spats' between the Royal Navy and the Guardia Civil, with the latter following suspected drug-traffickers into Gib' territory and the Royal Navy then surrounding the Spanish police boats.

The PP Mayor of La Linea, which is the main route into Gibraltar from the Spanish mainland is threatening to charge a € toll for everyone going through his town to Gib. This is creating a bit of a rumpus, especially with the many Spanish who work in Gibraltar but live in Spain and will have to pay the toll every day.

One of Spain's pioneering zoological parks, the Vergel Safari Park in the Marina Alta, Alicante, closed its doors in early September after 33 years because of poor financial returns. A group of workers and vets will continue to work for at least five months until the 460 animals which live in semi-freedom inside are found new homes. (I wonder if we could keep one of their crocodiles in the bottom pool? It would certainly quieten it down a bit!)

The Alicante airport, El Altet, saw more than a million passengers during August, making it the busiest ever summer, despite a fall of almost 8% in British travellers. Most of the foreign passengers in August were from the United Kingdom at 481,908 (down 7.9%), Germany 101,080 (up 1.8%), and Holland 41,791 (up 1.7%).

The power companies in Spain say that the new 4.8% increase in electricity prices for domestic and small business users from October 1 is not enough. Consumers' organizations have already criticized the price hikes which mean that electricity will cost 30% more than it did in July 2007, but the power companies say more is needed as there is greater use of renewable energy.

Three ferry companies, Balearia, Trasmediterránea and FRS Iberia have been fined €3.8 million for price fixing on the route between Algeciras, in Southern Spain and Cueta, in North Africa.

The *Club Fumadores por la Tolerancia*, the Smokers Club for Tolerance, has presented 500,367 signatures in a petition against the new anti-tobacco law which the Government hopes to introduce on January 1 2011. The new legislation being prepared by the Government is still to decide whether smoking clubs will be allowed, but will ban it in all closed public spaces, a decision which has been attacked by many in the hostelry business. Only hotels and hostels will be able to grant 30% of their rooms for the use of smoking guests, and these will have to be separate from the rest of the accommodation and separately ventilated.

Meanwhile the Basque Region is set to have a harsher anti-smoking policy than the rest of the country. The new law being promoted by the Socialist led administration envisages banning smoking on patios and terraces of academic centres and hospitals as well as in children's parks. Also smoking will not be allowed when there are children in the car. Fines 3,000 to 600,000€

The Guardia Civil held a protest rally in Madrid on September 7, despite not being allowed to do so. The Guardia were protesting about working conditions and a 'dignified' working day. 20,000 youngsters are reported to have applied for 116 new Guardia Civil places. This year there are far fewer places on offer than in previous years.

The company owned by retired Australian golfer Greg Norman, The Stripe Group, has purchased the Valderrama Golf Course, at Sotogrande, Cádiz, including associated facilities and properties. It is considered the best golf course in Europe, and was host to the Ryder Cup in 1997, and will host the Andalucía Masters between October 28 and 31. The price paid to the 252 selling partners has not been revealed.

The Socialist President of the Junta de Andalucía is looking for women who had shaven heads 70 years ago to give them 1,800 € The Junta wants to pay compensation for the abuse by the Franco supporters between 1936 and 1950. ABC says that women who swear that they suffered will get the money, given that there are no documents, and says that a commission will study the cases and make the payments during the local election campaign. Great timing!

Spain's biggest municipal corruption case, known as Malaya, started in Marbella on September 27. The case first came to light after police raided the Marbella Town Hall in March 2006. Five years on there are now 95 accused, which include the town's real estate assessor, Juan Antonio Roca. The prosecution instruction case summary considers that 19 local real estate promoters paid regular backhanders between 2002 and 2006 of more than 33 million € to Roca and his cohorts. In return they were granted permission to build on land classified for other uses. One of the promoters, Aifos, has admitted that they paid Roca. Roca faces a possible 30 year prison sentence, accused of defrauding 670 million from the Marbella Ayuntamiento, while ex Mayor Marisol Yagüe faces 20 years, and another ex Mayor, Julián Muñoz faces ten. In total the 95 accused face 509 years in jail and fines totalling 4 billion € The defence lawyers have already attacked the first instruction judge as being biased and not competent to try the case. The case is expected to last a year.

