

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

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

Issue no. 78 1st of August 2013

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the August edition.

Well so far it has been a very hot summer and I have no doubt that the mercury will rise even higher this month. Once again, please don't underestimate the strength of the sun. One can get badly sunburned in a very short time and it can ruin the holiday for your loved ones.....or even yourself! Watch the 'ankle-biters' while they are in the pools. There have been far too many fatal accidents with young children so far this year on the Costa Blanca.

At the time of writing, we seem to have missed the jellyfish invasions that usually accompany the hot weather. Hopefully we will get some respite from them this August.

There is little good news in Spain at the moment. The horrific train derailment in Galicia has pushed the seemingly endless political corruption and bribery off the front pages, at least for the present. But there are indications from the polls that the Spanish people have had enough with austerity and tax increases from a political establishment which cannot seem to keep its fingers 'out of the till.' A Sigma Dos poll published in the El Mundo newspaper during the month of July has indicated that if the ruling Partido Popular (right of centre party) were to go to the polls now, their support would drop from the 44.6% they secured in 2011 to 30.7% now, a drop of a third. But this is not enough to give encouragement to the PSOE opposition (left of centre party) who themselves have dropped one point from 28.8% in 2011 to 27.8% now. The one party doing well in the survey is the left-wingers, Izquierda Unida (United Left). Now if these guys were leaning any more to the left, they would be in Cuba. They are now Spain's 3rd strongest party, moving from 6.9% in 2011 to 14.3% today. Rosa Díez's UPyD (middle of the road party) have also moved up from 4.7% to 8.3%. The Economist published an interesting article relating to this poll stating that the trends indicate that Spain could be moving towards a 'paella coalition' at the next General Election in 2015. The article and graph showing this unmistakable trend can be seen here - <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21580516-disillusion-leading-rise-two-alternative-parties-paella-coalition>

This month's newsletter also has another helpful DIY article by Lee Bell. You can find that on page 8. The 'history article' is also back again, which should please the enthusiasts (and probably bore everyone else!) and there are a number of articles which cover the latest price rises, changes to urbanisation law, frauds, scandals and much more. There is also a review of the Sunshine Sunset Boat Parties. 'She - who must be obeyed' and I went on one trip in July and it was great fun. Couldn't get her to walk the plank though!

Orihuela now has an online postbox where you can submit suggestions and petitions. Go to www.orihuela.es, click on Contacto and then on Buzón Ciudadano. They advise that the service will soon be available in English.

Many thanks to Stefan for helping to deliver The Dream Scene locally during the last two months and welcome back to Steve, the oldest delivery-boy on the Costa Blanca. Thanks also to Laura, Jan of NHW and Andy M for the help towards costs. Have a great month and I hope we will see you all soon.

Mick & Tid

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Strange things happen when you're in debt. Two weeks ago, my car broke down and my phone got disconnected. I was one electricity bill away from being Amish. Tom Ryan



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New Tax on New Air-Conditioning Equipment Sales in 2014.

From 2014, the government will be applying a new tax to the purchase of air conditioning equipment. This so-called 'green' tax will add approx. €65 to the current cost of a unit. You can read more here in Spanish - <http://www.diarioinformacion.com/finanzas-personales/2013/07/12/aire-acondicionado-factura-dispare/1395054.html>

If you plan to purchase or install an A/C unit, I suggest you do so now. I have used 'Affordable Air Con' - advert below - on several occasions and would recommend them as I have found their service & prices excellent.

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The teacher asked Little Johnny why he wasn't at school the previous day. 'Our cow was on heat, so I had to take him to the bull,' says Johnny. 'I'm sure your father could have done that,' said the teacher. 'Oh no, ma'am,' says Johnny, 'it has to be the bull.'

*The dachshund is a German draught-excluder.
Billy Connolly*

The tragic rail crash in Galicia has dominated last week's Spanish news and as this has received saturation coverage, even internationally, I do not intend to cover it here. In their haste to issue a quick statement on the disaster, the government copied and pasted a previous condolence message in error which expressed, '.....deep sympathy for the victims of the earthquake in Gansu, China.' And you thought George W. Bush was dumb! But then the state run RTVE television topped this by showing a picture of a 2003 Chinchilla train crash and including the Chinchilla emergency number as well!

This disaster has also brought to public attention a metro crash which took place in Valencia in 2009. In this incident 43 were killed and 47 injured. The families of the dead and injured have never accepted the official report, saying that it was a 'manipulation of the facts.' Indeed Ferrocarrils, the railway company, paid a PR firm €21,000 of public money to concoct a report which basically said 'it was an accident.' A similar derailment three years earlier was hushed up. This is a 'smoking gun' and we are bound to hear more on this.

Prime Minister Rajoy is 'on the ropes' at present. The ex-PP treasurer Luis Barcenas, who secretly sent €7 million in dodgy money to various Swiss bank accounts, admitted paying Rajoy and other top PP officials substantial cash payments - up to €200,000 to the Secretary General of the PP! Barcenas is now in prison without bail, as he poses a flight risk. Lawyers defending the imprisoned former treasurer resigned in early July, citing "professional disagreements". What actually happened was Barcenas blabbed to El Mundo before he went to jail that the PP had been funded by illegal donations for two decades. This funding took the form of donations from construction magnates and other business people, Barcenas alleged. However he omitted to tell this to his lawyers. While PM Rajoy has ignored the allegations to date, pressure from the public and media will force him to make a statement to congress on August 1st. Don't expect any revelations or the truth!

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has poured cold water on the recent optimism circulated by the government concerning growth. The IMF predict a contraction of 1.6% in the Spanish economy for this year but have also slashed their forecast for next year by reducing their original growth forecast of 0.7% to a 0.0% rate for 2014. Although some future quarters may see some growth, the annual figure is not likely to be positive until 2015. Although IMF forecasts tend to be more pessimistic than others, the outlook is still grim as Spain battles its longest recession in living memory while austerity measures continue.

Spain will levy a fee on CFCs (chlorofluorocarbon gases used in air conditioners, for instance) that it hopes will bring in 340 million euros this year. (See page 2 for details) Higher tobacco taxes will add an estimated 366 million euros a year in revenue, and alcohol levies will bring the total up to 700 million euros. The government also made changes to corporate taxes, eliminating a deduction for portfolio deterioration that will save the state around 3.6 billion euros a year, although the impact of this particular cut will not be felt before 2014.

The Government intends to overhaul the entire tax system, to support economic recovery and to boost job creation in Spain. An independent committee of 'experts' has been set up to analyse the existing system and draft recommended revisions, which, given their wide scope, should be far reaching. The committee is due to present its conclusions to the Finance Ministry by the end of February 2014. The proposals must not raise public expenditure.

Sleepless in.....Salford?

Dick is staying in a cheap hotel. The walls are very thin and Dick is alarmed to find that the people in the next room are honeymooners. All night long, he's kept awake by the sound of frenzied lover-making. Eventually, Dick has had enough. He pounds on the wall and shouts, 'Can't you shut up? I'm trying to get to sleep!' There's no reaction: just more sounds of grunting, torrid sex - someone's getting a real pounding! 'Damn!' shouts Dick. 'Knock it off! I'm trying to get to sleep!' A man's voice calls back weakly, 'For God's sake shout louder! She can't hear you!'

Repsol has admitted that they have been using the 'Monday effect'. This is when petrol stations lower their prices on a Monday, because that is the day the EU takes its reading for prices across the continent. Many drivers in Spain know the trick and always fill their car on a Monday. Repsol contends they drop the price on Monday because the wholesale price has fallen on the Friday, but later they admitted that reducing prices on the first day of the week was a commercial strategy.

Spain has signed an agreement with Uzbekistan to cover the avoidance of double taxation and prevention of tax evasion. So, if you have any camels or tents tucked away in Uzbeki' you may have 'to come clean' soon!

Seat, the Spanish car firm owned by Volkswagen, is planning cut-backs to its factories in Spain. It is proposing that 571 workers a day stay at home from their factories in Catalonia, on a rotating basis, between September and December. Further cut-backs are expected next year. As many of you are already aware, new cars are very expensive in Spain. Taxation on new Spanish cars is 20% more expensive than in the UK. Of course this also pushes up the price of secondhand cars as well, although trade-in prices at the dealers are always ridiculously low, if they will take them!

The Spanish government has now decided not to comply with the revised EU directive on olive oil dispensers. This is a result of lobbying from the olive oil lobby as the government once again 'bends over' for big business. This means that refillable oil dispensers will be outlawed on restaurant tables some time next year.

