

# THE DREAM SCENE

## NEWSLETTER

*Helping to keep expat's informed.....and smiling.*

Issue no. 76 1st of June 2013

*Bienvenido a todos*, and welcome to what must surely be, the start of the summer edition.

After what was an excellent warm winter, the weather broke for a couple of days in May, during which, on one occasion hail-stones the size of thumb-nails or 'maltesers' rained down. It was quite a phenomenon which lasted about 30 minutes, giving a snow-covered image to gardens and even the beaches. However, the hail-stones also caused some damage, even to some painted walls. Flowering plants, particularly roses, had their flowers stripped-off by the hail. A neighbour of mine had the varnish stripped off his wooden shed by the strength of the downpour. Local farmers are complaining about the serious damage the hail did to their budding fruit and veg. A figure of about €20 million has been reported.

There is little good news to report on the economic and unemployment front here. Despite the feeble reassurances from some blinkered politicians, most Spaniards realise that matters will remain quite grim for some time. Although PM Rajoy stated that the 'temporary' income tax increases levied during the last two years would be removed next year, he has now stated that this will now not be possible. Expect more promises before the General Election in 2015!

A blog/article by the assistant editor of the right-leaning English newspaper, The Telegraph, caused quite a stir here. Although the article gave a concise report on some of Spain's problems, its by-line '*Spain is officially insolvent, get your money out while you can!*' could be considered inflammatory. But you must realise that The Telegraph rarely has anything good to say about the EU and particularly the euro. You can read the article here - <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/finance/jeremywarner/100024476/spain-is-officially-insolvent-get-your-money-out-while-you-still-can/> In order to correct 'excessive macroeconomic imbalances' the European Commission is likely to demand increases to the lower rates of IVA, higher taxation on alcohol and other products and the bringing forward of the pension reforms to ensure sustainability. Brussels is now effectively 'holding the reins' to the Spanish economy.

**Reminder:** Your Spanish income tax return should be sent to the hacienda by the end of June. There is some helpful information on the process here, in Spanish - <http://www.diarioinformacion.com/especiales/renta-2012/>

If you want to know more about the reporting of assets outside Spain and Form 720, go to this very helpful site with questions & answers and sample forms - <http://jullastres.es/wordpress/?p=718>

Congratulations to all those who organised *Dog's Day* at The Lounge in Lago Jardin II. An admirable €250 was raised during the table-top sale, the proceeds going to the P.A.P.S. dog charity. There was even sufficient funds to have a stray cat that frequents the area neutered. So, take heed! It doesn't do to be wandering aimlessly around the area; you never know what you might lose! Also, please read the advert on page 2 for the Champagne Cruise to raise funds for Paul Cunningham Nurses. It promises to be tremendous fun!

I have just read that Jet2 will be providing new flights on Mondays and Fridays to and from Glasgow to San Javier. Corvera Airport appears to be slipping into a fog of oblivion and recriminations. The outlook is not good.

Many thanks to Mo & Arthur, John & Gloria and Les Biggs for the extra donations towards costs.

I hope this coming summer there will be some 'people improvements.' Let me explain. Last year I noticed many families sitting at tables outside bars and restaurants where dad would be texting on his phone; mum doing the same on hers and their son doing likewise on his. Meanwhile their little daughter was playing on her mini-games machine! No talk, no sociability and no human interaction. Sometimes technology does not really advance the human condition.

*Have a great month! Mick & Tid.*



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Did you hear about the dyslexic pimp?  
He bought a warehouse.

Catalan premier Artur Mas has responded defiantly to the Constitutional Court's decision to rule that a declaration of sovereignty issued by the regional parliament is null and void. Spain's highest legal body admitted a central government objection to the text issued by the Catalan assembly in January declaring the region "a sovereign political and legal entity." This was the phrase that incited the Solicitor General's Office to file a legal complaint to the text on the grounds that it represented "an open challenge to the Constitution."

The dispute over the Catalan education system's linguistic model is headed for a dead end: an increasingly tangled web between the regional government's steadfast defence of a system in which subjects are taught in Catalan and a series of judicial resolutions requiring the teaching of more Castilian Spanish for those pupils who want it. The Catalan Regional High Court ruled that the demands of families who want more hours of teaching in Castilian must be addressed. To date, the Catalan education authorities have ignored the ruling.

Mario Draghi, President of the European Central Bank, wrote a letter to Prime minister Mariano Rajoy, saying he must adopt a wider set of measures which attack the underlying cause of the difficulties being seen with mortgages, so as to avoid, at all possible, the evictions. The real problem with the 'reforms' is that few of them go far enough. The 'wishy-washy' changes to the outdated mortgage legislation is a prime example of the government loosing their nerve and botching the opportunity for lasting, beneficial and meaningful change.

Statistics from the Bank of Spain show that last year nearly 40,000 families lost their home for not being able to pay the mortgage. Almost most half of them gave up voluntarily and 18,195 cases had to go through the courts.

The respected US economist, Arthur Laffer, the inventor of the Laffer Curve, has suggested that the government reduces taxes now, together with announcing that in three years times there will be large cuts in spending. Laffer stated that 'Spain is probably the country with most potential that I have seen in my life, and the one which has most failed to take advantage.' The Laffer Curve theory simplified states that tax revenues would be zero if tax rates were either 0% or 100%, and somewhere in between 0% and 100% is a tax rate which maximizes total revenue. Laffer's postulate was that the tax rate that maximizes revenue was at a much lower level than previously believed: so low that current tax rates were above the level where revenue is maximized. Income tax in Spain has become quite penal and is now among the five highest in Europe. All this does is that it further encourages and inflates an already massive 'black' economy.

An EU investigative team are back in Madrid to ensure that the stabilisation of the banking system is following the demands that came with the €100 billion rescue package. They will also discuss the Socialist decision in Andalucia to take the empty flats owned by the banks, pay the banks a small amount and then rent out the flats to those who have been evicted.

Government officials and labour union leaders dismissed the idea advanced by the European commissioner for employment, László Andor, that Spain introduce a single work contract as a means of eliminating the duality of the local labour market. The current system has 41 different types of labour contracts!

Spanish retail sales fell by 8.9% year-on-year on a calendar-adjusted basis in March. This marked the 33rd month in a row of falling retail sales.

Miguel Blesa, the former chairman of Caja Madrid has been thrown into jail for an evening while he raised bail money of €2.5 million. He raised the bail the following day. In 2008, Blesa bought a bank in Florida and paid double what it was worth. The judge is also investigating the irregular commissions received by Blesa and other members of the Caja Madrid board for the purchase of the Florida bank, with commissions totalling 100 million dollars.

Spain is the second noisiest country in the world, with Japan in first place. According to a report called 'Noise and Health', Spain has the highest rate of population exposed to excessively loud noise: it currently affects more than 9 million people, or 20% of the population. Traffic, transport and some forms of entertainment (concerts and clubs) are the main causes of the problem in Spain. As an expat I might add tile-cutting and continuously barking dogs.

The European Commission has withdrawn its proposed ban on refillable oil containers in restaurants next year. The European Commissioner for Agriculture stated that despite having the backing of producer countries such as Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal, the proposal did not have broad support, particularly among consumers.

Brussels is investigating why Spain is charging IVA/VAT on school dinners. The EU wants Spain to verify that it does not charge IVA on infant care in out-of-school hours. European legislation allows for IVA not to be paid in such circumstances, but it seems that Hacienda has been charging 21% IVA on all children over 6 and 10% IVA for children under that age.

A joint operation by French security forces and the Civil Guard in early May resulted in the arrests of six of Spain's most-wanted ETA members in various cities across France. According to sources close to the investigation, the detainees formed part of ETA's logistics apparatus, known as Elosa, among whose functions is the storing of weapons.

The Spanish press reports that several British financial havens have decided to cooperate in the fight against tax evasion. They have signed an agreement to facilitate greater information on the owners of accounts and their use. Bermuda, the Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, the Turks & Caicos islands, and the Isle of Man have all agreed with the agreement which Chancellor George Osborne has announced. The offshore territories will share their information with the UK, Germany, France, Italy and Spain. Jersey and Guernsey have decided to reject the plan.

The price of a barrel of crude has fallen nearly 6% since the start of the year. The National Energy Commission, (CNE) which supervises the distribution of the fuel, has not seen this discount passed on to consumers. In addition the Commission has detected that petrol companies have increase their profit margin by 31% since January.

The British Government is planning to stop giving people who live abroad a British state pension allowance based solely on the employment record of their spouse. There are some 220,000 overseas residents who have been collecting this allowance at a cost to the Government 410 million pounds a year. Many of these have never even set foot in the UK. The Pensions' Minister Steve Webb explained, "Say you are an American man and you marry a British woman, you can claim, if she has a full record of contributions, a pension of 3,500 pounds a year for your entire retirement and having never paid a penny in National Insurance."