Tall story of the month has to go to the 30 year old Sevilla man, who has been arrested in connection with the murder of a 49 year old teacher, a North American lady. The Spaniard told the judge that he had met the woman on the night of August 30 and that they had had an argument, although he could not remember what the argument was about. He said that she then cut her own neck and self harmed herself on other parts of her body. The body of the victim was found cut up and placed in a suitcase and bag which had been thrown into the Guadalquivir River. He said that he was frightened by what had happened and decided to get rid of the body by throwing it in the river. He said the knife the woman had used was the same one he used to remove the head and an arm from the body, and then he had thrown it into a rubbish container.

The Spaniards may have discovered most of the New World, however Carlos Orihuela, a 50-year-old hotel owner, has dismally failed to match their exploratory achievements. One Friday evening in September, Carlos set out on the calm seas from the Catalan Coast in a rented pedalo. Shortly afterwards, he telephoned a friend to say that he was drowning. There then followed a coordinated land, sea and air search & rescue, which after searching for him for 54 hours found him on Salou Beach on the following Monday night. Poor old Carlos was found to be safe but disorientated and suffering from mild hypothermia and dehydration.

Happy Jap!

A young Japanese girl had been taught all her life that when she married she was to please her husband and never upset him. So the first morning of her honeymoon the young Japanese bride crawled out of bed after making love, stooped down to pick up her husband's clothes and accidentally let out a big fart. She looked up and said ...
"Aww so sowwy ... excuse please..... front hole so happy back hole raugh out roud!"

Spanish Vignettes - The Basque Country & ETA

What is known as the Basque Country or *Euskadi* (collection of Basques) lies in the north of Spain, see Wiki map. The first written records of the Basques comes from the Roman occupation of Spain from around 200 BC. Although the Romans (and everybody else) found the Basques to be aggressive and warlike, they still managed to introduce some Roman infrastructure in the region, such as roads, bridges and aqueducts. Many archaeologists believe that the Basques could have preceded the Romans by as much as 10,000 years, some believing that they might be direct descendants of Cro-Magnon man. That the Basques were pugnacious and aggressive meant that no one entered their territory unless it was unavoidable. In 777, the Frankish king, Charlemagne, invaded Spain with an army and sacked Pamplona. When they retreated through the Pyrenees, the rearguard of his army was decimated by the Basques in Roncesvalles Pass. Throughout history the Basques have been thought of as bigger and stronger by their neighbours. This was borne out by anthropological research in the early part of the 20th century. They found that Basques were two to three centimetres taller on average than their Spanish and French neighbours. The anthropologists also established that the typical Basque had a distinctive 'hare's head', broad at the top and narrow at the bottom with a high forehead, straight nose and a distinctive bulge over the temple. They were also more muscular but their hands and feet were more delicate. Studies, which continue to this day, also illustrate differing blood types from the Spanish and French. Although at one time thought of as 'Europe's aboriginals,' a study in 2001 revealed considerable genetic similarities between the Basques and the Celts of Ireland and Wales. The Basques were also the last Europeans to become Christians and to have towns.



Aside from any differing physical characteristics it is the Basque language, called *Euskara*, that shines as a beacon of uniqueness. It is a truly extraordinary language; it is unique and many attempts to link it to other languages in the world have failed. One sixteenth-century scholar was convinced that their strange tongue enabled the Basques to communicate with the monsters of the deep! To say that it is 'difficult to learn' is borne out by the author of the first Basque grammar, who called his book *The Impossible Overcome*. It is said that it takes between 300 to 500 hours of tuition to attain a conversational standard of the Basque language. Teachers are given up to two year's paid leave - and free classes every day - to learn *euskara*. 80% of the state schools now teach almost entirely in *euskara*. However, the nationalist ideal of a nation of *euskaldunes* - Basque speakers - will be very difficult to achieve as *castellano* is still the most common language spoken in the region.

Many people blame one person for the violence and hatred now emanating from the Basque Country - Sabino de Arana, the father of Basque nationalism - who founded the Basque National Party (PNV) in 1894. Arana's father was a Carlist. (Carlists were reactionary, traditional Catholics, who backed an absolutist pretender to the Spanish crown and opposed any liberal reforms that attempted both to create legal equality across Spain and loosen the Church's power; they fought two bloody civil wars in Spain in the nineteenth century and would also play a part in the last Spanish Civil War, fighting for Franco's nationalists.) In 1892 Arana published his first full-length political treatise. He was also profoundly reactionary and wanted to return the Basque country to a state of pre-industrial innocence in which society would be guided by the dictates of religion. At the core of his doctrine was an undisguised hatred for the immigrants - 'They come up here bringing with them their bullfights, their flamenco songs and dances, their "refined" language so abundant in blasphemous and filthy expressions, their fighting knives and so many splendid means of "civilization".' Arana was a racist and was also against 'mixed' marriages. He founded a number of community centres (*batzokis*) to further Basque nationalism but even here members were divided into three categories according to the number of their Basque grandparents and only those whose four grandparents had Basque surnames could hold office. (This reminds me of a certain Austrian with a funny moustache and neat haircut, who held similar views on lineage.)