In Spain an average of three rapes are reported every day — that's one every eight hours. While the 1,161 cases recorded in 2011 represent a decline of 16 percent compared with the total reported five years ago, the number of assaults remain stable, with just a few minor variations. This suggests that nothing has changed regarding the conditions that make this form of violence against women possible. Experts estimate that only about half of the sexual assaults that take place are ever reported. A survey carried out in Catalonia in 2010 revealed that 2.9 percent of women said they had been raped at some time in their lives. (El Pais)

More than 100 Spanish bankers are paid more than one million euro a year, according to figures for 2010 and 2011 released Monday by the European Banking Authority. Specifically, 125 officials in the sector received an average remuneration of 2.4 million euros in 2011, the highest average among the bankers of all European countries paid over one million euro a year. The average in 2010 was 2.25 million euro. In 2011, they jointly received 106.9 million euro in fixed salaries and 198 million in bonuses. And, as we all know, Spanish bankers are as useless as a one-legged man in an ass kicking contest.

Latest: All cyclists under 18 must now wear a helmet in towns. Also, the maximum fine for drunk driving has now been increased to €1,000. Associated driving bans will be from one to five years.

At the start of every holiday season petrol prices go up. Petrol is 5.7% more expensive than a year ago, while diesel is 4.1% higher. The cabinet has passed new tax increases on alcohol and tobacco. The tax on spirits will rise by 10% but there is no change for beer or wine, so your bottle of *Oxfam Lager* (Bavaria) is still safe! In Spain, 79.5% of the price of a cigarette is tax.

4 What's Up? continued

A 40-year-old Barcelona policeman has been sentenced to 18 months prison and slapped with a €450 penalty after he fined four tow trucks in "retaliation" after his own parked car was towed away on two occasions after he illegally parked on the pavement outside his own house. The court found the man guilty of issuing four tickets to municipal tow trucks for supposedly jumping red lights between October 2010 and February 2011. In one case, the tow truck had not yet left the depot at the time of the alleged infraction. The man was found guilty of falsifying an official document and of abusing his office as a policeman – for which he received the custodial sentence – despite a full confession. He is also banned from working as a police officer for the next 18 months, although his conviction was further reduced by his "psychological alteration" at the time of the events, since he was going through a breakup with his girlfriend! But sentences of less than two years are rarely served in Spain. The prosecutor in this case originally asked for five years.

Sean Connery, the Scottish actor, and his wife, Micheline Anne Jeanne Connery, have been given six months to appear before a judge in Marbella and answer questions relating to a deal involving a property they sold, which was later demolished and 72 flats erected in its place. This case started in 2006 and is a parallel case to the Malaya one against urban corruption which has processed 17 people and sent the leaders, such as the ex-real estate town planner Juan Antonio Roca, and Mayor of Marbella Julian Muñoz, to prison on other charges. If the couple don't appear - and they have made several excuses or ignored previous requests - an international search and capture order will be issued for their arrest.

Two people responsible for a pensioners' residents home in Nijar, Almería, have been charged with using electronic prescriptions from 19 dead people to obtain free medicines and sanitary products. They continued to obtain free medicines for the duration of what would have been a course of treatment. The Guardia Civil say that the deaths occurred between January 2009 and October 2012, with a cost of €8,984 to the public purse. There have been three similar cases in Almería during the last 12 months.

Nine people were killed and another 22 injured when a bus went off the road in early July near Avila northwest of Madrid. The 54-year-old driver was uninjured but was arrested by the police after allegations that he fell asleep while driving.

A taxi driver in Northern Valencia was arrested after he hit four cyclists over a two kilometre stretch of road near Peniscola. He also tested positive for cocaine.

Okay, not the sort of guy you would like to see your daughter bring home for Sunday dinner, but after 13 years on the run, 41-year-old Mark Alan Lilley (left), who received in his absence a 24-year prison sentence in the UK for drug dealing, was captured while hiding naked in a 'panic-room' in his luxury villa in Malaga. The panic room was hidden behind a false panel in a wardrobe in the bedroom.

But Spanish police had another great drug's coup during July. In a joint operation with Venezuelan police, an international drug operation was smashed with the arrest of seven in Venezuela and seven in Albir, close to Benidorm. One of those arrested was Brian Charrington, one of the 'Top Ten Criminals' according to European police. 220 kilos of cocaine was seized in a flat in Albir and bank accounts were embargoed together with properties and other assets valued at more than five million euros. €350,000 in cash was also seized. At one stage in the 90's, Charrington was a 'supergrass' for the British authorities on the Colombian cartels. At one stage he was relocated to Australia, but they soon threw him out. No doubt when he returns to prison this time, there will be several dubious characters waiting for him with 'sharp nasty pointy things.'

Although 296 were convicted of arson in Spain during the last six years, only eight had prison sentences of over two years and went to prison. Most of the recorded offences were in Galicia.

*Harry mated a bulldog with a shitzu.
He ended with with a bullshitt.*





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All dogs, cats and ferrets in the Region of Murcia must now be inoculated against rabies. This follows the recent outbreak in Toledo, reported in the last issue.

A shark, nearly two meters in length, was spotted in the waters near the beach of La Patacona (Alboraya near Valencia) causing alarm among bathers. The shark appeared to be in distress (photo) and was given a lethal injection.



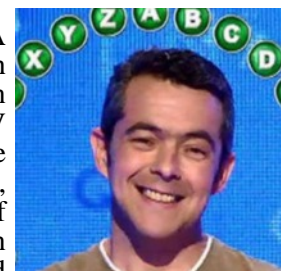
Police in nearby Murcia have detained a gang of seven who stole 690 kilos of copper wiring from a number of urbanisation lighting systems. The thieves were cutting the cables at 250 metre intervals and then attaching the cable to a rope tied to a car. This enabled them to extract 250 metres in a single run. Those arrested were a mixture of Spanish and Moroccans.

The footballer Lionel Messi's lawyers met Barcelona prosecutors on Friday to see if they can settle the soccer star's tax case, in which auditors claim he defrauded the government of some 4.1 million euros. According to judicial sources, if Messi decides to pay during the next two months, it would cost him about nine million euros: the 4.1 million he reportedly defrauded; a four-million-euro fine; and an additional one million in interest.

Spain's richest man, Amancio Ortega of Inditex (Zara, Massimo Dutti, etc and another poncy 5,500 shops worldwide) will also have to pay 33 million euros for back taxes owed from 2001 to 2003 after a Supreme Court judgement rejected his final appeal in a dispute with tax auditors.

The body of a 31-year-old British tourist and mother of two, was found floating in the sea off the s'Arenal beach in Sant Antoni, Ibiza, on the morning of July 6. Although she died from drowning, the autopsy also revealed positive results for MDMA, cocaine, speed and meth-amphetamine.

Some good news at last! A 42-year-old married man with two children has won €1,674,000 in the Spanish TV competition, *Pasapalabra*. The man, Juan Pedro Gómez (right), won 24 consecutive editions of the program. Juan has been unemployed for four years and spent this time studying dictionaries and encyclopaedias. I do hope Juan gets his well deserved prize. There have been incidents where the 'winners' in some TV competitions never received payment.



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Many of you will be aware of the misery and delays caused by the congestion on the two-lane N332 stretch through Torrevieja, particularly during the summer season. Whereas all the other municipalities from Guardamar to Pilar de Horidada managed to convert their stretch to four-lane, Torrevieja, through lack of planning and incompetence, still had a funnel (*embudo*) of just two old lanes with no firm plans to widen their stretch of road. One of the big issues concerning this stretch is the expropriation of the land required for this road-widening project. But even to date, the Torry 'burghers' have done nothing to acquire the land and even start the project. A budget was first drawn up in 2009 - €34 million and again in 2010 - €36 million. Now the Ministry of Development is quoting a figure of €42 million.

It is alleged that the Orihuela Town Council fraudulently awarded local government contracts between 2007 and 2011. At the centre of these enquiries is PP ex-mayor Monica Lorente. Another fifty defendants, including businessmen and public officials are also being investigated. During this July, Lorente attempted to organise a vote of no confidence in the ruling Green/Socialist councillors which, if successful, would have resulted in her becoming mayor. However her attempts were stymied by her own provincial and regional party barons who stated categorically that even if the opposition managed to secure a change of local government, she could not hold the position of mayor. This is because of a ruling within the PP which states that officials who are under investigation by a prosecuting attorney cannot hold public office. Even though she and her supporters tried to force the issue through, one of her own party effectively voted against her (abstained) and two of her supporting votes were ineligible.

It was interesting to read that the Former Chinese Minister of Railways, Liu Zhijun, received a two-year suspended death sentence for bribery and abuse of power. If he behaves himself in prison for that period the sentence will be commuted to life imprisonment. He also had all his assets confiscated and has been deprived of political rights for life. So I wonder, what the effect of tougher and quicker sentencing of corrupt politicians in Spain would achieve? Probably remarkable results.

Five young children have already died this summer in pools in the Valencia region, the latest a two-year-old who drowned in a pool in the La Siesta urbanisation in Torrevieja.