Property owners in Spain will this year face a Property Tax (IBI) amounting to 789 euros on average, although the actual amount depends on the property location. This was revealed by an analysis by the real estate portal [www.pisos.com](http://www.pisos.com) on the IBI of the various regional capitals, which also shows that the receipt of a single-family home is 34% more expensive than a group home. The payment of this charge will be difficult for many Spanish, especially for those living in Santander and Barcelona. While the national average is 339 euros for apartments in buildings and 1,239 euros for houses, the Cantabrians will pay 658 and 3,479 euros respectively, and the charges for the Catalans will vary from €483 to €3,219 plus! Fortunately, the IBI rates in Orihuela Costa remain very low, at least for the present.



#### 4 What's Up? continued



Workers at a cemetery in Seville have kicked up a stink after thieves stole several motors from fridges used to preserve bodies until their cremation. Thieves have also taken the steel slabs from inside the cremation ovens and numerous metal railings from inside the precinct. Workers at the San Fernando cemetery in Seville have grown tired of the string of robberies that have taken place in recent months, according to the local press. Seville's UGT union secretary general reported in early May: "In the last 15 days, we have seen the sorts of robberies that used to be unthinkable. All the metal in the cemetery is being ransacked and they have taken everything from scaffolding and wheelbarrows, to the letters on the tombstones." The lack of security inside the cemetery was the main reason for the robberies, he explained. "Seville Town Hall is going to pay the price for not wanting to spend more money on security. They're going to have to replace everything that's been stolen." Cemetery workers fear the tomb raiders will one day confront them. On several occasions they've come face to face with strangers walking around the grounds in the early hours of the morning.

Police have recovered 300 kilos of peeled copper wire together with another 5,000 metres of unpeeled copper wire in the Valencian town of Nules. The wiring was stolen from the A-7 motorway nearby. Police believe that 17,000 metres of wiring in all has been stolen from the roads around Nules. Nules other claim to fame is that its name is used for the most popular type of seedless Clementine grown in Spain.

A police officer who was guarding a 3,592 kilo stash of marijuana in a container at the port of Valencia has been jailed for seven years, together with three other associates. The officer assisted a gang to gain access to and break into the secured container. The drugs were removed and probably fetched around €3,240,000 on the street.

The National Police in Palma have arrested five members of a dangerous armed gang in Palma, Mallorca. Among those arrested were a suspected ex-British Special Forces weapons expert and two former sailors from the Spanish navy. On May 8, 2009, they stole a lorry from a military base and drove it into the wall of Carrefour in Palma to get to the safe, but on that occasion they left with nothing. Then on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, of the same year these thieves got into the same establishment through a window and escaped with €107,500. The last assault was in June 2010 when they entered the offices of Carrefour threatened the cashier with a firearm, gagging her and escaping with €176,000. A security guard at the shopping centre has also been detained on suspicion of colluding with the thieves. The gang is also accused of illegal detention (kidnapping) and a violent home robbery. You would have thought that Carrefour might have 'twigged' earlier that they were a bit of a 'soft touch.'

Continuing a story we reported on in 2010; the 82-year-old actor Sean Connery, has now been given six months to answer questions about the sale of his Marbella home, Casa Malibu, in 1999 or face being arrested. The Connery couple had owned the property for 20 years and sold it for a reported €5.5 million. The judge thinks that there were irregularities in the sale, and he is investigating 17 people in what has become known as the 'Goldfinger' affair. Among the 17 are the ex Marbella Mayor, Julián Muñoz and the real estate planning chief in the Marbella Town Hall, Juan Antonio Roca, both of whom are wrapped up in other corruption cases and facing lengthy jail sentences. After the sale a block of 72 flats were built on the site, despite planning permission for only 5 houses. The development gained a €3 million profit, which is understood to have been sent offshore. After three years the judge has lost his patience with Connery. If he does not appear he and his wife may be the subject of an international arrest warrant. Connery says he is too sick to travel and that the money laundering accusations are ridiculous.

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A Down syndrome association, Down España, has filed a complaint against a hotel in Almería for refusing to admit a group of youngsters on the grounds that "We don't accept groups of people with mental disabilities. These kinds of people could bother the other clients." The case is being investigated by the Almería public attorney's office. Under the Penal Code, denying people a service they are entitled to because of their disability constitutes an offence that can lead to one to four years of professional disqualification. Down España recalls two other cases in which young people with Down syndrome were barred entry: one was a nightclub in Sabadell last March and the other was a pub in Alicante in 2010. The owner lost his license a year later. In 2009, a parish priest refused to give a child from Teià (Barcelona) her first communion because she was "already God's angel."

Seven greyhounds, photo, were rescued after they had been dumped in an abandoned swimming pool in Callosa de Segura near Orihuela. The dogs had been tied up and left without food or water.



Alicante Airport have been paying Elche Town Hall €300,000 annually for several years for local police support. The airport authorities say the support should be free. The contract runs out today, June 1, and the airport states that they will not renew it.

A 47-year-old Lithuanian was stabbed to death near a shack close to the Punta Prima roundabout on the N332 at approx' 11pm on May 23. The alleged assailant has been arrested.

A 'Peeping-Tom' or should I say a 'Peeping-Pedro' has just received a two year prison sentence for videotaping women in the toilet of his bar in Cazorla, Jaen. He had installed a tiny camouflaged camera in the 'Ladies,' capturing 148 videos of women in various acts of disrobing in the toilet. One woman discovered the camera and reported it to the Guardia Civil. 38 of the women were identified from the recordings and the bar owner/would-be Spielberg has to pay a fine of €3,600 and compensate 35 of the women with €1,000 each. The other three ladies did not wish to participate in the case, obviously pleased to have 'made it in the movies' at last! Although the prosecutor asked for a five-year jail term, the 'Peeping-Pedro' apologised to the ladies 'for the damage' and that it 'was an obsession' and that he 'did not want to do it.' Poor dear! I am sure all you ladies feel very sorry for him.

When my mother-in-law hangs out her bra on the line to dry, we lose an hour of daylight. Les Dawson

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The courts in Orihuela and Torrevieja now have an outstanding backlog of 33,000 civil and criminal cases. Despite consultations with the Supreme Judicial Council and the High Court of Justice, there are no plans yet how to tackle the jam, probably one of the worst in Spain. Obviously more lawyers and additional courts are required, but there appears to be no money for these. Although this is a nationwide problem, some firms appear to do quite well. According to the British journal, *The Lawyer*, a Spanish firm tops its annual list of the 100 highest-earning law firms in Europe. The firm is the Madrid-based corporate law practice, Garrigues, with revenue just short of €320 million last year.

The following is a good example of time-wasting in the justice system locally. Seven PP councillors in Torrevieja have been indicted for allegedly committing an electoral offence. It seems they held a meeting during a local election campaign in the Municipal Theatre in May 2011. It seems that this venue was not on the list of authorized public places for holding political rallies, so the Socialists (PSPV) and Greens (LV) denounced the PP for alleged misuse of a municipal area for a rally. This is typical of the bullshit sniping and waste of court time that seems to pervade local politics.

But of course there are many instances where the politicians are 'hauled over the coals' for more serious matters, but they often seem to get off very lightly. A former PP mayor of Orihuela, Jose Manuel Medina, showed an incredible lack of judgement and responsibility during his tenure when he 'omitted' to reclaim money owed by a developer. Basically, it appears that a developer received more land than he was entitled to, with a market value of around 2.1 million euros, due to 'miscalculations' by the town hall. But the regime, under Mayor Medina, just forgot about the whole issue and did not pursue the claim. Consequently, the mayor was banned from public office for a period of seven years but, as he is 69 and retired, it is no punishment.

But it now seems that the PP ex-Mayor of Orihuela may have some more charges to the two already admitted to the courts. This relates to money paid out during the Fitur International Tourist Fair in Madrid, during the years 2009 to 2011. The normal procedure is that if the ruling council wants to spend more than €18,000 on an item or service, it has to be presented at a council plenary meeting. It is alleged by the local leader of the Socialists, that Lorente's administration distributed a total of €340,000 to favoured, allegedly politically-linked suppliers by issuing multiple invoices of less than €18,000! It is also claimed that of the five companies paid, four of the companies were in reality the same one. Some of the invoices involved were: €8,262 for the transport and assembly of a miniature olive tree; €6,960 for the hire of a plasma 50" television and €18,000 for the rental of four large plasma televisions.

57 vehicles had their tyres slashed during one 24-hour-period in Torrevieja during May. This happened in the streets annexed to the bars around Paseo Juan Aparicio. With the all-singing all-dancing CCTV system now installed in the town, one would hope the culprits were found.

But on the positive side, the Valencian Community has gained a total of 127 Blue Flags for its beaches and marinas this year. Of the 127 awards granted, 114 correspond to beaches and 13 to ports. By provinces, Alicante has received 58 blue flags for beaches and 12 for marinas, which becomes the Spanish province with more awards for the quality of its waters and facilities. Meanwhile, Castellón earned 30 blue flags for beaches and one for a marina, while Valencia has 26 Blue Flag beaches. Galicia was awarded the most Blue Flags 126 for beaches and 17 for marinas.

During just four days in late April, 80% of the normal annual rainfall cascaded down during the period. In some areas this was 86 litres per square metre!