The Basque nationalists believe that Euskadi consists of, or should consist of, the three French Basque districts, Soule, Labourd and Basse-Navarre together with the four Spanish provinces of Alava, Guipúzcoa, Biscay and Navarre, the latter which has always had a large number of non-Basque inhabitants. During the Spanish Civil War 1936-39, after being promised home-rule by the Republican Government, both Guipúzcoa and Biscay sided with the Republicans. They would pay dearly for their choice both during and after the civil war, but more on this in future history articles.

The letters ETA - standing for Euskadi Ta Askatasuna - Euskadi and Freedom - first appeared daubed on the walls of towns in Guipúzcoa and Biscay during 1960. In June 1960, ETA's first victim was a 22-month-old baby, Begoña Urroz, who was killed by an explosive device in a train station in San Sebastián. In 1961, ETA tried to derail a train carrying Francoist veterans to a rally in San Sebastián. In the resulting police operation, over 100 people were arrested and many were tortured. Some were sentenced to up to 20 years in jail, but all the ETA leaders had escaped to France. For several years the organisation had a succession of internal conflicts, with the more violent groups persisting and ousting the moderates, their primary objective now being separatism and not just the removal of Franco and his minions.

Continued on Page 5

Obituary: Mr. Fester Lug died in a hunting accident last Monday. He is survived by a wife, two sons and a rabbit.

Continued from Page 4 - The Basque Country & ETA

The late seventies and early eighties were ETA's most successful period as a terrorist organisation, if you judge success by a large 'butcher's bill.' When Franco retired in 1973, he appointed Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco - a Francoist - as prime minister/president. Unfortunately and indeed fatally for the elderly admiral, he was a creature of habit and always parked in the same spot while attending morning mass. ETA tunneled under the road and placed a large cache of explosives beneath his parking space on December 20, 1973. When the admiral returned from mass, he, together with his specially armour-plated Dodge, were blown five stories into the air, over the top of the Madrid Church of San Francisco de Borja and into a courtyard on the other side. During 1980 alone, ETA were responsible for the deaths of 118 people. ETA were also particularly hostile to the PP party (Partido Popular) who cracked down heavily on the organisation when the PP held power. An unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of the then President Aznar - a PP member. Aznar had banned the Batasuna political party, which was the political mouthpiece of ETA. In 1997, ETA kidnapped and murdered a young PP councillor called Miguel Angel Blanco, from the Basque town of Ermua. The terrorists were stunned by the response of the public. Up to three million Spaniards took to the streets in protest, including the streets of the Basque strongholds of Bilbao and San Sebastián. Despite the public outcry, eleven small-town Basque councillors were murdered over the following three years. They also tried to assassinate King Juan Carlos on a number of occasions.

Aside from the inhumanity, all this was bad for business. Workers in the Guipúzcoa and Biscay regions, who used to enjoy the highest earned net-incomes in Spain, now found that they were dropping down several pegs in the earning's ladder. ETA's policy of raising funds by kidnapping businessmen for ransom, together with charging a 'revolutionary tax' of several thousand euros to businesses (if you didn't pay up, you were shot and/or your business was burnt down), discouraged external investment in the whole of the Basque country. A cooperative effort between the Spanish and French police has now greatly damaged the ETA hierarchy, and both France and Spain now no longer offer safe hideouts to the terrorists. A recent move to 'go-to-ground' in Portugal has also proved unsuccessful with more terrorists being arrested there. Last summer, two policemen were killed in a string of bomb attacks in Palma de Mallorca and in a bungled car robbery outside Paris in March this year, a French police officer was shot dead. ETA's 50 year bloody campaign has resulted in 829 murders, 84 kidnappings and thousands injured. To this day, ETA still maintains contacts with the IRA in Northern Ireland and with FARC in Columbia.

In early September this year, ETA announced a 'halt to attacks' in a videotape given to the BBC. This latest statement has, because of its vagueness, received little government attention. ETA has announced ceasefires before, the last one being in March 2006 which they broke nine months later with the killing of two South Americans by a bomb in a car park at Madrid Airport. The authorities will require a declaration promising a permanent rejection of violence as a precursor to any contacts.