The number two in the sports' newspaper MARCA has been sacked after he tweeted, 'Catalans are shit, they don't deserve anything'. Juan Carlos Gafo made the comment after the disrespectful whistling during the Spanish National Anthem at the World Swimming Championships in Barcelona.

The Alicante town of Torrevieja registered during early Monday morning at 00:28 hrs, June 1, an earthquake of magnitude 1.2 degrees on the Richter scale, although there has been no damage or injuries, as reported by the National Geographic Institute and the Center for Coordination (OCC). On June 13, the towns of Rojales and Guardamar del Segura recorded two earthquakes of between 2.7 and 3.2 degrees on the same scale.

Problems between the Senegalese illegal street traders and the local police continue in Torrevieja. In a recent fracas four policemen were injured. Three had bruises to their necks and shoulders after being struck with belt-buckles. The fourth was punched in the jaw and bit on the fore-arm. One of the assailants was captured and handcuffed, but managed to escape during the confrontation. The rear window to a police patrol car was also broken. Then, just a week later, another three policemen were also injured and three police cars and a van damaged in another incident related to the Senegalese. These scuffles have been commonplace since 2011 and will no doubt continue until the local authority address the problem with some firmness and allocate sufficient resources to the police. Film here - <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2013/07/23/alicante/1374582036.html>



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A dog who was trapped in the front grill of a car after being hit has been rescued alive by agents of the Guardia Civil in Alicante. See photo. The event took place a couple of weeks ago on the county road CV-943, passing through the area of Guardamar del Segura, when a passing car ran over a dog that was crossing the road. The police took the injured animal to a local veterinarian and the dog has now fully recovered.

Mayor of Orihuela, Monserrate Guillén has warned that pet owners who do not pick up their dog's poo will be fined up to €750. He also reminded owners that all pets have to be microchipped and recorded on the local registry. He noted that the abandonment rates for dogs was 'outrageous' and that around five dogs were being admitted daily to the animal shelter at San Bartolomé.

By the end of June, the new AVE high speed rail link between Madrid and Alicante had broken down three times. On one occasion passengers were stuck in their carriages for 90 minutes with temperatures around 35°. Passengers were given leaflets to fan themselves with and later a full refund of their tickets.

Alicante Airport is to be renamed Alicante-Elche Airport and Elche City Council have budgeted €50,000 for the change of signage at the aerodrome. Incidentally, passenger traffic at the airport during June was up around 11% on the same month last year with 996,864 people. Flights were also up by 12.3% for the same period, with 6,811 flights handled.

A total of 18 children between 3 and 12 years have been poisoned by chlorine in a swimming pool in the Jaen town of Lopera After a swimming lesson, the children showed signs of intoxication. Several of them were held in hospital for observation for a few days.

- *What has thick glasses and a wet nose?*
- *A short-sighted gynaecologist.*



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(The Telegraph, July 12, 2013)

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Sister Anne & The Cure.

Sister Anne goes into a bar and asks for a bottle of vodka. 'It's for the Mother Superior,' she explains. 'It's to relieve her constipation.' An hour or so later, as the barman is closing down for the night he hears noises coming from a nearby alley. He checks it and sees Sister Anne sitting dead drunk in a pool of vomit and piss. 'Sister Anne!' he exclaims. 'You said that alcohol was to help the reverend mother's constipation!'

'It is,' slurs the nun. 'When she hears about this, she's going to shit herself.'

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ELECTRICITY TO GO UP AGAIN!

The average electricity bill is set to rise by 3.2% this August. The increase is aimed at attacking the problem of the so-called tariff deficit — the difference between what it costs to produce electricity and the regulated rates charged for it. Industry Minister José Manuel Soria estimated that the shortfall this year will come in at 4.5 billion euro. “The measures in this reform aren’t easy for anyone, but they’re absolutely necessary,” Soria told a news conference. “If we did nothing, the only alternatives would be either the bankruptcy of the system or an increase in the price for consumers of more than 40 percent.”

BAD NEWS FOR SECOND-HOME OWNERS.

Along with the increase in electricity bills, taking effect at the start of August, the Govt. has also announced plans to move towards a fixed electricity tariff that will raise the cost of electricity for holiday-homes and second-homes.

Under the present tariff, electricity bills are made up of 30% fixed fees, and 70% based on consumption. The plan is to move towards a 50% fixed tariff that will increase electricity bills for properties with low consumption, like holiday-homes that are only partially occupied during the year.

Another smart move by this Government to discourage foreigners from buying holiday-homes in Spain..... Who needs those *quiris* with their money anyway?

Surely this will also make the deficit worse? Heavy users will be subsidised by light users, which will encourage the waste of electricity, and bugger the environment.

Household electricity bills went up by 63% between 2006 and 2011, according to reports in the Spanish press.

(Mark Stucklin of Spanish Property Insight)

Makes Sense!

The doctor was explaining to Seamus how nature adjusted certain physical disabilities. ‘For example, if a man is blind, he develops a keen sense of hearing and touch. If he’s stone deaf, he develops other senses.’

‘I know what you mean,’ said Seamus. ‘I’ve noticed that if a bloke has one short leg, then the other one is always a bit longer.’ (Seamus is now Vice Chairman of the European Central Bank.)

FITTING AN IRRIGATION SYSTEM .

Fitting an irrigation system is not too difficult and ensures that your garden gets the water it needs on a regular basis, the parts for a basic system cost around €100 and can provide hours of DIY entertainment for you, your family, friends and neighbours..... The most expensive item is the programmer. These start from about €35 and you should look for one capable of turning the water on and off maybe twice a day and for periods of 15 minutes up to a couple of hours. I find 15 minutes a day enough for most plants and my own system is set to come on early in the evening.

The first part is planning; an irrigation system can water plants on your solarium, bedroom balcony and, or just, at ground level but the starting point is at one of your taps. From there you need to get water to your plants and an hour or two working out the best route is time well spent.

You should plan to run the large pipe the shortest and neatest possible route to get water to all the places it’s needed; balancing valves can, and should be fitted to control water flow to different areas depending on the water required by the plants. Obviously a mature orange or lemon tree will need more water than a small cactus and into the main pipe the small "feeder" pipes are inserted taking the water to each plant or pot; there is a type of outlet available which has a screw top and these can be opened and closed to exactly suit the watering requirements of the plants and several outlets can be used where a plant needs a lot of water. The pipes can be cut with a Stanley knife or similar and a lubricant when assembling the push-fit joints will make life much easier. Adding extra bits on is a simple job once you have the basic installation in place. The pipes can be fixed to the wall with purpose made brackets which need a screw and plug fixing or neatly tied cable under railings etc.

The parts are all available at the local *Ferretaria* or *Bricolage* type places and you will need a new outside tap with a branch to feed the timer or programmer, a roll of "big" plastic pipe and a roll of "small" pipe together with the bends, tees, connectors, valves and pipe clips as decided in the planning stage. It is worth laying the large pipe out flat in the sun for a few hours to let it straighten before attempting installation.

Whichever outside tap you decide to use should be removed (don't forget to turn the water off first) and replaced with the new one, it is often necessary to fit a spacer to move the tap out from the wall to make enough room to fit the programmer, be very careful at this point - some of these taps, especially those exposed to the sun all day, have a nasty tendency to shear off and the repair involves chiselling a hole in your wall to expose the pipes and fittings that will need replacing. These are soldered fittings and can be quite tricky to replace. With the new tap in place the programmer can be fitted and checked for clearance. Remember you will need to access the programmer every year or two to replace the batteries, so make sure it's accessible. After that follow your plan for running the large pipe to wherever you need it. This pipe is pierced as necessary and the smaller pipe to the outlets fitted.

After fitting, the system needs balancing, that is where flow is adjusted to all points on the system. Start by regulating the flow to the programmer from its branch on the new tap, then open each feeder valve to suit the requirements of the plants they serve; balancing valves controlling the water flow to different floors or areas can now be adjusted to get the right amount of water to each section. It will take a week or two to get exactly right but at least your plants will survive the summer.

Lee, Dream Hills Plumbing. 653 553 715 (See advert top left)

Pinocchio's Problem.

Pinocchio had been getting complaints from his girlfriend. ‘Every time we make love,’ she said, ‘I get splinters.’ So Pinocchio went back to his maker, Gipetto the carpenter, for advice. ‘Sandpaper,’ said the carpenter. ‘That’s what you need.’

So Pinocchio took some sheets of sandpaper and went home. A few weeks later, the carpenter bumped into Pinocchio again. ‘How are you getting on with the girls now?’ he asked.

‘Who needs girls?’ said Pinocchio.





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RESULTS TO BELUSHI'S QUIZ COMPETITION.