*How do you get a nun pregnant?  
Dress her up as an altar-boy.*

I suppose one should always be careful when entering the sea. On Piles Beach near Gandi in early May, bathers were a little



shocked to see a sharks patrolling the shallows by the beach. See photo. This particular shark measured two and a half metres and stayed in the area for some hours. An oceanographic veterinarian explained to the press that this type of shark, the blue shark, is common to Valencian waters but rarely ventures so close to the shore. They normally hunt in pairs or small groups and feed on other fish and sea-birds. They rarely attack humans, he stated, unless they 'confuse a hand or a foot with fish.' So, if you are wearing those flippers, your foot might look just like a fish tail!

Recent figures released by AENA has revealed how the number of flight to Alicante's El Altet Airport increased by 10.1% in April, compared to April 2012. Passenger numbers from the UK alone increased by 7% over the same period. However, the largest growth came from the Scandinavian countries, with a 36.3% increase in passengers from Norway; 33.4% from Sweden and 79.1% from Denmark. A total of 827,764 passengers flew through the airport on 6,055 flights during April 2013. By passenger nationality, the month of April saw 375,937 passengers from the UK (+7%); 100,786 domestic passengers (-19.5%); 55,253 from Germany (+11.2%); 52,154 from Norway (+36.3%); 51,459 passengers from the Netherlands (+26.6%); Sweden with 35,861 passengers (+33.4%) and Denmark with 16,482 passengers (+79.1%).(Source: AENA)

A company, Aerovillage, wants to transform the old airport terminal - photo, at El Altet, Alicante, into what is being called a 'macro outlet' with 109 shops. Aerovillage will finance the alterations to the building at an estimated cost of €40 million, and in exchange it wants to be able to run the business for 30 years. The company says that 650 direct and indirect jobs would be created by the project. Personally, I think the new terminal was a mistake and the space now being wasted between the massive largely unused car parks and both terminals is criminal. The joke is that the airport authorities continue to use the old terminal for plane taxiing and disembarking space.



### Open wide, please.

The female dentist prepares the needle to give the bloke with the toothache an anaesthetic injection. "No way! No needles, I hate needles!" the guy said. So the dentist starts to hook up her nitrous oxide gas the man objects again. "I can't do the gas thing either. The thought of having the gas mask on my face makes me faint!" She then asks the guy if he has any objection to taking a pill. "No objection," the patient says. "I'm fine with pills." When she returns she says, "Here's a Viagra and a glass of water." The guy says, "Wow! I didn't know Viagra worked as a pain killer!" "It doesn't" she said, but it'll give you something to hold on to while I pull your tooth out." (Mel Bettell)

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Mick, in a highly excited state, rang up for an ambulance.  
'Quickly, come quickly,' he shouted, 'my wife's about to have a baby.'  
'Is this her first baby?' asked the operator.  
'No, you fool,' came the reply, 'it's her husband.'



**SE VENDE** **ASTRID'S** **SE ALQUILA**  
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**IN THE ORIHUELA COSTA AREA**  
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**REASONABLY PRICED**  
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#### **New Residency-Permit Threshold Announced.**

After much dithering, the Spanish Government has let it be known it plans to raise the residency-permit investment hurdle to €500,000, which will buy **non-EU nationals** the right to reside in Spain for the duration of their investment.

The Spanish Government is reported to have prepared a new draft law granting qualified residency permits (with strings attached) to non-EU nationals who spend half a million Euros or more on a home in Spain, according to the Spanish press (elEconomista.es). The draft could become law as early as this summer.

This means the Government is finally doing something about the residency-permits-in-return-for-property-investments idea it floated last November, which met with stiff criticism. Back then the investment hurdle for a residency permit was just €160,000, which some said was too low and made Spain look cheap.

Under the latest draft, non-EU nationals – predominantly Russians and Chinese – would get a residency permit (with strings attached) for them, their spouses and children, upon spending €500,000 or more on a property in Spain. That would bring Spain in line with countries that have introduced similar incentives, like Portugal and Ireland. Investments tied to residency permits will no longer be limited just to property. Permits will also be obtained with investments that create at least 2 jobs, or by investing in financial assets like Spanish government debt (€2 million!), say press reports.

(<http://www.spanishpropertyinsight.com/>)

#### **Have a heart!**

Just got off the phone with a friend who lives in Scotland. She said that since early this morning the snow has been nearly waist high and is still falling. The temperature is dropping far below zero and the north wind is increasing to near gale force. Her husband has done nothing but look through the kitchen window and just stare. She says that if it gets much worse she may have to let the drunken bastard in!  
 Lee Bell

#### **ANDALUSIA: HASHISH CENTRE OF EUROPE?**



May seems to have been a particularly busy month for the police in Southern Spain. First of all in Algeciras, 32 tons of hashish was discovered hidden in a consignment of melons due to go from Morocco to France. Around 400 trucks pass through the Port of Algeciras daily with around half being inspected. On the same day, a plantation of around 13,000 marijuana plants was discovered in an estate in Málaga. But just one day later, police in Córdoba were called to an attempted break-in at a warehouse in an industrial estate. There they discovered the largest hashish shipment ever seized in Spain - 52.6 metric tons. Photo/AFP. Six days later, another 291 kilos of hashish were discovered inside a second warehouse. The following day, 10 more tons turned up inside two trucks in a third warehouse, all in the same industrial park of La Amargacena.

Police believe that Córdoba has become the new Spanish base for storing and shipping Moroccan hashish to northern Europe, particularly Germany and the Netherlands. The never-ending stream of trucks coming in from Morocco used to stop in Seville, but the gang decided to move the business to the less suspicious city of Córdoba to throw off investigators.

#### **THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THERE SUCKERS!**

Why is it that whenever 'gold' enters the business environment, slight of hand and general 'dogyness' rares its ugly head. The profusion of gold or 'oro' dealers prompted the local authorities in Madrid to carry out a random inspection of the dealers' weighing scales. Out of 37 scales tested by regional Directorate General of Industry, 60% of the scales were found to be inaccurate or the business-owners refused to have them tested! Indeed some of the owners of the businesses visited showed a "violent attitude" toward inspectors, who had to leave without properly carrying out their jobs.

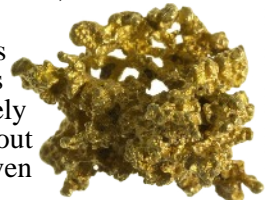
The Madrid regional government now says it is going to begin taking action against all business owners whose scales don't measure up adequately or who refuse to have them tested, dishing out fines of between 3,000 and 12,000 euros and even moving to close certain establishments.

In a separate investigation conducted by the OCU consumers organization, they discovered that the price a seller can get for their gold can vary by 400 percent - between 12 and 47 euros a gram - depending on the shop visited. This is not illegal - traders are free to offer whatever amount they deem worthy, and it is up to the seller whether they accept it or not. So, in a business where there is little regulation, once again it is the customer who is being regularly duped. But as ever, there is no honour among thieves. A Bilbao resident and her daughter found that several items of jewellery including a particularly valuable ring were missing from their collection. Suspicion eventually fell on a cleaning lady and her boyfriend. Police discovered that this larcenous couple has disposed of their ill-gotten gains in an 'Oro' gold-trading establishment. There, they were persuaded by the dealer that one of the rings was only worth €300, which they accepted. Police reported that the true value of the ring was closer to €200,000!

So remember, if you must visit these types of establishments, just because they are not wearing a mask does not mean that some of them will not try to rob you!

#### **Smooth Operator.**

Ivan was the smoothest talker in the world. He could sell bacon to the Arabs. He even made his wife feel sorry for the hitchhiker who had lost her bra and panties in his car.





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 FRIDAY - QUIZ**

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**\*\*\***

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**Via Park V  
 966184951 & 632199167**

A junior soccer team is playing a match one Sunday. Just before the kick-off the team coach approaches one of his young players. 'Do you understand that you mustn't swear at the ref if he gives you a card and you mustn't attack an opponent if he fouls you?' 'Yes,' replies the boy. 'Good,' says the coach. 'Now go and explain that to your mother.'

**LARGE BAVARIA  
DRAFT €2.00!  
BOTTLES  
JUST €1!!**



**HAPPY HOUR 3 - 7pm**  
Pints: Bavaria €1.50  
John Smith's €2.00  
Tropical €1.50  
Magners €2.50  
Can: Flavoured Cider €2

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FROM GREAT STEAKS, LAMB & GAMMONS  
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HOMEMADE CHIPS, NEVER FROZEN!**



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**RACE NIGHT JUNE 16 AT 9PM !!**

**FULLY BOOKED!**



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**Coming Soon!  
THE FULL  
MONTY**

**And they're off!**

Some racehorses are chatting together in a stable. One of them starts to boast about his track record. 'Out of my last 15 races, I've won eight!' he says proudly. Another horse breaks in. 'That's good. In my last 27 races, I've won 19!' 'Not bad, but out of my last 36 races, I've won 28!' says another, flicking his tail. At this point they notice a greyhound that has been sitting there listening. 'I don't mean to butt in,' says the greyhound, 'but I've won 88 of my last 99 races.' The horses are clearly amazed. 'F\*\*k me!' says one, after a hushed silence. 'A talking dog!'