Meanwhile, since May 2009, the Basque Country has been ruled by a coalition of the Partido Socialista de Euskadi (which is federated to the PSOE) and the Partido Polular (PP), ending 30 years of nationalist predominance. The Basque Autonomous Community is currently the wealthiest region in Spain. Nowadays it is one of the most decentralized regions in the world, in this regard it has been referred to by The Economist as having "*more autonomy than just about any other in Europe.*"

Two Ladies Talking in Heaven

1st woman: Hi! Wanda.

2nd woman: Hi! Sylvia. How'd you die?

1st woman: I froze to death.

2nd woman: How horrible!

1st woman: It wasn't so bad.... After I quit shaking from the cold, I began to get warm & sleepy, and finally died a peaceful death. What about you?

2nd woman: I died of a massive heart attack. I suspected that my husband was cheating, so I came home early to catch him in the act. But instead, I found him all by himself in the den watching TV.

1st woman: So, what happened?

2nd woman: I was so sure there was another woman there somewhere that I started running all over the house looking. I ran up into the attic and searched, and down into the basement. Then I went through every closet and checked under all the beds. I kept this up until I had looked everywhere, and finally I became so exhausted that I just keeled over with a heart attack and died.

1st woman: Too bad you didn't look in the freezer--we'd both still be alive. (Ken Billingham)

What's Up, Doc?

A doctor in a remote part of Newfoundland wanted to get off work and go hunting, so he approached his janitor.

"I am goin' huntin' tomorrow Buddy and don't want to close the clinic. I want you to take care of the clinic and take care of all my patients and I'll give you fifty bucks."

"Yes, sir!" answers Buddy

The doctor goes hunting and returns the following day and asks:

"So, Buddy, How was your day?"

Buddy told him that he took care of three patients. "The first one had a headache so I gave him TYLENOL."

"Bravo Buddy! The second one?" asks the doctor.

"The second one had a bad stomach and I gave him MAALOX, sir." says Buddy

"Bravo, bravo! You're good at this and what about the third one?" asks the Doctor

"Well Sir, I was sitting here having a smoke and suddenly the door flies opens and a woman enters. She undresses herself, taking off everything including her bra and her panties and lies down on the table and shouts: 'HELP ME - I haven't seen a man in over two years.'

"Holy jumping codfish, Buddy!!! What did you do?"

"I put drops in her eyes!!"

Donna & Richard
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Fashion Statement?

Two old ladies were discussing the benefits of stockings over tights.

'I much prefer stockings,' says one.

'Do you find them more elegant?' asks the other.

'Oh yes,' replies the first. 'And if I fart wearing tights, I usually blow my slippers off!'

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The Darker Side of Women

A woman was in town on a shopping trip. She began her day finding the most perfect shoes in the first shop and a beautiful dress on sale in the second. In the third, everything had just been reduced by 50 percent when her mobile phone rang. It was a female doctor notifying her that her husband had just been in a terrible car accident and was in critical condition and in the ICU. The woman told the doctor to inform her husband where she was and that she'd be there as soon as possible. As she hung up she realized she was leaving what was shaping up to be her best day ever in the boutiques. She decided to get in a couple of more shops before heading to the hospital. She ended up shopping the rest of the morning, finishing her trip with a cup of coffee and a beautiful chocolate cake slice, compliments of the last shop. She was jubilant....Then she remembered her husband.

Feeling guilty, she dashed to the hospital. She saw the doctor in the corridor and asked about her husband's condition.

The lady doctor glared at her and shouted, 'You went ahead and finished your shopping trip, didn't you? I hope you're proud of yourself! While you were out for the past four hours enjoying yourself in town, your husband has been languishing in Intensive Care! It's just as well you went ahead and finished, because it will more than likely be the last shopping trip you ever take! For the rest of his life he will require round-the-clock care. And he will now be your career!'

The woman was feeling so guilty, she broke down and sobbed.

The lady doctor then chuckled and said, 'I'm just pulling your leg.

He's dead. Now show me what you bought.'

(Pete Dudman)

Petition to UK Government re Rank and Pension of Soldiers Killed on Active Service.

Once again the UK Government is dragging its heels in relation to the armed forces, which is soon to be emasculated by the Treasury. Shamefully, in this instance, it is concerning the rights of soldiers killed on active service.