1. What legendary soul singer sang 'Think' in the movie *The Blues Brothers*? **Aretha Franklin.**
2. What famous Spanish writer was born in September 1547 and died in April 1616? **Miguel de Cervantes.**
3. The creators of which cartoon characters were threatened by Oasis with legal action in 1996 if they covered any of their songs? **The Smurfs.**
4. Which sauce is named after a river and state in Mexico? **Tabasco.**
5. What was the main news story the day after the 13th December 2003? **The capture of Saddam Hussain.**

Congratulations to Dave & Jan Knight on being the winning entry drawn at random. The winners have been notified.

The Answer.

Victor and Jane were an elderly couple who had been dating for some time. One day, they decided it was finally time to get married. But first, they needed to discuss how their marriage might work. They talked about finances, living arrangements, health and finally, their conjugal relationship. 'How do you feel about sex?' Victor asked Jane, with a smile on his face. 'Oh, I like to have it infrequently,' replied Jane.

Victor thought about this for a moment, and then asked, 'Was that one word or two?'

Dealing with the heat.

It was a sweltering hot day in Los Altos when Peter stepped out of the shower and said to his wife, Sue, 'It's just too hot to wear any clothes today, honey, they would be soaking in just a couple of minutes. What do you think the neighbours would say if I trimmed the hedge without anything on?'

Sue replied, 'That I married you for your money!'

Easy Jobs?

The easiest job in the world has to be a coroner. Surgery on dead people - what's the worst thing that could happen? Maybe you'd get a pulse.

Denis Miller.

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Now that I'm 78, I do tantric sex because it's very slow. My favourite position is called the plumber. You stay in all day but nobody comes. John Mortimer

Former Public Works Minister, Socialist Magdalena Álvarez on Tuesday was formally named in an ongoing investigation into a fraud scandal involving an Andalusia government fund used to help pay jobless benefits. Seville Judge Mercedes Alaya said the former Socialist minister, who also served as economic and finance chief for the regional government from 1994 to 2004, "laid down the rules" in how the money was transferred from the Andalusia budget into the fund. (Álvarez is currently the vice president for Trans-European Networks at the European Investment Bank (EIB), where she earns €20,000 per month!) "Now is the time to take a qualitative step in the investigation and determine the participation of other persons and their activities [...] which would have allowed the misuse of fund transfers, resulting in the waste of public funds," the judge wrote in her ruling. Alaya, who has been conducting the inquiry for more than a year, also named 19 current and former officials of Andalusia's Socialist government for allegedly misusing public money.

The fund was set up by the government to help cash-strapped businesses to pay severance pay to laid-off workers. However, the investigation so far has shown that hundreds of people, such as family members of certain officials, illegally received money from the fund, including those who never worked at any of the companies that benefited from the trust. Judge Alaya has found that some 140 million euro of public money may have been embezzled between 2001 and 2010.

The scandal has rocked the Socialists who have been governing Spain's largest region for nearly 30 years. The Socialist president of Andalucía, José Antonio Griñán, who was scheduled to retire in 2016 has now resigned 'for personal and family reasons'. Griñán is also expected to be indicted shortly as auditors submitted 15 reports on the irregularities while Griñán was Andalucía's finance chief and it seems he ignored them.

The judge has already ordered several former officials held in preventive custody, including Francisco Javier Guerrero, the region's former labour chief. Other targets of her investigation have also been arrested but released after posting bail. (Extracts from El País)

**HEY DUDE, WHERE'S MY FAT BELLY.....
AND MY MEMORY?**

A court in Palma, Majorca upheld an appeal by the victim to overturn a 2012 ruling which had cleared the medical professionals of any blame.

The 38-year-old man was undergoing cosmetic surgery on his "abdomen and thighs" in 2006 when he suffered a cardiac arrest, according to the Spanish daily, Qué. After being discharged he was diagnosed with 'cerebral anoxia', which caused him to suffer short-term memory problems, disorientation and difficulties with speech. Doctors say he finds it difficult to remember concepts he has learned only minutes earlier, and that he can't recognize false memories. The man was declared permanently disabled as a result of the incident because of the cognitive disorders and the associated changes in behaviour that they have provoked. These include increased anxiety and aggression, as well as reduced verbal fluency and thinking speed.

The original 2012 court ruling went against the man because he had signed an informed consent form. But the victim alleged that the waiver was invalid because it did not contain enough information. The court upheld this appeal and ruled that the man was not properly informed of the risks of the surgery or anaesthesia. There was found to be no specific reference to the surgery in the consent form other than in the title and a single mention of the word 'liposuction'. No information about anaesthesia was included in informed consent section of the 'pre-operation exam' form. Instead, only the patient's handwritten name, the name of the doctor, and the date were given.

The surgeon and anaesthetist have now been ordered to pay €160,217 in compensation. Steve Tallantyre (news@thelocal.es)

Quickies.

You know those trick candles that you blow out and a couple of seconds later they come alight again? Well, the other day there was a fire at the factory that makes them.....

Tim Vine

I went to my doctor and asked for something for persistent wind. He gave me a kite.

Les Dawson

Sam: 'How's life treating you Norm?'

Norm: 'Like it caught me sleeping with its wife.'

Cheers



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TELECOM COMPLAINTS UP.

Vodafone heads the list of telecom complaints in Spain's FACUA Consumers in Action for the first half of this year. The multinational British operator is also rated as the worst by its mobile phone clients.

More than 30% of the telecom's complaints related to Vodafone. In second place in comm's complaints is Movistar with 25% of the complaints in the sector down two on last year, Orange at 24% up 5% since last year, fourth is Ono with 10%, 2% more than last year and fifth Jazztel at 8%, 3% higher than last year. The main reasons for complaints are failing to meet the advertised offers, unrequested & unwanted services, continuing to send invoices after the consumer has left the company, and charging for calls which were not made.

FACUA has accused the Government and the regional administrations of ignoring the problems in the sector. The telecoms sector is the one with the second most *denuncias*, behind only the banks.

FED UP WITH COLD CALLS?

The phone companies in Spain have been told to control their telesales operations. New legislation forces Movistar, Vodafone, Orange, Jazztel, Ono and Yoigo to cold call only between 10am and 8.30pm on weekdays, and 10am - 2pm on Saturdays. Cold calling is banned on Sundays. The new regulations do not affect other companies who want to bother you when they feel like it. One thing you can do about them, although it will not necessarily work, it will give you something to say when you get a cold call.

Go to the page listarobinson.es and register your name. Cold calling companies are supposed to look at this list to see the people who do not want calling. If you do get a call when you are on the Robinson List, you can tell the caller that she is breaking the law by calling a number on the Robinson List, (a slight exaggeration but it works well!) . Typically Spanish.



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A Welsh Wedding.

The day after his wedding, Dai Evans returned home. 'What's happened?' asked his mother.

'It's Gwyneth,' he said. 'I found out she is a virgin. So I left her.'

'Quite right,' said his mother. 'If she is not good enough for the rest of the boys in the village, she's not good enough for you.'



DREAM HILLS (1) FIESTA! SAT' SEPTEMBER 7th AT 6pm.

Dream hills will be holding another 'get-together' on the above date at La Casita. All residents are invited. Although food & drink will be provided, could you please bring something along to share with others. The spread, provided mainly by your goodselves during the party in July, was tremendous and because of the new time and date, we expect more to attend this time.

Speaking from personal experience, it might be a good idea to also bring along a stool or small chair as all the available seating gets occupied very quickly. It promises to be a great evening!

Grateful thanks to David the handyman in Dream Hills, who continues to do a wonderful job. Well done, Dave!

IDIOT OF THE MONTH.

At the start of every month I am usually on tenterhooks wondering 'Will there be another candidate truly deserving an entry in the coming month's issue?' But thankfully, I am never disappointed.

The first 'idiot' this month is *The System*. Let me illustrate. A Moroccan, who is a legal resident in Barcelona, Spain, asked for an appointment to apply for Spanish Nationality. This is just so that he can hand in his papers. The clerk in the registry gave him an appointment for March 19, 2019, six years time! And that is just to hand in the papers! So, using this as measurement: You have to be legally resident in Spain for ten years before even applying for nationality. Then, maybe like this poor chap, you have to wait a further six years to hand your papers in; then another three years of red tape before you finally get A DECISION. Almost 20 years in all. The man's lawyer stated, 'It seems incredible, but it's true.'

Regular readers of The Dream Scene will recognise that 'history does repeat itself' after reading about our next contestant.