## Letters & e-mails to the Editor



I enjoyed reading the reviews of Manuel's and Alingui in your last issue of 'The Dream Scene'. Both are good restaurants but I think your reviewer has missed a real Filton Centre gem just around the corner. *El Duende del Manzano*, located behind The Dublin pub by the Ferrreteria is a spacious colourful bar with a charming enclosed courtyard. It is a traditional Spanish bar offering great tapas and Menu de Dia. Everyone that we have taken to it, have expressed what a brilliant find it is.

If you just go for a drink, you are offered a free mini tapa to go with it in the traditional Spanish style. When we visited we were given an albondigas. The meatball was excellent but the sauce was absolutely sublime. The depth of flavour was outstanding and nothing like I have had in Spain before. This continued with a tapa Magra de Cerdo, which was delicious. We supplemented this with calamari. No pre-made supermarket rubbish here, freshly cooked with the lightest of home made batter. Finally we had a fish tapa with Merluza (hake), prawns and mussels cooked in a subtle spicy sauce. All this served with free bread. We also had a bottle of house white wine and two bottles of water. At 9.50 Euro a head a complete bargain.

In addition, they have a variety of entertainment over the weekend from Thursday to Sunday. This includes a Spanish trio that play traditional folk songs and Flamingo. It is not only toe tapping but one is actively encouraged to get up and join in.

There are very few quality Spanish establishments close to the Filton Centre and for those of us that have a cosmopolitan view and want to experience some of the culture of this country, then I suggest a visit to *El Duende del Manzano* is a must but please note that it is closed on Mondays.

Ruscombe Smyth-Pigott.

\*\*\*

We wonder if you could include a comment in the Dream Scene about the impressive landscaping that has been carried out on Dream Hills? As part time residents we don't see these projects developing but would like to say thank you to the hard working volunteers who have created such impressive community garden areas. The trees and flowers are beautiful and make the development look cared for and welcoming. The gardeners are clearly skilled and dedicated in creating an environment which is a pleasure to look at and to wander around. Thank you to all concerned!

Pat and Adrian Cartwright.

\*\*\*

Many thanks for all the positive feedback on the plumbing articles, the worst criticism was that it was "a bit technical"; guess I can live with that, more to follow when space permits, in the mean time if you're stuck feel free to give me a call on 653553715 or email dreamhillsplumbing@gmail.com with any queries.

Lee.

\*\*\*



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**Watch all live sports in comfort!**

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Monday to Friday €3 per hour  
Other times €6 per hour.

**Bookings please call 965 319 512**

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 **Tuesday's - Pool**

**Wednesday's - Macklin's Poker League,**  
Texas Hold'em from 7pm

**Thursday's - Sarah's Bingo from 3pm**  
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**SKY SPORTS**

**INTERNET BOOTHS  
WITH PRINTER.  
LICENSED TO SELL  
CARTONS OF CIGARETTES.**

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Scrummy Cheesecakes and Delicious Desserts**

**Breakfasts served from 10am**

**Unlimited Tea or Coffee with Big or Little Breakfasts  
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**8oz Rump Steak, Fries, Mushrooms,  
Onion Rings and Peas**

**served with a sauce of your choice only €13,50**

**Friday Evening – Mixed Grill and Chop Night**

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**rikandkath@gmail.com**

### 'Er Indoors!

- My wife woke with a massive smile on her face this morning. I love felt-tip pens.
- Bought the wife a bag and belt set for her birthday. She doesn't like them, but the Hoover has never worked so well.
- I've just fitted strobe lights in the bedroom. . . . . It makes the wife look like she's moving during sex.
- I spent a couple of hours defrosting the fridge last night, or "foreplay" as she likes to call it.



THE

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CHARITY RACE NIGHT AT 8:30PM

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Gambling!

•After examining a 3,000-year-old mummy an archaeologist announces that it's a body of a man who died of a heart attack. 'How can you tell?' asks one of the students. 'I examined a piece of parchment found in the mummy's hand,' replies the archaeologist. 'It was a betting slip that said "5,000 on Goliath".'

•How do you leave Las Vegas with a small fortune? Go in with a big one.



## INTERNATIONAL IDIOTS OF THE MONTH.

We would never want to give the impression that 'idiots' are solely within the domain of Spain. Certainly not! Einstein once said that, 'There are only two things which are infinite, the Universe and stupidity.' So this month the award goes international. There are plenty of candidates, so you choose the winner.



First we start with two unnamed police officers in Ramsgate in the UK. These two policemen drove up in a police car and reprimanded a 10-year-old girl because, they said, the hopscotch grid she was chalking on the pavement could be criminal damage and illegal. (See photo) This pair of 'bell-ends' should never have been given a uniform, and they should never, ever, be given weapons!

But then there came along another odd story, but this time concerning a policewoman in the UK. Constable Kerry Ann Taylor was injured while disposing of the plants and equipment at a cannabis factory at a house in Southsea, Hampshire. It was hot with poor ventilation and, because she felt nauseous from the smell of the cannabis, she decided to open a window. (Now, some people pay good money for this sort of thing!) Anyway, not noticing that the window had been sealed, Pc Taylor, who was wearing latex gloves to protect against skin irritation, pushed at the glass which broke and her right hand went through, cutting her thumb. The officer sued Hampshire Police and a judge at Winchester County Court found in her favour, awarding her £5,000. Not sure who is the idiot here; probably the court.

Now onto India. On an Air India flight from Bangkok to New Delhi, both the pilot and co-pilot decided to take a sleep. They put the plane on auto-pilot and retired to the Business class seats for a sleep. It then seems that a stewardess sat in the pilots chair and accidentally knocked off the auto-pilot switch causing the plane to behave erratically. This resulted in the now awakened and no doubt very frightened pilots scurrying back to the cockpit to put the auto-pilot back on and avoid a crash! No doubt the 166 passengers on board were suitably impressed!

There have been many concerns relating to air safety in India for some time. In the past, a number of pilots tested before flying were shown to be drunk and in 2010, several pilots flew with fake licences. Then just last week, on an Air India flight between Delhi and Bangalore, the pilot went for a pee in the toilet. Unfortunately on his return, the door to the cockpit became jammed and the passengers began to panic. The co-pilot had to make an emergency landing at Bhopal.

But now we return to Spain, thankfully not by Air India. The Spanish Navy commissioned four new submarines in the new S-80 series from the state-owned shipbuilder Navantia. These have a total budget of 2.2 billion euros and are all due for delivery by March 2015. However, it seems that the first sub, the *Issac Peral*, is between 75 and 100 metric tons too heavy. Now this might not seem much when the floating tonnage of the sub' is around 2,200 tons. However, the engineers miscalculations in this instance could tip the balance of the sub' giving it all the buoyancy characteristics of a stone, which although it might not compromise its ability to submerge, might make it impossible to re-surface! Cue some very red-faced engineers. This will now delay the delivery dates of the sub's by up to two years and the effect on the budget will be catastrophic. The company, Navantia, has now decided to bring in a foreign advisor to solve the problem.

But it has also emerged that Navantia have never built a submarine before. After this 'cock-up' I don't believe the new crews will be very enthusiastic about manning these new vessels, that is if they ever see the water. It might be cheaper and safer to buy Russian sub's, and you all know what those are like!

## Quickies!

This week in La Punta, Valencia,, a 38-year-old policeman stabbed a 55-year-old bank employee four times. It seems the bank official had previously sold the policeman some preferential shares in Bankia. As with all the preference shares of the failed banks, their original values have been destroyed.

Barcelona FC have spent over €100 million on a five-year-deal to purchase 21-year-old Brazilian footballer, Neymar (photo). This is the highest cost-signing ever in Spain. In the first division six clubs have entered into bankruptcy protection over the last two seasons.



Gibraltar has become UEFA's 54th member and means that senior football matches will soon be held on the Rock. Spain has opposed the decision. UEFA President, Michael Platini, said that Gibraltar would be kept away from Spain in qualifying for Euro 2016. 'Gibraltar will not play qualifying matches with Spain – we also have this situation with Armenia and Azerbaijan', he said.

The two owners of a bar in Valverde del Camino, Huelva, have been given a three-year and two month sentence. The two have been found guilty of causing acoustic contamination, and in addition both will have to pay a €3,800 fine, and compensation of €7,000 for the neighbours' 'somatic and psychic' disorders. The court considered it proved that the neighbours suffered acoustic contamination from 2008 to May 2010 from the bar next door. The sentence stated that the bar owners used an improper sound limiter.

The sale of homes fell by 21.5% in the first quarter of this year compared to last. The rapid drop comes with the end of mortgage relief. There were 54,512 house purchases made in the first quarter. The figure was also affected by the higher IVA being charged on the sale of new properties.

Spain's state debt has doubled since the start of the crisis, and now stands at 641 billion, 461 million euros. The regional governments have unpaid bills totalling €10 billion.

## Gone to the Dogs!

Steve took his dog for a walk down to the local pub on Saturday night. He was having a quiet drink when the football results came up on the television set. Steve's team had won and the dog started running in circles and yelping with delight.

'What does he do when your team loses?' asked the barman.

'Somersaults,' said Steve.

'How many?' asked the barman.