Now, the Ministry of Defence bean-counters are saying that those killed on active service will not get the full pension awards of their new rank unless they have held it for a year. Once again it is cold accountancy winning over compassion.

A petition has been launched to support a motion in the UK parliament to rectify this, stating the following:

'That this House, convinced that the courage and devotion to duty of members of the British Armed Forces who are killed while on active service for their country should be recognised and rewarded in every possible way, particularly by the pensions and help given to the families they leave behind, recommends that the Ministry of Defence's rule providing that pensions on promotion are payable only after the role for the new rank has been held for a year should be revoked for those killed in the service of their country so that their families are paid the rate appropriate to the rank held at the time of death; and considers that the family of Sergeant Matthew Telford of Grimsby, promoted to the rank in June 2009 but killed by an assassin in Afghanistan in November of that year, along with Guardsman Jimmy Major of Cleethorpes and three other soldiers, should be paid the full pension appropriate to the rank he was proud to honour at the time of his death'.

Please go to the following website and sign the petition -

<http://soldiers-pensions.co.uk/?q=petition>

Pressure from the public worked in the case of the Gurkhas, so please do your bit for the families of these heroes.

(Thanks to Martin & Wendy Jung of Serena 4 for bringing this campaign to my attention.)

More Frog Bashing

A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., the Royal, the Royal Canadian, the Royal Australian and French Navies. At a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a large group of Officers that included personnel from most of those countries. Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks but a French admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked, 'Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?'

Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied, 'Maybe it's because the Brit's, Canadians, Aussie's and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German.'

You could have heard a pin drop.

In Hollywood a marriage is a success if it outlasts milk.

Rita Rudner

Flyday!

A Chinese restaurant and a Greek restaurant were next door to each other. The Chinese owner of the restaurant had difficulty with the 'R' sound. Every Friday the Greek restaurant owner used to wait for the owner of the other restaurant to appear and would ask "What day is it today Wong?" "It's Flyday" Wong would say which sent the Greek into gales of laughter. Finally Wong decided to put an end to this torment by going to a speech therapist. The next Friday the Greek repeated his usual ritual but this time Wong was ready. "It's FRIday!, FRIday!, Gleek plick"

Bloody Foreigners!

Latest data published by Eurostat shows that Spain has an immigrant population of 12.3%, nearly double the average in the European Union which stands at 6.4%.

On January 1 2009 there were 31.9 million foreigners living in the European Union countries, of which 11.9 million were EU residents who had moved to another EU country. On that date there were 5.65 million foreigners living in Spain, of which 2.27 million or 5% of the population were from another EU country.

In absolute numbers Spain is, after Germany, the country which is home to most foreigners. She is followed by the U.K., France and Italy while the countries with the fewest numbers of foreign residents are Bulgaria and Malta.

In percentage terms Luxembourg with 43.5% and Latvia with 17.9% are the countries with most foreigners.

The data also shows that 2 million Romanians, 1.5 million Poles and 1.3 million Italians had chosen to live elsewhere among EU residents, and from outside the EU the most numerous were 2.4 million Turks, 1.8 million Moroccans and a million Albanians.

It should be pointed out that many foreigners living in Spain have recently been returning to their countries of origin, as the recession continues to keep unemployment high here in the country.

In Alicante the regional education authority notes that the number of foreign pupils in the province's schools has fallen by 6.5% over the past two years to now stand just over 38,000.

The census of the 462,974 foreign residents in Alicante shows that 93% of them live along the coastal strip. Only 7% of foreigners chose to live inland in the province. (Source -TypicallySpanish)

Spain's wasted youth.

There are 1,573,600 unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 29 today in Spain, a third of the total jobless figure.

The average rate of unemployment in the European Union for those who are less than 25 years old is 20.2 percent (July 2010). Spain is at the top of the list with 41.5 percent; Slovakia is the closest of those behind, but with a much lower rate (34.4 percent). At the other end of the scale, in Germany and the Netherlands, youth unemployment stands at 9.2 percent and 8.1 percent (as of June 2010), respectively.

Although unemployment is a generalized problem in Spain, an individual's level of education does play a role. Among the under-25s who did not graduate from compulsory secondary education (ESO), an alarming 62 percent are out of work. For those who reached the Baccalaureate level or did vocational training instead, the rate is 40.6 percent. In the case of graduates, the situation is worsening but the rate of joblessness is lower, currently standing at 28.3 percent. (Source - El Pais)

Out & About

Although the weather remains glorious during the daytime, it is now slightly cooler in the evenings.