The emergency department of the Can Misses Hospital in Mallorca had to call the fire service for assistance on the late evening of July 4. No, it wasn't a fire but a 51-year-old German man who got his 'family jewels' stuck inside a metal ring. The ring they described as almost 'armour plated' and the hospital just didn't have the correct (if you pardon the expression) tool for the job; hence the call to the firemen. By the time the fireman arrived the German was complaining audibly. 'Look Heinz, you got yourself into this mess!' The problem was further complicated as the man's penis continued to grow (maybe he just liked firemen and no, I am not making this up) during the operation. So in the end they had to administer a full anaesthetic to the German and continue with the procedure. During the operation, which took two hours, the firemen got through two radial saws and two sets of batteries, before freeing the man's penis and testicles. This is not the first time that Majorcan fire-fighters have been called upon to free people from various sex-aids/toys but they said "never one as big as this"....and that is the actual ring they were talking about, Doris, not the 'todger.'

Then tragically last month, a 45-year-old Spanish man died needlessly during a 50-metre bungee jump in Valdequeda, Madrid. The reason? The rope was too long!

But as we all know, idiots are truly international. My favourite last month was the broadcast by the KTVU news team on the Asiana plane crash in San Francisco. On their program they reported the pilots' names as Captain Sum Ting Wong, Wi Tu Lo, Ho Lee Fuk and Bang Ding Ow. They reported this in all seriousness. This is not a spoof and you can see it on the following link to -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcjkoPkW3y8>

And let's not forget the British contestant from Hemel Hempstead in the UK, who put a traffic bollard over his head as a joke (photo) and then was stuck inside it for two hours. Eventually, he was freed by the police. You can watch the video of the incident and his 'escape' here -

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/10139237/Man-gets->



An Australian Love Poem.

-Of course I love ya darlin
 You're a bloody top-notch bird
 And when I say you're gorgeous
 I mean every single word
 -So ya bum is on the big side
 I don't mind a bit of flab
 It means that when I'm ready
 There's somethin' there to grab
 -So your belly isn't flat no more
 I tell ya, I don't care
 So long as when I cuddle ya
 I can get my arms round there
 -No Sheila who is your age
 Has nice round perky breasts
 They just gave in to gravity
 But I know ya did ya best
 -I'm tellin' ya the truth now
 I never tell ya lies
 I think it's very sexy
 That you've got dimples on ya thighs
 -I swear on me nanna's grave now
 The moment that we met
 I thought you was as good as
 I was ever gonna get
 -No matter what u look like
 I'll always love ya dear
 Now shut up while the cricket's on
 And fetch another beer..

THE FACE OF EVIL.

This wretch in the photo is José Bretón. Just two weeks ago, a jury of seven women and two men found him guilty of murdering his two children, Ruth and José, aged 6 and 2 on October 8, 2011. Although the jury vote was unanimous, a majority of seven would have been sufficient for a guilty vote (and five for a not-guilty vote).



Bretón said he lost the children while taking them to a park. Described as a 'very cold character,' Bretón is separated from his wife who was also divorcing him. It is believed that Bretón gave the children tranquilizers and then took the bodies to his parents' farm in Córdoba. There he took the bodies, and together with 250 kg of firewood and 80 litres of diesel, tried to incinerate and obliterate the remains, the fire reaching temperatures up to 1,200 degrees.

A search of the parents farm near Córdoba revealed some bones, which an inept coroner initially stated were animal bones. A competent forensic scientist hired by the mother later revealed that the bones were indeed human. However no DNA was found. The forensic scientist did however find human teeth, and confirmed that they belonged to two children aged between 2 and 6.

Bretón, who is believed to have killed the children in revenge for his wife leaving him, has been sentenced to a total of 40 years in jail, 20 for each murder. But, under the Spanish legal system, he is unlikely to serve more than 25 years. Let's hope that these are very demanding.



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LIME BAR GOLF SOCIETY, LOS ALTOS, ORIHUELA COSTA

The golf societies venue for the 10th of July 2013 was held at the El Valle Golf Course.

About thirty players took to the course in warm glorious sunshine which was in good condition although unforgiving for any mistakes made.

The competition was the 'Captain's Cup' in Stableford format and the scores recorded are as follows.

Nearest the Pin on the 9th Hole was Andy McDonald.

Nearest the Pin on the 15th hole was Dave Cahill.

1st Best Guest with a score of 27 points was J Mc Ginn.

2nd Best Guest with a score of 25 points was Chris Denee.

The captain decided to award the winners by mixing the the score cards and drawing 'blind pairs' with the highest joint scores, giving all players an equal chance with a cup going to the winning pair together with golf prizes to them and the runners up.

4th place Steve Cottle and Colin Capper with a joint score of 58.

3rd place John Winkley and Dave Everson with a joint score of 59.

2nd place John McGregor and Dave Cahill with a joint score of 59 (on count back).

1st place Nev. Greenwood and Don Martin with a joint score of 67.

Nev. Greenwood's independent score was a magnificent 42 points, congratulations to him.

A very good day in pleasant company; thank you to Captain Mick Slater for organising the event and also thanks to the Staff at The Lime Bar and ladies for a most enjoyable meal. Anyone wishing join our friendly society just needs to phone Mick on 659 866 468.



A Very Naughty Johnny.

Teacher asks the class "I want you to explain the word "contagious".

Little Sarah puts her hand up and says "Miss, it's something to do with diseases being passed between people".

"Well done" says teacher, "Can anyone add more".

Little Johnny shouts out "Miss, Miss, it means something that takes a long time"

Teacher, wondering what Little Johnny is on about, asks him to explain: "Well Miss, my Dad and I went out for a walk on Saturday and we saw a man painting his door with a tiny paint brush. Dad said "It'll take that c**t ages to paint that door with a brush like that".

GOVERNMENT RENEGES ON PROMISE TO PAY SUPPLIERS.

The third service provider payment-plan will not even cover half of last year's unpaid invoices by the end of 2013. Of the 19.35 billion euros of unpaid bills, the first stage of payments will cover only 8.2 billion euros, and the Finance Ministry won't free up these funds until the end of the year. Priority will be given to town councils, which will receive 3 billion euros, followed by the regional governments.

Most of the private sector service providers will have to wait until next year to receive their payments. Companies in the construction, contracting and lending businesses that work with service providers are understandably angered at the newest delays, even if they are not voicing their frustration loudly. The government's inability to pay these service providers on time is the main reason that their balance sheets are in disarray, and they are tired of financing the public sector's spending in this way.

The healthcare industry has been hit hardest by delayed service provider payments, racking up a total of 7 billion € in back payments. The pharmaceutical industry in particular has 3.53 billion € in unpaid hospital medicines. The pharmaceutical companies are trying to channel investments outside of Spain and have even started to increase their foreign sales in order to compensate for domestic sales struggles.

Service providers have had to make a series of cutbacks to their staff and salaries, but these will have little effect because now they will have to wait even longer to receive their payments. Cristóbal Montoro, who promised to reduce the term that Public Administrations have to pay their service providers to just 30 days by the end of this year, was not able to keep his word. And 2012 invoices will still be unpaid as we enter 2014 as companies keep financing the government. (ElEconomista)

STAMP FRAUD.

The pyramid selling of rare stamps (Ponzi fraud scheme) in Spain has finally led 14 directors of **Afinsa** to the accused bench. The judge has set bail at 1.928 billion €. The judge says that the stamp investing was just a cover-up which has seen the defrauding of 190,000 clients. Many of the investors are pensioners for whom investing their savings in rare stamps appeared a more attractive option than placing them in a lower-return bank savings account. The personal investments ranged from €600 to €600,000!

Customers bought a series of stamps, which the company promised to buy back in the future. The customer was also paid interest on the stamps' value, say 6% over three years. Customers were strongly discouraged from taking the stamps home, as 'stamps were very delicate and the more expensive they were, the more vulnerable they were to damage.' The company also offered to hold the stamps in safekeeping for the clients free of charge! Surprisingly, very few buyers even asked to see the stamps and those that did were just shown the same stamps as other customers who asked.

The court is accusing the Afinsa directors of fraud, punishable insolvency, and the laundering of capital. The first arrests were made in May 2006 and it is not until seven years later that the leaden wheels of justice are starting to turn. One of the Spanish consumer associations, ADICAE, has been warning the government and the public about these type of operations since 2002 but were largely ignored.

A similar company, **Forum Filatélico**, operated around the same time and went bust with a debt black-hole of more than €3 billion. It is believed that around 400,000 investors in total have been defrauded by both companies.

My grandfather was killed at Custer's last stand. He was camping in the next field and went over to complain about the noise. *Joey Adams*



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RENEWAL ENERGY GENERATION PENALISED!

The Spanish Government, has just introduced a draft decree to penalise renewable energy generation at home through higher tariffs. Under the draft decree, drawn up by the Ministry of Industry, energy generation at home will be hit by a new "support toll" (*tarifa de respaldo*) 27% higher than the tariff paid by users of conventional "dirty" energy generated by the big energy companies.

The Government argues it needs to control the growth of renewable's at home to protect the energy industry as it goes through a "complicated economic situation." No doubt the electricity companies are delighted with this. Another case of 'Let's stuff the consumer and look after the Big Boys!'