'Depends on how far I kick him.'

Mick: 'My dog's called Carpenter. He's always doing little jobs around the house.'

Phil: 'I call my dog Mechanic. I give him a kick in the nuts and he makes a bolt for the door.'

I was with this girl the other night and from the way she was responding to my skillful caresses, you would have sworn she was conscious from the top of her head to the tag on her toes.  
(Emo Philips)



# LIME BAR



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**ALL SPORTS ON 7 LARGE SCREENS!**  
**CATCH 3 GAMES AT 4pm EVERY SATURDAY!**  
**SLIMMER'S WORLD EVERY MONDAY AT 11.30am.**  
**MON & THURS AT 9PM DOMINOES & CRIB NIGHTS**



**FRIDAYS AT 9PM**  
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**JOIN THE LIME BAR**  
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**GREAT PRIZES!**



**Free WiFi**  
**Happy Hour Mon - Fri 3 'til 7 pm**  
**Tel: 659 899 831**

## LIME BAR GOLF SOCIETY, LOS ALTOS, ORIHUELA COSTA

The golf societies venue for the 8th May 2013 was held at the La Torre Golf Course.

The weather was fine and warm and thirty-two players looked forward to this interesting and challenging course.

The competition was in the Stableford format and the scores are recorded as follows.

Nearest the Pin on the 3rd hole was Paul Abbot.

Best Guest with a score of 33 was Lee Bryant.

Silver Class 4th Place was Colin Clarke with a score of 31.

Silver Class 3rd place was Dave Railton with a score of 32.

Silver Class 2nd place was Colin Capper with a score of 33.

Silver Class 1st place was Dave Everson with a score of 34.

Gold Class 4th place was Charlie Mc Gonagle with a score of 28

Gold Class 3rd place was Bill Dennie with a score of 30 .

Gold Class 2nd place was Paul Abbott with a score of 30 (on count-back).

Gold Class 1st place score of 32.

Matchplay: Current while playing the were as follows:

Mark Taylor beat Nev. Greenwood beat Ken Sutton beat Due to family Coleman has resigned and good wishes go to missed.

A very good day in

you to Captain Mick Slater and for organising the event and also thanks to the Staff at The Lime Bar and ladies for a most enjoyable meal. Anyone wishing to join our friendly society just needs to phone Mick on 659866468. (Colin Clarke)



was Graham Mitchell with a

match play events took place above event and the results

Steve Cottle by 1 hole.

Mike Heighway by 1 hole.

Norman Dobson by 1 hole.

commitments Stewart as Vice Captain; our thanks him, and he will be sadly

pleasant company; thank



## 86 and still scoring!



Most football enthusiasts, particularly the older ones, will have heard of Di Stéfano.

Alfredo Stéfano Di Stéfano Laulhé was born in Argentina in 1926. Di Stéfano. Also known as "*Saeta rubia*" - the blond arrow - he became one of the greatest footballers of all time. He played internationally for Argentina and Columbia before coming to Spain. Although he came to Spain to conclude a contract with Barcelona, various agents of Real Madrid 'side-lined' him to play for their team instead. This only exacerbated the traditional enmity between the two clubs. After acquiring Spanish citizenship, he then played for Spain on 31 occasions. In a career lasting 698 games, he scored 510 goals.

Now 86 and a widower for eight years and after four heart by-pass surgeries, Di Stéfano wants to marry his 36-year-old representative, Costa Rican Gina Gonzalez (photo: El Mundo). Di Stéfano, now an honorary president of Real Madrid Football Club, first met Gina - who holds a doctorate in Law and International Relations - when she was writing his biography some years ago.

The couple had planned to wed within 15 days, but the course of true love, or indeed any other type, never runs smooth. Di Stéfano's surviving five daughters have now 'cordoned-off' their father from the public and Gina, saying that he and his assets need to be protected. They have also taken the matter to court to ascertain whether he now has the 'capacity' to proceed with the arrangement, but insist that they are not after his money.

### Driving me mad!

A driver came to a stream to discover that the bridge over it was in need of repair. Standing nearby was an old fellow, Seamus, so the driver asked him if he thought the stream was shallow enough for him to drive across.

'Yes, I should think you could do that, sir,' replied Seamus.

So the driver drove into the stream and almost immediately his car sank and he only just managed to scramble out and swim for the bank. 'What the hell's the idea of telling me I could drive across,' he shouted at the old boy. 'It must be at least 20 feet deep!'

'I don't understand it,' said Seamus, 'the water only comes halfway up the ducks.'

A policeman stopped a motorist in the centre of town one evening. 'Would you mind blowing into this bag, sir?' asked the policeman. 'Why?' said the driver.

'Because my chips are too hot,' said the copper.

A police officer stopped a car for speeding and saw a dog in the back. 'Does this dog have a licence?' he asks.

'Oh no, officer,' says the driver, 'I do all the driving myself.'

## Top of the World, Ma!

Spain has once again dominated the Top 10 in "Restaurant" Magazine's annual ranking of the World's 50 best restaurants. The much coveted Number One spot was awarded to *El Celler de Can Roca*, Girona, who has come 2nd on the list for the two previous years.

The 2-star Michelin restaurant has been run by the three Roca brothers since 1986, and has usurped Denmark's "Noma", preventing them from holding the title for a 4th consecutive year. Spain's Feran Adria - El Bulli - lost the No.1 ranking in 2010.

The New Top 10 :

- 1 — El Celler de Can Roca, Girona, Spain
- 2 — Noma, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 3 — Osteria Francescana, Modena, Italy
- 4 — Mugaritz, San Sebastian, Spain
- 5 — Eleven Madison Park, New York, United States
- 6 — D.O.M., Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 7 — Dinner by Heston Blumenthal, London, Britain
- 8 — Arzak, San Sebastian, Spain
- 9 — Steirereck, Vienna, Austria
- 10 — Vendome, Bergisch Gladbach, Germany.

El Celler de Can Roca is run by three chefs, all brothers: Joan Roca, master of savoury fare, Jordi, king of all things sweet, and Josep, whose liquid concoctions are said to be 'out of this world.' Jordi specialises in making his desserts smell like famous scents & perfumes. (I wonder if he does 'Brut'.) Am I the only one who thinks you don't need any teeth to enjoy haute or grand cuisine?

At El Celler, the tasting menu is €130 and the festival menu is €160 per head. Drinks are extra.

The following is an extract from their website at [http://www.cellercanroca.com/menu/menu\\_a.html](http://www.cellercanroca.com/menu/menu_a.html)

"The reconstruction of cuisine in the dining room, addressing new changes and concepts can be fascinating. Interpreting the rhythm and pauses of the table. Becoming storytellers, narrators of dishes and wine and much, much more... Wisdom is indispensable for physical and mental decompression, and it should come as no surprise that study and knowledge are part of our vain refuge. They enshroud the exercise of our profession. The foundations are study, perseverance, consistency and curiosity, so as to become more confident and self-assured." I could quote more but I am already drowning in bullshit!

Below is one of their famed dishes - Chicken biscuits with lemon on a stone - *Galletas de Pollo al Limón*. Enjoy!



Two women had met for coffee. One noticed that her friend seemed troubled, and asked, 'Is something wrong? You look stressed.' Her friend sighed. 'Well, my boyfriend just lost all his money and life savings in a nasty stock market crash. He's totally bankrupt,' she explained. 'Oh, that's dreadful,' the other girl sympathised. 'You must feel really worried about him.' 'Yeah, I am,' replied her friend. 'I don't know what he's going to do without me.'



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## Changes to Rental Laws.

Under the new rental law passed by Congress on May 16 with the votes of the ruling Popular Party, which has an absolute majority in the lower house, and backed by the regional parties UPN and Foro Asturias, tenants who fail to pay their rent can now be evicted in 10 days if they fail to provide a judge with reasons for the eviction not to be executed.

The controversial new law also removes rent subsidies for low-income groups. The standard length of a rental contract has also been reduced from five years to three. Tenants can now abandon a rented property without financial penalty by providing the landlord one month's notice, while the owner of a house that requires the property for himself or family members can repossess it by giving the tenant two months' notice to leave.

The new legislation also establishes a register that blacklists tenants who have previously failed to pay their rent. This list can be consulted by potential landlords.

The Public Works Ministry, which is responsible for housing affairs and sponsored the law, said changes to the legislation were needed to make the rental market "more flexible."

Experts believe there could be up to six million empty homes in Spain, or over 20 percent of the total. One of the arguments used to explain this phenomenon was the rental law. This legislation favored tenants, who were hard to evict legally — even when they failed to pay the rent. Source: El Pais.

There have been several reviews of the rental laws during the past couple of years. It is difficult to see if this new legislation will have any real teeth, particularly with the horrendous backlogs in the courts.

## Being needed.

A young medical student approached a patient in bed brandishing a syringe. 'Nothing to worry about,' said the student, 'just a little prick with a needle.' 'Yes, I know you are,' said the patient, 'but what are you going to do?'

## Remember Eating in the U.K. in the 1950's? Part 2.

By Judy

**Spices** came from the Middle East where, we believed, they were used for embalming.

**Figs and dates** appeared every Christmas, but no one ate them.

**Black puddings** were mined in Bolton, Lancashire.

Only **Heinz** made beans.