Torrevieja Town Hall have, at last, replaced the road surfaces around Lago Jardin 2 and Inspiration. They have done an excellent job, but now need to paint some white lines on the new surfaces. Still, lets be thankful for 'small' mercies.

On September 13, I went to La Zenia to witness the laying of a foundation stone for the new Security and Emergency Centre. There was a brief presentation before the stone-laying in a sweltering marquee. There were plenty of 'big-wigs' there, the biggest being the Regional Minister of the Interior, Serafin Castilian. The Mayoress of Orihuela, Monica Lorente, was also there together with representatives of the security and emergency services and Chris Poole of Neighbourhood Watch, Orihuela Costa. The new centre will be located next to the Consum carpark in La Zenia and will house the Guardia Civil, Local Police, Traffic Police, Fire and Civil Protection units. 'The communications will be state of the art,' said Ms Lorente, 'and the centre will be a pioneer in the whole region.' The mayoress promised that the centre would become a reality in record time. She also mentioned that during her tenure to date, that she had increased police numbers in Orihuela Costa by 400%. The building works are supposed to take 18 months but I suspect that the centre will be available before that. The delay in starting the project was down to a lack of commitment on the funding from the Valencian region. The project now has a budget of €3,030,000 which is being paid in full by the Ministry of the Interior. There was a minor demonstration outside the event. The minister and the mayoress approached the demonstrators before the presentation and talked to them - very civilised.

Then on the 17th I went to the launch of the Orihuela Costa Football Club at the Abbey Tavern in La Florida. (The Dream Scene was invited to sit at the 'press table' and was given a 'freebie' drink! My head got so big I almost fell over!) The new team have played two matches to date, a loss against Bigastro and a win against Dolores. The team trains five nights a week! I will have a full report on the club including the club logo in the next issue.

Which leads nicely on to the new Sports Centre, which will be opening at Calle Niagra near the Playa Flamenca Centre in the third week of October. You are invited to go there and have a walk around now. Again more on this in the next issue.

Regrettably, All Bar Sue will be closing in October. Kevin and Jules will be remaining in Dream Hills and Jules will be continuing her hairdressing business after a holiday. There will be a 'farewell bash' on October 2nd. See you there!

The Octoberfest is continuing at deBassus in La Zenia and finishes on October 3. Tried to visit it during the week but couldn't find a parking space! More next month, Mick.

When an 80-year-old man goes for a checkup, the doctor is amazed at his shape. "To what do you attribute your good health?"

"I'm a turkey hunter and that's why I'm in good shape.

Get up before daylight, chase turkeys up and down mountains."

The doctor says, "Well, I'm sure it helps, but there have to be genetic factors. How old was your dad when he died?"

"Who says my dad's dead?"

"You're 80 years old and your dad's alive? How old is he?"

"Dad's 100. In fact, he turkey-hunted with me this morning."

"What about your dad's dad, how old was he when he died?"

"Who says my grandpa's dead?"

"You're 80 years old and your grandfather's still living? How old is he?"

"118."

"I suppose you're going to tell me he went turkey hunting this morning?"

"No. He got married to an eighteen year old girl."

The doctor looks at the man in amazement. "Got married? Why would a 118-year-old guy want to get married to an eighteen year old girl?"

The old-timer answers, "Who says he wanted to?"

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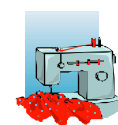
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Mick in the Hay Shed

Paddy is passing by Mick's hay shed one day when through a gap in the door he sees Mick doing a slow and sensual striptease in front of an old red Massey Ferguson. Buttocks clenched, he performs a slow pirouette and gently slides off first the right welly, followed by the left. He then hunches his shoulders forward and in a classic striptease move lets his braces fall down from his shoulders to dangle by his hips over his corduroy trousers. Grabbing both sides of his check shirt he rips it apart to reveal his vest underneath and with a final flourish he hurls his flat cap on to a pile of hay.

"What the feck are you doing Mick" says Paddy.

"Jeez Paddy, ye frightened the livin bejasmus out of me," says an obviously embarrassed Mick: "but me and the Missus been having some trouble lately in the bedroom department, and the therapist suggested I do something sexy to a tractor".

(Pete Dudman)

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Blokes

What's a blokes idea of safe sex? A padded headboard.
What should you reply if a bloke asks you: 'Am I your first?'
'You could be, you look familiar.'
Why are blokes like lava lamps? Fun to look at, but not all that bright.
Why are blokes like floor tiles? Lay them right the first time, and you can walk all over them for the rest of your life!
Why are blokes like dog poo? The older they get the easier they are to pick up!
How many divorced blokes does it take to change a lightbulb?
Nobody knows. They never get the house!