Spain is a country with abundant sunshine where solar power generation at home has grown massively in the last five years (despite the usual grants being withdrawn), as the price of solar panels tumbled by 80%, and the crisis encouraged households to seek ways of saving money.

Once the decree is passed (the National Energy Commission have yet to give an opinion on the matter), companies and households that generate their own energy from renewable sources will have two months to register and start paying the new toll, or face substantial fines and being cut off the grid. Now, I hope that this new decree will just be geared towards those who generate their total electricity requirement from natural sources. If it effected everybody who had a solar panel, there will be a ruckus! But then again, never doubt the ability of government to make a bad situation considerably worse and not give a damn! More here-
http://elpais.com/elpais/2013/07/23/inenglish/1374591905_024635.html

IMPORTANT URBANISATION LAW CHANGES.

There have been some major changes to the Law of Horizontal Property (Act 49/1960) which became effective on June 26.

Although many of the articles have been amended (quorum and number of votes needed to reach various agreements and many other changes,), here I will just deal with the changes which affect the important issue of non-payment of urbanisation fees.

From now on, the person/company/bank who acquires a property will be liable, together with the property, for the urbanisation fees in the year of acquisition and three years before. The previous law stated that the maximum claimable by a new owner was a maximum of two years - the current and previous year. The actual property itself constitutes a guarantee for the payment of these debts with independence of who the owner is. This means that the community debt will have preference over the mortgages' charging the property.

Purchasers will now be demanding debt certificates much more rigorously and it also imposes additional responsibility on the secretary and president of the community. The debt certificate has to be responded to by the community of owners within a term of seven days of the filing of the application. The secretary and president will have liability for any inaccuracy with regard to the information contained in the certificate in the case of negligence or wilful misconduct as well as liability for any delay in the granting of the certificate. So if your president does not comply correctly with this, he can be sued by the community of owners.

We didn't have metaphors in my day. We didn't beat about the bush.
Fred Truman

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SUNSHINE SUNSET BOAT PARTIES - A REVIEW.

Together with about 150 others, we boarded the large catamaran which is moored in Torre Vieja harbour, opposite the Casino. The crowd was multi-national and good humoured, everybody looking forward to a great evening and another ripping performance by The Faith.

The boat, which provides the ferry service to the Island of Tabarca, slowly backed its way out of the mooring together with a slight whiff of diesel fumes mixed with the sweet aroma of exotic tobaccos from the large German contingent on board - a heady mix! There was a rising feeling of expectancy in the crowd; lots of laughing, joking and 'let's get this party started' attitude!

Shortly after we got our drinks Charley (Farley) - 'The Pirate' & guitarist with The Faith - banged out the opening bars to AC/DC's *Shook Me All Night Long*, then Robbie Priest (photo left), jumped in with the vocals and it was PARTY ON! **ROCK THE BOAT!**



The band played on the upper deck and everybody was on their feet, strutting their stuff and soaking in the atmosphere.

Once we had left the harbour enjoying the cooler breezes, the boat started to roll heavily, which as Robbie said, 'Gives a new meaning to Rock 'n Roll!' When one of the speakers tumbled, the captain wisely decided to remain within the breakwater and the party continued without a hitch. The Faith gave 100% that night, which was as rocky as you can get with music from The Who, Motorhead, AC/DC, Guns & Roses and many others. What was particularly popular with the crowd was their 'punk set'. If you weren't up dancing it was only because there wasn't space...or you were dead!

At around 11:30pm, as we returned to the moorings in Torry' harbour with The Faith continuing to 'bang them out'; it was obvious to the crowds around the harbour that this was the best party in town and they had missed out! Those on board had enjoyed an excellent night's entertainment, some lovely cool sea breezes and great company. The night we were on board, there was also a baby in a pram there and he slept the whole night.....even through The Faith! Get his hearing checked, Mother! Drinks and snack food is available on board at very generous prices and the hospitality crew couldn't be more helpful. All in all it is a very well organised event and a 'must' for your summer outings.

If your taste in music is a bit more sedate, you will see from the advert opposite that most tastes and ages are catered for, depending on the trip. Every Saturday and Wednesday, it is Wet & Funky Party Time from 1pm 'till 5:30pm, with sun and swimming guaranteed.



Due to their popularity, many of these parties are booked-up well before the actual event. If you procrastinate you will be disappointed.

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- August 9, Wet & Funky House Party with DJ's.
- August 13, Caribbean Night!
- August 14, Ladies Night with JJ Soulman, Ricky Devine .
- August 16, Wet & Funky Boat House Party.
- August 21, U2/Bono Tribute / Lynden B entertains.
- August 22, Pink Ladies Charity Night, Dan Davey, Nick Gold
- August 23, Wet & Funky Boat House Party, Guest DJ's.
- August 29, The Faith. **ROCK THE BOAT!**
- August 30, Showaddywaddy Tribute & more!
- September 6, Wet & Funky Boat House Party.
- September 13, Ladies Night, Lynden B entertains.
- September 14, The Faith - **ROCK THE BOAT!**
- September 20, Wet & Funky Boat House Party.

Wet & Funky Boat Parties Sat' & Wed' 1:30pm to 5:30pm

Other parties start at Torre Vieja Harbour at 8pm & return for 11pm.

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Two cannibals were eating a clown. One said to the other: 'Does this taste funny to you?'

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Brian goes into his local chemist and asks the assistant behind the counter, 'What's this Viagra like, then?'
 'It's very good sir,' says the assistant, 'I use it myself.'
 'Good,' says Brian. 'Can you get it over the counter?'
 To which the assistant answers, 'Only if I take six, sir.'

Eggs, cholesterol, Omega-3 fatty acids and beer.

One of the problems with modern living is that food we were once told was bad for us is now good and vice versa. Back in the early 70's, the American Heart Foundation recommended limiting egg intake to three a week. Since then this theory has been debunked by a number of sources, the latest being the University of Granada. Health professionals traditionally insisted that eating eggs increased cholesterol levels, however, the most recent research suggests that increased serum cholesterol is more affected by intake of saturated fats and trans fats -- present in red meat, industrial baked goods, etc. -- than by the amount of cholesterol in the diet. The research, which involved nine countries, demonstrated that eating larger amounts of egg is neither linked to higher serum cholesterol nor to worse cardiovascular health in adolescents, regardless of their levels of physical activity. The conclusions, published in the journal *Nutrición Hospitalaria*, confirm recent studies in healthy adults that suggest that an intake of up to seven eggs a week is not associated with an increased risk of developing cardiovascular diseases. You can read more here -

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/07/130719083908.htm>

The taking of 'supplements' has always been surrounded by controversy. Of these, Omega-3 fatty acids, which are found naturally in oily fish, have long been hailed as protection against a host of maladies including heart attacks and strokes, arthritis and various cancers. But a recent controversial study found that men with high levels of omega-3 in their blood were at 43% greater risk of prostate cancer than those with low concentrations, while less common aggressive "high-grade" tumours were 71% more likely than in those not taking supplements. The difference in blood concentrations of the fatty acids between the two groups was the equivalent of more than two portions of salmon per week, researchers said. Now this is not excessive. It is unclear why omega-3 increased the risk of the disease but the effect could be related to the body's conversion of fatty acids into compounds which can damage cells and DNA, and suppress the immune system, researchers said. The full article, and the comments on the article which are very informative, can be found here -

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/10172445/Omega-3-supplements-could-raise-prostate-cancer-risk.html>

One comment on the article was that the researchers were morons and that 'Populations that have high intake of omega 3 (like the Japanese) have very low rates of prostate cancer. They also have higher intake of iodine, which is likely to prevent prostate cancer.A more plausible explanation of what's going on here is that men with high Omega 3 in their blood ALSO have high mercury levels, from consuming fish. Omega 3 and mercury are correlated because they both come from fish. There is evidence that mercury (and other pollutants that come from fish, like PCBs, and brominated fire retardants) cause prostate cancer.'

In this hot weather, dehydration is a common problem. Men need to drink about three litres a day, women 2.2 litres. The Spanish Society of Dietetics and Food Sciences has now revealed that beer is good for hydration! Now how many Phd's did they have to determine this? They recommend a moderate intake of beer for men - two to three cañas a day but only one or two for women. They warn that in healthy adults, a dehydration of 2.8% of body weight after exposure to heat and strong exercise, leads to a decrease in concentration & short-term memory, increased fatigue, head pain and reduced response times. Bit like how I feel after a few beers!

Has anyone here been caught thieving in the Middle East? Let's have a show of hands.

Jimmy Carr

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Another Nun's Story.