**Sauce** was either brown or red.

**Frozen food** was called ice cream which only came in one colour and one flavour.

**Calories** were mentioned, but they had nothing at all to do with food.

**Cheese** only came in a hard lump.

A **tart** was a fruit-filled pastry, not a lady of horizontal pleasure.

**Hot dogs** were a type of sausage that only the Americans ate.

**Cornflakes** had arrived from America, but it was obvious that they would never catch on.

**Boil-in-the-bag** would have been beyond our realms of comprehension.

**Open chips** would not have made any sense to us.

One thing that we never, ever had on our table in the 50's was **elbows**.

## What.....?!

Patrick picked Maureen up at a local rave party. Later, she took him home and she asked him to go to bed with her. 'I've got no protection,' said Patrick. 'That's O.K.' said Maureen, 'but be careful.'

Patrick was just working up a full head of steam when he stopped dead, looked at her and said, 'You don't have AIDs, do you?'

'No,' said Maureen, 'of course not!'

'That's a relief,' said Patrick, 'I don't want to catch it twice.'



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David, whose advert appears above, has a short e-book entitled 'Why are we always late in Spain?'

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**Still making its mark!**

If you happen to pop into any Spanish bar for a recuperative libation, you will always find that one or two newspapers are usually supplied for the customers. Locally, these might include Informacion & El Pais – both left of centre politically, or maybe El Mundo – centre/centre-right. But whatever the political leanings of the bar, you will almost always see a well-thumbed, creased copy of MARCA.



MARCA is a Spanish national daily sports newspaper. It was founded in San Sebastian, a nationalist area in Northern Spain, in December 1938, about five months before the end of the Spanish Civil War, see

photo. Initially it started off as a weekly publication, but became a daily in November 1942. Although the daily covers a range of sports, football gets the most coverage with Real Madrid getting the lion's share. Indeed in 2008 Sir Alex Ferguson, former manager of Manchester United, accused MARCA of being "a vehicle to unsettle players" on behalf of Real Madrid – in reference to the alleged 'tapping-up' of Cristiano Ronaldo. The newspaper is not afraid of controversy. On one of its front covers it accused the then president of Real Madrid, Ramón Calderón, of "stealing the Assembly" during their annual general meeting. He in turn said that MARCA was 'run by a psychopath!' In another it reported that Man U manager, Alex Ferguson, was 'senile.' See Gallery on page 22 for more.



MARCA now has a daily readership of around three million, the highest of any Spanish daily. In Feb' 2001, MARCA launched a 24-hour sports radio station and a TV channel, MARCA TV in 2010. This is available on TDT. MARCA also announces a number of footballer awards at the end of each season including one for best referee!

MARCA also has a website in English at <http://www.marca.com/en/> which is just as colourful as the newspaper itself.



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### **Mixed Bag.**

- A Euro-tourist is at a urinal near Montego Bay 'pointing Percy at the porcelain'. He notices that the native bloke next to him has "WENDY" tattooed on his todger. He asks, "Is Wendy your girl? I had my girlfriend Amy's name tattooed on mine. See it?" The native replies, "No, not Wendy. It says *Welcome to Jamaica Have a Nice Day.*"
- There's a new anti-depressant on the market for lesbians.....it's called Tricoxagain.
- I swear that I must be Anorexic, because every time I look in the mirror, there's a fat ugly bastard looking back at me.
- My mate set me up on a blind date. He said, "She's a lovely girl, but there's something you should know. She's expecting a baby." I felt like a right bloomin' idiot waiting in the pub wearing nothing but a nappy.
- Basically my wife was immature. I'd be at home taking a bath and she'd come in and sink my boats. (Woody Allen)



### Where's my water pressure? by Lee.

One of the commonest questions asked by owners of quad houses is why is my water pressure very low when some of my neighbours have loads of it, the answer is usually bad plumbing! The next question is, can it be fixed?; the answer to that is yes. It just depends how much time and effort you're prepared to expend. Before anything though, check that the filters on the taps are not blocked, every tap has a filter, the presence of which the house owner is frequently and blissfully, unaware! Replacements can be bought at the Ferretaria or soaking the filter overnight in vinegar gets rid of some of the lime scale.

Your first port of call after that should be your water meter where you should check the two valves are open at about 95%, but never leave a valve jammed fully open, you're asking for trouble! Assuming no problems there, ensure the main valve, usually found above and to the side of your back door is open and working properly, again remember these valves fail on a regular basis and while they can be repaired with a new valve core, it is essential that the valve seat is re-cut at the same time. Other sets of valves can be found under the kitchen sink, below the water boiler, and on the walls of the bathroom and shower room, all should be 95% open and no signs of water leaking from under the valve top.

Assuming that all is OK this far, it's time to check the output from the wall check valves; the hose can be removed from the valve - it's handy to have a spare one to save water going everywhere when you turn it on! If water pressure is good here you should look for a blocked or damaged hose or a faulty tap, if not, replace the check valve in the wall; many are seized solid and they're worth changing periodically anyway.

Many problems on the hot side are caused by the restrictive, standard sized hoses which can be upgraded to larger diameter without too much trouble and can make a huge difference, if your boiler needs changing insist that the hoses are upgraded at the same time! The combination of a too small hose from new and a buildup of scale over time can wreak havoc but do remember to check the input side too.

And if all this fails? Sadly there are houses where debris entered the water system when the house was built or wrongly fitted pipe and hoses cause ongoing problems, it's all fixable but can be a major job.

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### The Seasoning.

Two missionaries in Africa were apprehended by a tribe of very hostile cannibals who put them in a large pot of water, built a fire under it, and left them there. A few minutes later, one of the missionaries started to laugh uncontrollably. The other missionary couldn't believe it.

'What's wrong with you?' he shouted. 'We're being boiled alive! They're gonna eat us! What could possibly be funny at a time like this?'

'Well,' said the other missionary, 'I just pissed in their soup!'

### Coastal Law Amnesty.

The PP conservative government's new Coast Law, which is significantly more lenient than its predecessor, will benefit over half a million people who own homes, hotels, beach bars and other businesses right on the beachfront. "Let's take advantage of the impact that's already been done," the secretary of state for the environment, Federico Ramos, said during an announcement in May.

The Popular Party (PP) had always been critical of a law aimed at clearing the Spanish coastline of the cement that covers it following years of indiscriminate building. Although it was passed in 1988, it took inspectors years to map out exactly which properties lie within 100 meters or so from the waterline — an area considered of public use. Homes falling inside that area could not be sold by their owners, who only got a concession to live in them. In 2009, an amendment stated that properties built before 1988 would be left out of the expropriation. Still, thousands of foreigners who bought properties in Spain, including many Britons and Germans, were affected by the law and European lawmakers sought to pressure Spain into letting up on it.

Now, the PP has found a way to let around 1,000 hotels, 3,000 beach bars and 1,700 other businesses off the hook, even though they sit right on the beachfront. The government claims this move will save 150,000 direct jobs, mainly in the tourism sector, one of the few remaining competitive areas in the Spanish economy. Also saved are 12,800 homes built on public land, some of which were due for demolition in 2018. Owners may renew their 75-year concessions and even sell up. (El Pais)

Environmentalists are incensed by the amnesty as it basically gives the 'go-ahead' to many horrendous developments in environmentally sensitive areas. One of the few restrictions on these properties now is that they cannot be extended, as if anyone is going to take notice of that!

### The Masterpiece

The curator of an art museum asked an artist for a painting depicting General Custer's last thoughts. Two weeks later, the artist unveiled a painting of an enormous canvas with a lovely blue lake painted in the centre, with a fish leaping from the water with a shining halo around its head. On the shores of the lake were the most detailed pictures of American Indians fornicating.

After gaping at the painting for some time, the enraged curator demanded to know what the theme was supposed to be.

'You asked for a painting of Custer's last thoughts,' the artist explained. 'That's it.....Custer was thinking: "Holy Mackerel, look at all those f\*\*king Indians!"'

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**THE SPANISH PROPERTY MARKET, ONE VIEW.**

It seems to me and many others that the Spanish government have a death wish as regards to their “Golden Goose” the property market! I do not suffer from the problem many foreign residents do; ie grasping at straws in the hope that they will herald an improvement in the property market. Your comment “we can expect sales to recover somewhat next month” is based on the flame of optimism which, sad to say, the Spanish authorities are continually dousing with cold water. Here are just some of the reasons that the property market will not improve in the foreseeable future.

1. 3.5 million properties waiting to be sold.
2. Due to defaults this figure is not decreasing.
3. The limited buyers from Europe are looking elsewhere due to the Spanish attitude.
4. The knowledge that soon the banks, because of pressure, will have to start dumping their toxic assets.
5. LAU law is still in force.
6. The new Declaration of Assets law.
7. The proposed restrictions on letting property.
8. The continual attack by the local authorities on foreign resident properties for extra tax or projects invented to raise cash.
9. The retrospective alteration of laws relating to permission on building and occupation.
10. And because of this, there are a vast numbers of foreign property owners just waiting for a slight upturn in the market so that they can dump their property and return to their safe homeland! This will cause a double dip in prices.