(Barb)

TDT

What is TDT (Televisión Digital Terrestre)?

This is the Spanish equivalent of 'freeview' - Digital Terrestrial Television. On April 3, 2010, all analogue television broadcasting ceased in Spain and was replaced by digital transmissions.

Why digital television broadcasting?

With digital transmissions you have better picture quality and sound, more channels and more services.

What do I need to do to receive TDT?

There are three steps. First check that there is TDT coverage in your area. As around 98% of Spain is now covered by the digital signal, this is unlikely to be a problem.

Secondly, align your antenna. If you live on a modern urbanisation, this is not necessary as most urbs will already have a community aerial and your property will have already been wired-up already to receive the signal. (Usually the old analogue antenna can be modified by the addition of amplifier modules to receive the TDT frequencies.)

Finally you will need a tuner - a TDT box - to allow you to receive the digital signal, after connecting to the digital feed line. You can buy a suitable box at a whole range of outlets - Tien 21, Carrefour, Media Mart etc. Prices range from around €20 upwards. If you intend to subscribe to pay-per-view channels in the future, then buy a TDT box which also accepts viewing cards. Make sure that the remote control allows you to change the language (idioma) on the appropriate programs. So if a particular program was made in the U.S. or the U.K., by pressing a couple of buttons on the remote, you can generally hear the soundtrack in English. However if the program was made say by the French, then it will only translate to Spanish and French.

You will not need to acquire a tuner box if your television already has an integrated TDT receiver; although in some instances an integrated receiver may not perform as well as a separate TDT box. You can also buy a dongle which, when attached to your laptop, will allow you to receive TDT signals.

What's on TDT?

The current TDT schedule offers around 30 channels ranging from current affairs to children's channels.

The **news & current affairs** channels are Canal 24H, CNN+ and Intereconomia, all in Spanish.

For **children** there is the Disney Channel, in English, and Clan TV with some program translation..

Teleduarte is a good **sports channel** in Spanish with some translation to English.

Regional TV is covered by Vega Baja TV, still in its infancy and still in Spanish. This will no doubt expand in time to include some local news programs in English, if they have any sense.

There are also a couple of **sales channels**, which offer you much the same junk that you see on satellite television in the UK. One of my favourite ads is a 'miracle' slimming tea. And the name of this wonder - Dr. Ming - a truly mingin' product!

However, it is the **general channels** which are probably of interest to most expats. These show lots of **imported films and tv series**, mainly in the evenings, which are translatable into English. These channels are mainly TVE1, La2, Antena 3, Antena 3 Neox, Antena 3 Nova, Cuatro, Telecinco, FDF, La Siete, La Sexta, and Veo 7. Although a lot of the series are not the latest, some are new such as Ken Follet's *The Pillars of the Earth* on Cuatro at 22.15 on Tuesdays, *The Tudors* on TVE1 at 22.15 on Thursdays, and my favourite, *The Dog Whisperer* - three programs, at 11.00 on Sundays. Unfortunately there is no 'what's on guide' available on-line or in hardcopy. Some Spanish newspapers carry details of what's on the more major channels such as Quatro, La Sexta (not what you think!) and Telecinco.

Films are generally shown at set times:

Monday to Friday: 15.00 FDF, 15.30 Antena 3 Nova, 16.00 Antena 3, 22.00 Antena 3 Nova, 22.00 Antena 3 Neox, 22.00 TV2 and 23.45 (approx) TV2.

Monday: 22.15 TVE1, 22.15 La Sexta. **Tuesday:** 22.15 La Sexta. **Wednesday:** 22.20 Cuatro. **Saturday:** 15.40 Cuatro. 16.00 TVE1. 16.00 Telecinco. 16.10 La Sexta. 17.30 TVE1. 18.00 Cuatro. 18.00 Antena 3. 22.00 Antena3. 23.45 Cuatro

Sunday: 22.00 TVE1. 23.50 TVE1.

New channels are now being added to the selection regularly but not all translate. There are now three pay-per-view channels, Gol - a football channel, Canal+ Dos and AXN, but this may increase in the future.

It was announced in June this year that the digital terrestrial television channels will change frequency before January 1, 2015, so users must re-tune their televisions and reset their systems for reception, but do not have to install new decoders and antennas. This is not a big deal and there will be plenty of 'idiot guides' available when the frequencies change.