A nun walks into Mother Superior's office and plunks down into a chair. She lets out a sigh heavy with frustration. 'What troubles you, Sister?' asked the Mother Superior. 'I thought this was the day you spent with your family.' 'It was,' sighed the Sister. 'And I went to play golf with my brother. We try to play golf as often as we can. You know I was quite a talented golfer before I devoted my life to Christ.'

'I seem to recall that,' the Mother Superior agreed. 'So I take it your day of recreation was not relaxing?'

'Far from it,' snorted the Sister. 'In fact, I even took the Lord's name in vain today!'

'Goodness, Sister!' gasped the Mother Superior, astonished. 'You must tell me all about it!'

'Well, we were on the fifth tee... and this hole is a monster, Mother, 540 yard Par 5, with a nasty dogleg right and a hidden green... and I hit the drive of my life. I creamed it. The sweetest swing I ever made. And it's flying straight and true, right along the line I wanted... and it hits a bird in mid-flight!'

'Oh my!' commiserated the Mother. 'How unfortunate! But surely that didn't make you blasphemous, Sister!'

'No, that wasn't it,' admitted Sister. 'While I was still trying to fathom what had happened, this squirrel runs out of the woods, grabs my ball and runs off down the fairway!'

'Oh, that would have made me blasphemous!' sympathized the Mother.

'But I didn't, Mother!' sobbed the Sister. 'And I was so proud of myself! And while I was pondering whether this was a sign from God, this hawk swoops out of the sky and grabs the squirrel and flies off, with my ball still clutched in his paws!' 'So that's when you cursed,' said the Mother with a knowing smile.

'Nope, that wasn't it either,' cried the Sister, anguished, 'because as the hawk started to fly out of sight, the squirrel started struggling, and the hawk dropped him right there on the green, and the ball popped out of his paws and rolled to about 18 inches from the cup!'

Mother Superior sat back in her chair, folded her arms across her chest, fixed the Sister with a baleful stare and said.....

'You missed the f**king put, didn't you?'

My Mother

My mother taught me about time travel:

'If you don't behave, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!'

My mother taught me logic:

'Because I said so, that's why.'

My mother also taught me irony:

'Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about.'

Recap: Looking back very briefly over 19th Century Spain, we saw war with Britain, invasion by France, disruption to the monarchical line, regular interference by the army in the running of the country and the disappearance of the Spanish Empire.

The resumption of hostilities with Britain led to the destruction of the French and Spanish fleets by Nelson at Cape Trafalgar in 1805. The French military occupation of the country led to the departure of Ferdinand VII to France, where he ceded the Spanish throne to the Bonaparte's. The occupation also led to a popular and violent uprising by the Spanish. The rebel Spanish leadership fled from Seville to Cádiz. Here the Cortes of Cádiz convened in 1810 under the leadership of the liberals. After much discussion (two years!) they promulgated a new constitution with Spain becoming a parliamentary monarchy, and would later abolish the Inquisition. A combined British, Portuguese and Spanish force, under the command of the Duke of Wellington, defeated the French at the Battle of Vitoria. On his return Ferdinand quashed the new constitution and established an absolute monarchy. The Spanish American colonies used the chaos in Spain to break away from the *patria*, with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Philippines in the Pacific also remained as a colony for the present.

The *pronunciamento* of Major Rafael de Riego in 1820, once again brought the parliamentary monarchy to the fore but it also gave the army a taste for interfering in politics, which they continued to do for the remainder of the century. There were *pronunciamentos* and more *pronunciamentos*, interspersed with three wars with the Carlists - a reactionary and legitimist political movement from the north of Spain; a brief experiment with a Spanish Republic, abdications and finally a Restoration System, where a constitutional monarchy was re-established and a new constitution in 1876. Between 1875 and 1923, the *turno pacifico* was devised so that the Conservative and Liberal parties could alternate power through managed (rigged) elections.

In 1898 Spain was shaken and humiliated by the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the 'sausage makers' in the United States. Referred to as 'the Disaster', this loss of national prestige caused much soul-searching and talk of 'regeneration.' One philosopher-writer, José Prtega y Gasset, commented, 'In Spain, there is a good deal to see but not much to eat. Spain today, rather than a nation, is a cloud of dust remaining after a great people galloped down the highway of history.' Although the country may have been at 'rock-bottom', the first quarter of the 20th century witnessed the highest cultural level in Spain since the 17th century with writers of the calibre of Machado, Juan Ramon Jimenez, a Noble Prize winner, Pio Baroja and Jacinto Benavente, another Noble Prize winner. In the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th., Basque and Catalan nationalism began to be more vocal and demanding.

Economic development: Although in this series of articles I have not covered much about the economic development of Spain, it was in these two regions, Basque & Catalan, that the country's industrial strength lay. Although they were still a half-century behind Britain and much of Europe, protectionism still kept many foreign imports out, particularly cheap American wheat. Luddism was also often a problem, even into the early part of the 20th century when peasants in Catalonia destroyed a local meteorological station and killed the director as they believed the station caused drought.

But Spain was still mainly an agrarian society, although an inefficient one, not benefiting from the modern technological advances in the sector or the transport revolution. Average yield per hectare was around half that of France and Germany. Of Spain's three main crops, wheat, olives and vines, it was cereal production that occupied more than 50% of all arable land. Until 1931 it represented twice the total value in money terms of all other agricultural production, and five times coal, iron and steel production put together.

But one of the biggest problems of the 19th century was the failure of successive Spanish rulers and governments to facilitate and promote land distribution and ownership among the public.

By the start of the 20th century, the bulk of the land still remained in the grasp of the Church, industrialists and the large estates of the land-owning nobles.

It was in the south that mining came to the fore. With the Mining Act of 1868, a mine could be established for the equivalent of £20. Spain was the bargain basement of the world for copper, lead, iron, mercury and zinc. Rio Tinto was the flagship of the mining bonanza. Established in 1873, between 1897 and 1911 it yielded British and Spanish investors an annual average return of 70% on capital invested!

Despite the lowest wages in Spain and a deadly level of contamination, the famished and desperate southerners had no option but to work in these hell-hole mines or in the sweltering above-ground furnaces. Dreadful conditions led to some savage industrial conflicts and the massacre of a peaceful demonstration in front of a town hall in 1888. The conniving and repressive attitude of the Spanish authorities shocked even the conservative deputy for the area who reported the slaughter to parliament.

The rise of Anarchism: Prior to 1868, social unrest was normally an agrarian phenomenon, but now with the growth of industry and the equally onerous working conditions in that sector, new political groupings began to emerge in the south and in Barcelona, hoping to improve the lot of the worker. The anarchists' political philosophy first came to Spain in 1868. This was based on the teachings of the Russian Mikhail Bakunin. He called for the end of all governments. He stated that 'The new world will be won only after the last king has been strangled in the guts of the last priest.' The starving, exploited and destitute peasants of Murcia, Andalucia and Extramadura had had enough and were now looking to revolutionary violence 'propaganda by deed' to better their miserable lives. Within five years there were 50,000 Spanish anarchists and their violent philosophy soon spread to many other regions in Spain.

In 1883, a conspiracy by the anarchists to murder the entire upper class of Andalucia was uncovered and 14 anarchists were garrotted in Cádiz. Later thousands of peasants armed with sickles marched into Jerez de la Frontera and attacked anyone wearing good clothes. Bombings by the anarchists began in the 1890's and were indiscriminate.

The government responded to these bombings with equal savagery. Following a bombing in Barcelona, there was a mass arrest of 400 suspects. Many were horribly tortured, several dying before they came to trial. Five were eventually executed but the original culprit was never found. There was considerable international outrage at the treatment of the prisoners at the time.

During a performance of William Tell in the *Gran Teatre del Liceu*, Barcelona, in November 1893, two bombs were thrown into the audience. Twenty people were killed and many more injured.

Anarchists would later assassinate three prime ministers, wound another and make two unsuccessful attempts to kill the king. The anarchists would then form a trade union, the Anarcho-Syndicalist union, CNT - *Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo* - in 1910 'for a final battle against a decrepit capitalist society.' The CNT would have a membership of 700,000 by 1919!

By contrast the founding of the Marxist Spanish Socialist Party, the PSOE, was almost muted in 1879. Their disciplined, legalistic approach failed to strike a chord with the majority of Spanish workers, with the result that their membership grew very slowly until the 1930's.

My aunt used to tell me, 'What you can't see, can't hurt you.' Well, she died from radiation poisoning a few months back... (Harry Hill)

Lime Bar Fishing Sunbathing Club.

Summer has arrived. Shirts off & slip, slap, slop! 33 degrees, sat in the shade of the bamboo watching the wildlife go by. Lots of people said I would be bored and restless when I retired. Bring it on! Even a bad day's fishing (and I've had plenty) is better than a good day's work.

At this month's meeting, we welcomed Charles Hale back into the club. Somebody else who can catch more fish than me!!! Fagin also told us that we have "loads of money". This is a good excuse for anti-social Baz to organise another "soiree".