And many more.

Regards, Juan.

(This was an online response to a Spanish Property Insight article. I would add to this list, the removal of tax relief on mortgages.)

A dog goes into a grocer’s with a basket in its mouth. In the basket is a shopping list and a purse. The grocer reads the list, puts the goods requested into the basket, takes some money from the purse and puts back the change. The dog then runs off home. This happens every week for months and the grocer becomes extremely impressed by the animals intelligence and its dedication to its task. One day he decides to follow the animal home and see if its owner would be willing to sell it. The dog eventually leads the grocer to a run-down house where it puts the basket on the doorstep and rings the door-bell with its nose. After a few seconds an old woman opens the door and starts hitting the dog with a stick. ‘Stop!’ shouts the grocer. ‘What are you doing? That’s the most intelligent dog I’ve ever seen in my life.’ ‘Intelligent, my arsel!’ shouts the old woman. ‘That’s the third time this week he’s forgotten his keys.’

My dog needed training, so I brought him into the bedroom at night. From me he learned how to beg. My wife taught him how to roll over and play dead.  
Rodney Dangerfield

My dog is not a child substitute. At least that’s what his piano teacher says.  
Rita Rudner

**Sports!**

My favourite sport in the Olympics is the one which you make your way through the snow, you stop, you shoot a gun, and then you continue on. In most of the world it is known as the biathlon, except in New York, where it is known as winter.

Michael Ventre

If you ever see any blacks or Mexicans on top of a snow-capped mountain, call 911. There’s been a plane accident.

Paul Rodriguez


**Dream Hills - Annual General Meeting May 17th.**  
The committee have asked me to place the following notice on this forum on their behalf:

**A.G.M.**

Our President, Maribel, the Admin, and the Committee - Jan, Terry, Pat, Lowri and Mags, would like to say a big 'thank you' to all those members of Dream Hills, who supported us at the AGM on the 17th May, 2013; thanks for their great attendance, and also for the positive proxy votes received. It enabled us to defeat the opposition and will ensure that we can continue to keep Dream Hills up to the high standard that has been achieved over the last ten years and during 2013-2014.

The Committee.

I must add that the annual urbanisation charge will remain the same as last year, which is a marvellous achievement in these difficult times. This charge is payable in June. Also thanks to Stefan Pokroppa for chairing the meeting despite a surfeit of bad manners and aggression from the usual clamorous minority. Few would have the patience to do so. Am I the only one who has noticed that those who whinge the most, do the least for their community?



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**3-D Bull Run!**

A 3-D documentary on the San Fermin Festival and the exciting and dangerous Pamplona bull run premiered in the Málaga Film Festival in early May. The documentary, which took four years to make, cost around €1 million. The movie covers each stretch of the spectacular 826-metre bull-running route and although it includes some of the dramatic violent moments including gorings and a fatality, it does not revel in the violent aspects of the run. (Hard to avoid I would think!) The documentary, titled *Encierro en 3D*, will be released in Spanish theatres in around 15 cities on June 28. An English version is also being released.





## ENERGY EFFICIENCY CERTIFICATION

Most of you may probably be aware at this stage of this new requirement for this part of Spain. If you plan to sell or rent your property from June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013, you will have to provide this certificate, *Certificado de Eficiencia Energética*. This is a certificate which relates to the energy efficiency of the property. As part of the grading process properties will be graded from 'A' - being the most efficient, to 'G' - being the least. This type of certification is already in place in most of Europe. Most of us are already aware that many of the properties on the Costas have the thermal efficiency of a caravan or a cardboard box. Certainly different practical requirements here to say, the north of Spain. Most of the housing in these warmer areas will probably rate either an 'F' or 'G.' Properties include dwellings and businesses.

So who does **not** need to obtain a certificate:

Properties which are not for sale or rent.

Properties with a floor area of less than 50 sq. Metres.

Properties where there is already a rental contract in place.

Properties where a rental contract is signed for less than four months. (If a contract is exempt, a signed declaration must be included with the rental contract.)

Properties, or parts thereof, which are used for less than four months a year.

Although comprehensive details concerning this certification and who can sign it, have not been released yet, the penalties for not complying with it have already been announced! This is typical of the punishing bureaucracy which holds Spain back. The fines range from €300 for minor offences to substantial fines for very serious infringements.

It is the responsibility of the property owner (or the developer in case of a new property) to obtain the correct certification. The certificate can be renewed every ten years. Costs for certification are from €250 upwards. As they haven't got their act together, the authorities will probably allow a couple of months or so before each Autonomous Community will have its own register up and running.

There is no doubt that this new requirement will bring a lot of 'cowboys' out of the slime and one will have to watch out for those who promise and charge for what they can't deliver.

There is plenty of info' online. There is a report on the pricing of energy performance certification here - [http://www.epbd-ca.org/Medias/Pdf/Price\\_of\\_energy\\_performance\\_certificate\\_s.pdf](http://www.epbd-ca.org/Medias/Pdf/Price_of_energy_performance_certificate_s.pdf)

### Hong Kong Dong!

Bob had just returned to the States from Hong Kong. His doctor diagnosed that he had caught 'Hong Kong Dong.' 'I'm afraid it's got to come off,' he said. Bob was horrified. 'Don't worry,' said the doctor. 'You can have a transplant.'

'How much would that cost?' asked Bob.

'Well,' replied the doctor, 'we have some specials now under ObamaCare. It's just \$1,000 for the standard model, \$2,000 for a big one and €5,000 for a big black one.'

'I'll have to talk it over with my wife,' responded Bob.

Bob returned to the doctor the next day.

'Don't worry about the transplant, doc. We've decided to get a new kitchen instead,' he said.

### Taking Lulu for a walk.

A little girl asks her mum, 'Mum, can I take the dog for a walk around the block?' Her mum replies 'No, because she is on heat.' 'What does that mean?' asked the child. 'Go and ask your father. I think he's in the garage.' The little girl goes out to the garage and says, 'Dad, can I take Lulu for a walk around the block? I asked Mum, but she said the dog was on the heat, and to come ask you.' He took a rag, soaked it in petrol, and scrubbed the dog's backside with it to disguise the scent, and said 'Ok, you can go now, but keep Lulu on the leash and only go one time around the block.' The little girl left and returned a few minutes later with no dog on the leash. Surprised, Dad asked, 'Where's Lulu?'

The little girl said, 'She ran out of petrol about halfway round the block, so another dog is pushing her home.' Pete Dudman

## HOLIDAY RENTALS.

Holiday lettings in Catalonia will soon be controlled by restrictive local laws, as the Government in Madrid moves to devolve the regulation of holiday rentals to Spain's 17 autonomous regions.

The national Government in Madrid is changing the national tenancy act (*Ley de Arrendamientos Urbanos*) to devolve the regulation of holiday rentals to the regional governments, where powerful local hotel lobbies are eager to put pressure on competition from private landlords. Holiday-home owners in Catalonia, as elsewhere, will have to bone up on local laws to avoid fines for engaging in illegal holiday rentals.

In Catalonia, tourist rentals are covered by decree 159/2012 of December 2012. This distinguishes between tourist apartments (*apartamentos turísticos*) and homes used by tourists (*viviendas de uso turístico*).

It is only a matter of time before our own region will jump on this band-wagon to increase their revenues. Common sense never seems to impinge on their tax-grabbing strategies. Cash-hungry Catalonia are ahead of the other regions in this matter and as you can see below, the requirements can be quite onerous. As a guideline, the cost of the tourist letting licence from the local town hall in Catalonia is around €250, and that is payable per annum!

### Requirements:

Registered with the town hall as a tourist use property  
Occupancy licence (*cédula de habitabilidad*), and never exceed the number of tenants allowed by that licence.

Comply with health and safety laws

Adequately furnished

Provide a contact number in case of problems

Issue clients with invoices including VAT at 10%. The invoice should detail the owner, the identity of clients, the number of guests, arrival and departure dates, the cost per night and taxes charged.

Charge clients the new tourist tax (in Catalonia since 01/11/12)

Make available an official complaints form to clients

Inform the police of all stays within 24 hours of arrival by fax or email (or in person at the police station)

### Restrictions:

You are not allowed to rent out just rooms. Stays of more than 31 days are not considered tourist rentals.

No one can be registered as living in the property (empadronado), which means just second homes.

I repeat that at this stage, the above requirements are only in Catalonia. I do hope that our region will be more sensible and more realistic when it drafts its own legislation.

### Confessions!

Priest: 'Tell me, Rabbi, did you ever cheat and try eating ham?'

Rabbi: 'Well, to tell the truth, I did break down once, just out of curiosity. Since I've confessed my experiment to you, let me ask, have you ever had a woman?'

Priest: 'Yes. Though I hate to admit it, earlier in my career I just had to find out what it was like.'

Rabbi: 'A lot better than ham, no?'