A Happy Bunny?

A rabbit manages to break free from a research laboratory and finds a group of wild rabbits lying in a field. He joins them and spends the day eating grass, stealing carrots and lettuce from a farmer's field, and mating like crazy with all the female rabbits. However, as evening falls, the rabbit turns his back on his wild friends and heads back to the lab.

'What's the matter?' says one of the wild rabbits. 'Don't you like it out here?'

'I love it,' replies the rabbit, 'but I'm dying for a cigarette.'

The Chase

A fire engine speeds down the road with all bells ringing. Behind it a drunk tries to chase the engine on foot. The engine turns a corner and zooms out of sight. The exhausted drunk collapses on the ground and shouts, 'All right then! Keep your bloody ice-cream!'

WILLS , TAXES , IHT etc, etc, etc.,

I have now had a property on Dream Hills for the past four years and one of the most enjoyable aspects of the area is the numerous 'watering holes' [I think that's how you describe them Mick] and the friendly manner with which I have been welcomed by both landlords and fellow- frequenters alike .

In my many conversations during these hours of enjoyment, the thing that became obvious is the total confusion and misinformation that many have regarding Inheritance Tax, Wealth Tax, Income tax, Medical Insurance, Funerals etc, etc, etc.

The one important thing that I have done since coming to Spain is to develop contacts with a network of professional companies and individuals from whom I can get answers to the most difficult questions and problems.

I would therefore like to give you the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the above or any other financial matter via e-mail at mike@maypolefs.co.uk, or phone me if you prefer (see advert for details) so that I can answer them in a future issue of The Dream Scene. We will preserve your anonymity if you wish.

So here is your opportunity to clear up all those nagging questions and be able to go to your own 'watering hole' with the confidence that your knowledge is correct. We are offering this FREE of charge!

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I will be coming over to Dream Hills on October 9 for a week, so if you would like a free consultation in your home regarding the above or any financial matter, please email me mike@maypolefs.co.uk and I will be quite happy to meet you in your home.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Mike Heighway



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Waste Not!

The Tax Office sent an inspector to audit the books of a local hospital. While the Tax Office agent was checking the books he turned to the CEO of the hospital and said, "I notice you buy a lot of bandages. What do you do with the end of the roll when there's too little left to be of any use?"

"Good question," noted the CEO. "We save them up and send them back to the bandage company and every now and then they send us a free box of bandages."

"Oh," replied the auditor, somewhat disappointed that his unusual question had a practical answer. But on he went, in his obnoxious way "What about all these plaster purchases? What do you do with what's left over after setting a cast on a patient?"

"Ah, yes," replied the CEO, realising that the inspector was trying to trap him with an unanswerable question. "We save it and send it back to the manufacturer, and every now and then they send us a free package of plaster."

"I see," replied the auditor, thinking hard about how he could fluster the know-it-all CEO. "Well," he went on, "What do you do with all the leftover foreskins from the circumcisions you perform?"

"Here, too, we do not waste," answered the CEO. "What we do is save all the little foreskins and send them to the Tax Office, and about once a year they send us a complete prick."

(John Bradbeer)

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Diabetic?

"In Italy for thirty years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder, torture and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love, 500 years of democracy and peace, and what did that produce? The cuckoo clock." - Harry Lime (Orson Wells) in The Third Man.

My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there.

(Indira Gandhi)

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BE AWARE!
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If you have been diagnosed as a diabetic there is a very successful support group, which meets on the last Wednesday of every month at 11am at Hoggies Bar in San Luis. The support group is fully funded by the Help Association Vega Baja, so there are no fees. This is a large group and the support and advice is first class.

The wife and I were sitting around the breakfast table one lazy Sunday morning. I said to her, 'If I were to die suddenly, I want you to immediately sell all my stuff.' 'Now why would you want me to do something like that?' she asked. 'I figure that you would eventually remarry and I don't want some asshole using my stuff.'

She looked at me and said: 'What makes you think I'd marry another asshole?'

A Jewish man called his mother in Florida, "Mom, how are you?"
 "Not too good," said the mother. "I've been very weak." The son said, "Why are you so weak?" She said, "Because I haven't eaten in 38 Days." The son said, "That's terrible. Why haven't you eaten in 38 days?" The mother answered, "Because I didn't want my mouth to be filled with food if you should call."
 (Pete Dudman)

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The editor, Mick, can be contacted at mick.dreamscene@gmail.com or at 586 Dream Hills.