The July match was fished on the Eden again. The water was very low with zero flow. Depending on the swim, we were plagued by either terrapins or baby mullet stealing the bait. Fishing was hard, so well done to Mike the scribe with 10lbs & John with 7lbs. No snakes this week, but there were rafts of mullet swimming in tight circles, a rat and a 6 inch brown crayfish.

"Three rod" Geordie is in the UK. He emailed John a photo of a huge fish he caught while pike fishing. Geoff (the snapper – as in photos!) has been fishing the "new" water near Santa Pola. He is trying to better Geordie's largest "Spanish" fish and caught an 8.5 pounder. Watch out Geordie! He's on your tail.

After clearing the 24 swims at the Eden last month, we have been asked by the three other angling clubs if we want to join them in an inter club match series. I laughed at them. I said, "I have read your results in the free papers, we would get hammered by you professionals." They regularly catch 20 kg of fish, so it has been suggested that some form of handicap could be invoked. That will be interesting. One arm tied behind their back so they can't use a landing net? Still, we might pick up a few tips!

After a busy last month, not much going on now, just chillaxing!

Two morons were in a boat fishing. They had a great day. One said to the other "we should mark this spot." So the other one leaned over a put a mark on the side of the boat. Moron 1 said, "You fool that won't work". "Why" said moron 2. "We may not get the same boat tomorrow".

Next meeting is at The Lime Bar @ 17.30 Mon 5 August.

Fishy fingers!
The Ghost.



Not Fast Food!

The diner had been waiting a long time for his meal and was on the point of walking out when the waiter appeared. 'I must apologise for the delay, sir,' said the waiter, 'but your fish will be coming in a minute.' The diner replied coldly: 'What bait are you using?'

Political Joke.

Recently, while I was working in the flower beds in the front garden, my neighbours stopped to chat as they returned home from walking their dog. During our friendly conversation, I asked their 12 year old daughter what she wanted to be when she grows up. She said she wanted to be Prime Minister one day.

Both of her parents – Labour Party voters - were standing there, so I asked her: "If you were Prime Minister what would be the first thing you would do?"

She replied, "I'd give food and houses to all the homeless people."

Her parents beamed with pride!

"Wow, what a worthy goal!" I said. "But you don't have to wait until you're Prime Minister to do that!" I told her.

"What do you mean?" she replied.

So I told her: "You can come over to my house and mow the lawn, pull weeds, trim my hedge and I'll pay you £50. Then you can go down to the Town Centre, find a homeless man and can give him the £50 to buy food."

She thought that over for a few seconds, then she looked me straight in the eye and asked, "Why doesn't the homeless man come over and do the work and you can just pay him the £50?"

I said, "Welcome to the Conservative Party."

Her parents aren't speaking to me any more.

GONE MAD IN MURCIA!

I really think they have 'lost the plot' in Murcia. With a property market in tatters, millions wasted on a new airport and other questionable ventures, their regional government has now announced further increases to those introduced early in the year by central government on property transactions.

From July 8, 2013, the following changes are effective:

- If you purchase a second-hand property in the Murcian region, the transaction tax is now increased from 7 to 8%.

- If you purchase a new property in the region, the IVA rate of 10% has now been increased to 12%!

- If you take any step or contract which has to be notarised in a public deed - which covers most contracts including mortgages, an additional tax of 1.5% will be applied. Not only are notaries virtually useless and just another expensive, superfluous bureaucratic hurdle, they seem now to turning into tax collectors as well!

- In relation to inheritance tax payable in the region, the previous discount of 99%, which applied to heirs over the age of 21 years of age (and resident), has now been cancelled.

So, would you buy a property in Murcia?

Whereas the above news is undoubtedly some of the dumbest financial stories I have come across this month, the region also produced one of the silliest and tragic.

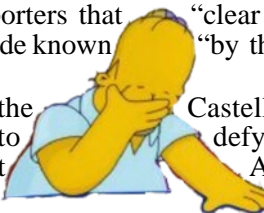
During the Virgen de Carmen fiesta in Murcia, a 45-year-old man won a drinking contest after drinking six litres of beer in only 20 minutes. After he stopped he felt unwell and had died by the time he got to hospital. I doubt they will put his 'victory' on the gravestone.

CORVERA AIRPORT - THE LATEST.

President Valcárcel of Murcia Region announced during July hinted that the target date for Corvera Airport being open to the public is Easter 2014 "all being well". And that's a definite maybe!

The Minister of Tourism for Murcia, Pedro Alberto Cruz, also told reporters that "clear and decisive news" would be made known "by the end of the month".

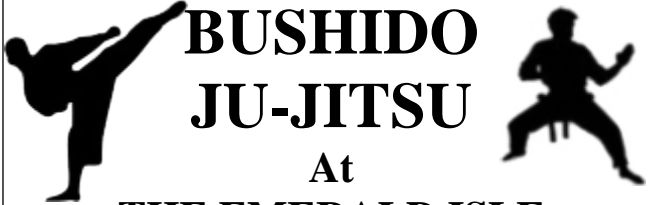
Meanwhile, the Castellon Airport saga continues to defy credibility. The latest is that A E N A Inspectors have studied the runway and ruled that it is not safe for larger commercial aircraft to use the runway unless and until further steps are taken to modify the runway. The Generalitat Valenciana, who are hoping to sell the airport, are now running around like headless chickens trying to determine what the additional costs will be.





Is this what Spanish politics has now been reduced to? Okay, this image is my own concoction just for fun and I know the PM is scrupulously honest and would never take a 'bung'! But the Spanish image or 'Spanish Brand' has been seriously damaged. There is an excellent article here concerning the image and the problems there are in addressing it.

http://www.murciatoday.com/spanish-brand-is-damaged-by-corruption_17657-a.html



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A Botellón is an activity where teenagers and young adults gather together to socialise and drink booze. These events, which are often attended by several hundred are a real headache for the authorities. This photo shows the mess after a recent one in Alicante.



Torre Vieja police in a stand-off with the Senegalese traders. See page 6.

One of the bulls scores a painful 'hit' during one of the bull runs in the San Fermin Festival in Pamplona in July.



The photo on the left is taken from a promotional video for cherries. Not just ordinary cherries but the luscious ones called *Picote del Jerte* or *Cerezas del Jerte* in Andalucía. These cherries are so special they have their own protected Designation of Origin status. The short video was launched to promote their marvellous fruit to a wider audience and contained some slightly suggestive innuendo such as 'the mature ones are the tastier' and 'ripe tasty and juicy.' Harmless you would think but not the Socialist Secretary for Equality in Andalucía, Nélida Martín, who stated that it was 'sexist,.....BLAH, BLAH, BLAH.' Although the video was withdrawn, you can still see it here and it has been a great success. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiLhQgHsnCI>

Cherries which are on sale in street markets without stalks, are *Jerte* cherries - juicy and flavoursome. The stalks remain on the trees.

**It's like
Fireman
came in
your
mouth**



Picture on the left is from the Moors & Christians fiesta in Rojales.

Now these luscious ladies look far better than any bevy of nuns, so this year I am supporting the Moors! Bet they don't win!



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*A friend of mine runs marathons.
He always talks about this
'runner's high'. But he has to go
26 miles for it. That's why I smoke
and drink. I get the same feeling
from a flight of stairs.*

Larry Miller

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

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FOOTBALL FANS? The football legends of Chelsea,
Spurs and Barcelona and holding a Tri-Tournament at
Torrevieja FC, along with live music with The Faith and
Dan The Man. This is tentatively scheduled for the
weekend 7/8 September. More details will be available
at The Lounge, Lago Jardin II, in due course.



POT LUCK!

The bull grizzly bear is 7 feet tall, weighs more than a Mazda Miata, and can tear
through a tree like a Jewish mother through self-esteem. *The Simpsons*

Economists are like Bangkok taxi-drivers; put two of them together and you will
have four opinions, any of which will take you careering off in the wrong direction
at great expense. Mike Carlton

Mobile phones are the only subject on which men boast about who's got the
smallest. Neil Kinnock

The hardest thing about writing country music must be thinking up clean words
to rhyme with 'truck'. Brian Kaufman

I don't like country music, but I don't mean to denigrate those who do. And for
those who like country music, denigrate means 'put down'. Bob Newhart

All I ever wanted was an honest week's pay for an honest day's work. Sgt. Bilko

I'm as busy as a one-armed taxi-driver with crabs. Sir Les Patterson

My dad used to say, 'Always fight fire with fire,' which is probably why he was
thrown out of the fire brigade. Harry Hill

- What do you call an Amish guy with his hand up a horse's ass?

- A mechanic.

Anon.

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with lots of helpful info, at Pat Farnaby's website -
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