**Bull's Eye for The Phoenix!**

After a challenging season, the Phoenix Darts Team, not only reached the Final but also won our League Team Cup for 2012 / 2013. The presentation was made on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April at the Sports Bar, Playa Flamenca. Many thanks to the Sports Bar for making it a great night. They also put on the best buffet seen in any bar! Well done also to Jim Waddell, on left of photo, for taking the trophy for the most 180's. I managed to get to the final of the Mens' Singles, but was beaten by a very good player, John Walker from Buddies bar; well done John. Also a big thanks must go to our captain Brian - centre front, for encouraging the team and not swearing once! I must also mention the only lady in the team, Gena Wood, who was a great asset to the team. Well done to everyone in the team and looking forward to next year's season. Ooooooh!

Kevin Wood( One-Dart Woody).



Gift idea for Father's Day June 16<sup>th</sup>.



Was I that drunk?

This is a section from an old front page of **Marca** from 2008. It headlines that 'FERGUSON IS SENILE.' It went on about his 'ravings' and the manager of Real Madrid said he was 'fed up with the Manchester Franquito.' The cover shows a photo of Ferguson morphing into 'Franco.'



May 17 was **Norwegian Day** in Torrevieja. As usual, the event drew large happy crowds (photos) and far too much salted fish!



Police in Orihuela arrested three Ukranians, aged between 20 & 30, after they discovered more than 400 marijuana plants growing in a store next to a house. See below. Most of these illicit growers are detected by their large electricity bills, which are usually more than five times greater than normal. Iberdrola routinely report abnormal consumption to the police.



Much to the surprise of Abdul, Omar and the others, the virgins who awaited them in paradise were not quite what they expected. They were even more surprised when they found out where the long rifle barrels went!

(Some images from El Mundo, Efe, Informacion.)



The First Republic of 1873 dissolved into chaos. The new Republican government found it impossible to curb a mounting wave of political and social disorder. Federal Republicans staged revolts in many towns declaring themselves to be self-governing 'cantons.' Most of these uprisings were quickly snuffed-out, although a handful of centres, notably Malaga and Cartagena, held out for several months. The whole of the Spanish Navy in Cartagena had defected to the Republican canton.

Soldiers in many army units refused to obey their officers and with the cry of 'Down with epaulettes' many officers were attacked and had a nail driven into their shoulders where the epaulettes were worn. The more crowns on your epaulettes - the more nails! With the army in disarray, the Carlists stepped up their military campaign and soon controlled most of Spain north of the Ebro and seemed set to topple the defenceless Republic itself.

Many mayors were shot dead and the violence extended to the religious sector where mobs attacked priests in the street and convents were desecrated and burned.

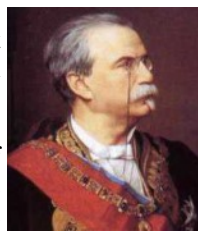
But the descent into anarchy and the destruction of discipline in the armed forces spurred a General Pavia and his loyal troops to save society and the *patria*. They descended upon the *Cortes* and after firing a few shots in the air, the 11-month-old Republic was finished.

A new *pronunciamento* in December 1874 in Sagunto (the old Iberian village in Valencia made famous during the Punic Wars), called for the return of the monarchy. The army had knocked the Bourbons off the throne seven years earlier, and now it was bringing them back in the shape of a new king, Alfonso XII.

Alfonso was the son of the former queen, Isabel. He received a military education at Sandhurst military college in England since he was 16-years-old. The new soldier-king showed signs of becoming a good ruler. The Carlists were soon crushed but would re-emerge some decades later.

Since Riego's first *pronunciamento* in 1820, the army had promoted Liberalism. Now however, the Army was becoming more conservative, the officers accepting the *moderado* coalition of monarchy, church and landowners as the natural order.

Largely under the guidance of a lawyer, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo from Malaga, the Constitution of 1876 was launched and it would last until 1923. Cánovas, who was described as looking like an unmade bed, sought to bring stability to the political scene by injecting common sense instead of ideology. 'The constitution should be formed on principles as liberal as the conditions of the country will allow,' he warned. Fringe groups such as the Carlists, republicans, regionalists and the anarchists were excluded from any participation.



Cánovas introduced the *turno pacífico*. This was a periodic rotation of power between the two only accepted political groupings, the conservatives (*moderados*) and the Liberals. Although universal male suffrage was granted in 1891, elections were rigged and manipulated to ensure that only one of the two accepted political groupings gained power. The change over was always orderly but corrupt. The fraud filtered down to the smallest village, where political bosses called *caciques* controlled voting and handed out patronage. With only 25% of the population being literate, it was easy to dupe an apathetic electorate. On one occasion, the entire 700 occupants of a cemetery voted.

In 1879, the Socialist Party was founded in Spain by Pablo Iglesias but it did not gain any strength until the next century.

Then in 1885, severe earthquakes in Andalucia destroyed thousands of buildings and left hundreds dead. A severe cholera outbreak followed and Alfonso, whose health was never strong, insisted on visiting the stricken areas. He died a few weeks later of a lung infection. He was 27. His second wife, Maria Cristina of Austria (right) became Regent of Spain and remained so for 17 years. She was described as "tall, fair, sensible, and well educated." Maria Cristina was pregnant at the time of Alfonso's death, but gave birth to a son who would later become king from 1902 to 1931.



By the late 1880s, Cánovas' policies were under threat from two sources. First, his overseas policy was increasingly untenable. A policy of repression against Cuban nationalists was ultimately ineffective and Spain's authority was challenged most seriously by the 1895 rebellion led by José Martí. Spain's policy against Cuban independence brought her increasingly into conflict with the United States, an antagonism that culminated in the Spanish-American War of 1898. Second, the political repression of Spain's working class was growing increasingly troublesome, and pressure for expanded suffrage mounted amid widespread discontent with the *cacique* system of electoral manipulation.

Cánovas' policies included mass arrests and a policy of torture. During a religious procession in 1896, at Barcelona, a bomb was thrown. Immediately three hundred men and women were arrested. Some were Anarchists, but the majority were trade unionists and Socialists. They were thrown into the notorious prison at the fortress of Montjuïc in Barcelona and tortured. After a number had been killed, or had gone insane, their cases were taken up by the liberal press of Europe, resulting in the release of a few survivors. Reputedly it was Cánovas del Castillo who ordered the torture, including the burning of the victims' flesh, the crushing of their bones, and the cutting-out of their tongues. Similar acts of brutality and barbarism had occurred during his regime in Cuba, and Cánovas remained deaf to the appeals and protests of civilized conscience.

Cánovas, who served six terms as Spanish prime minister, eventually paid a personal price for his policies of repression. In 1897, he was shot dead by Michele Angiolillo, an Italian anarchist, while taking the waters at a spa in the Basque region.

Despite the festering political and social tensions of the working class and regions of Spain, most of the 1890's were good for Spain. Queen Victoria visited on one occasion but she found the tea 'undrinkable' much as the Brit's still do here today!

However, it was events in the Caribbean and the Philippines which would accelerate Spain's decline to its nadir. I covered this historic period in detail in issue 63 of the Dream Scene. You can read it here in detail on page 19 of the archives - <http://www.heddon.co.uk/dhills/scene/ds63.pdf>

The Cuban Disaster was followed by the short but equally disastrous Spanish-American War in 1898.

In the Treaty of Paris (signed Dec. 10, 1898), Spain renounced all claim to Cuba, ceded Guam and Puerto Rico to the United States, and transferred sovereignty over the Philippines to the United States for \$20 million and lesser Pacific islands were transferred to Germany. Spain was now deprived of its empire. The struggle for Cuba had cost Spain its navy, 50,000 military deaths (nearly all from disease), and its national self-respect.

In Spain the Restoration regime had sunk to its nadir.

*After you've heard two eyewitness accounts of an accident, it makes you wonder about history.*

Dave Barry

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## WAR!

To a surprising extent the war-lords in shining armour, the apostles of martial virtues, tend not to die fighting when the time comes. History is full of ignominious getaways by the great and famous. George Orwell

We spend so much money on the military, yet we're slashing education budgets throughout the country. No wonder we've got smart bombs and stupid f\*\*king children. Jon Stewart

During the Second World War, a German prisoner of war was sent each week to tend my garden. He always seemed a nice friendly chap, but when the crocuses came up in the lawn in February, 1946, they spelt out 'Heil Hitler.' Irene Graham

The Japanese Prime Minister has apologised for Japan's part in World War II. However, he still hasn't mentioned anything about karaoke. David Letterman

UN inspectors haven't yet found any weapons in Iraq. The most they've done is to close down a coffee shop in Baghdad, because the fry cook wasn't wearing a hair net. Bill Maher

I'm really a timid person. I was beaten up by Quakers. Woody Allen

Obesity is now a problem in the navy. They've created a new rank: Really Big Rear Admiral. David Letterman

We have always said that in our war with the Arabs we had a secret weapon - no alternative. Golda Meir

- I fought in the war, you know. I killed four men.

- He was in the Catering Corps. He poisoned them. Basil & Sybil, *Faulty Towers*

## Scientific Breakthrough!

Yesterday, scientists in Madrid announced that beer contains small traces of female hormones. To prove the theory, they fed 100 men 12 pints of beer and observed that, shortly afterwards, 100% of them started talking nonsense and lost the ability to drive.

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