

# THE DREAM SCENE

## NEWSLETTER



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



Issue no. 85, 1st of March 2014.

*Bienvenido a todos* and welcome to the March edition.

Welcome to the start of year eight of The Dream Scene. It is also the Chinese Year of the Horse, or as McDonald's call it, Year of the Big Mac.

There is not doubt that Western Europe has been getting a hammering with the recent storms. Here, they have been particularly bad in the north of Spain, especially on the Atlantic coast. Although we have had some very heavy winds in this area, what has been unusual is the lack of rain so far this year. The year to date in Alicante has been the driest since 1981. This year we have only had 4 litres/m<sup>2</sup> of rain to date, whereas the normal amount would have been 47 litres per square metre. When this happened 33 years ago, it was followed by a damaging drought.

January was a record for tourism, 3.1 million visitors, up 12% on the same month last year. The main source was the United Kingdom with 552,526 visitors, and the region to attract the most visitors was the Canary Islands with 32.8% of the arrivals. Although we are in the middle of half-term, there is very little activity here on the coast. I have noticed though that the flights, even with the cheap airlines, are horrendously expensive.

As I write this, we are nearing the end of the Carnival season. These are the pre-Lent celebrations which will all end with the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>. Easter Sunday falls on April 20<sup>th</sup> this year.

There are no 'red days' in March but the 19<sup>th</sup> is the local fiesta of San José throughout Spain but I expect all the shops will be open. Saturday March 1<sup>st</sup> is St. David's Day and March 17<sup>th</sup> is St. Patrick's Day, if you want an excuse to party!

Locally I notice that what used to be The Liberty has had a complete refurbishment, internally and externally and will open on March 1<sup>st</sup> as Los Lobos Bar & Restaurant. On the opening evening there will be entertainment and a free buffet. Hugh O'Neill has now taken over 'Damo's' and it will now be called appropriately 'O'Neill's.' Official opening night here is on March 15<sup>th</sup> - see page 16.

The Samaritan's shop in Punta Marina C.C. is celebrating its first anniversary on March 1<sup>st</sup> with a Sunshine FM Funday. Please try and support them.

As we start year eight of The Dream Scene, I must thank our advertisers and our generous subscribers who have been very kind. I must also thank Tid for the editing (and occasional censorship!), Angela for her clever and funny original cartoons (her cartoon will be back next month ..she is away), Steve and Stefan for helping with the deliveries and Media Costa Blanca for the printing. This month I have had to increase the minimum number of printed issues to 700 monthly due to the demand. If I had 1,000 printed they would all go quickly, but at a minimum monthly cost now of €50, I don't want it getting out of hand. In this particular area and some others, the newsletter has greater coverage than any of the weekly or monthly freebies, but I still prefer to run it on a non-profit basis as the cheap advertising costs testify, which are just a fraction of what is charged elsewhere. **However, if you have your newsletter delivered to you or sent to you by email and you have not renewed your annual subscription this year, this will be your last copy.**

Hopefully you will find something interesting or humorous in this month's issue. Thanks to Peter & Brenda, Denis & Beryl, Janet, and Terry & Judy for their kind donations towards printing costs this month.

Wishing you all a great month.

Mick & Tid.

# O'NEILL'S



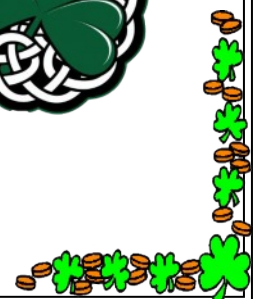
## IRISH PUB

(Formerly Damo's)

Via Park III

## céad míle fáilte

### CHECK-OUT PAGE 16.



*My favourite quotation is eight pounds ten for a second-hand suit.*

*Spike Milligan.*

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- DRIVING LICENCES
- COURT
- TOWN HALLS
- SCHOOL MEETINGS

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...film extras in Spain are very badly paid. The Madrid Association of Film Extras say that they are only paid €25 for a 10-12 hour day and only get cold food, usually what has been left over by the production team.

...Britany Ferries are now introducing a 'low-cost' service to both Le Havre and Santander called *Brittany Ferries economie*. The service Portsmouth to Santander will be a single trip at weekends, with a limited catering service, with basic en-suite cabins available, but reclining seats will also be available for those wishing to spend a little less. Trips to Le Havre will be more frequent. Each vessel will have two specially adapted disabled cabins and 12 pet friendly cabins. This spring one-way fares for a car plus two passengers and two reclining seats will start at just £79 to France and £169 to Spain.

...a food bank for pets has opened in Montmeló, Barcelona. The food bank, which is an extension of an animal shelter which provides free and cheaply priced basic veterinary care for people who cannot afford expensive vet fees. The food bank is run by a team of 21 volunteers and provides free dried food to pet owners who have an income of less than €450 per month. The *Banco de Alimentos para Mascotas* hope that this initiative will reduce the number of pets abandoned by owners during these difficult times.

**The Obit'!**

Gallagher opened the morning newspaper and was dumbfounded to read in the obituary column that he had died. He quickly phoned his best friend, Finney.

'Did you see the paper?' asked Gallagher. 'BeJaysus! They say I died!'

'Yes, I saw it!' replied Finney. 'Where are ye callin' from?'

Derrick Green

# What's Up?

Pressure is mounting on the Spanish borders of Melilla and Ceuta as a reported 30,000 sub-Saharaners are attempting to cross the border illegally. The threat of these numbers 'invading' is destabilising to both towns and there have already been numerous violent clashes on the borders. In one incident on February 6, 14 died trying to enter Ceuta and there have been allegations that the Spanish authorities fired rubber bullets at the migrants while they were in the sea. Between Feb' 17 and Feb' 24, 250 migrants managed to scale the fences in Melilla and then dispersed throughout the town. I often wonder why the Spanish still hold on to these enclaves as they appear to be nothing but 'warts.'

Despite the slump, sales of cheap housing are taking an ever increasing segment of the market. The number of properties for sale under €100,000 in value in 2007 was 3%. It is now 30.8%.

I dare say that it is welcome news that some of the bank chiefs who guided their banks into chaos and penury by mis-selling preference shares are at last being called to justice. There are several cases in the courts at present. In one, the case of the ex chairman of Caja Madrid, Miguel Blesa, is being investigated for a number of other offences. One of the big ones is that he paid \$1.2 billion for the City National Bank of Florida, whereas the American bank is only reputed to be worth less than half of that. More serious is that he ignored the requests of the rest of the board and others to have an independent assessment of the Florida bank's real value. He also bypassed regional laws in the acquisition which forbade a sizeable purchase without Madrid's approval.

And then there are the four former directors of the now nationalised Novacaixagalicia Bank who awarded themselves a total compensation package of €8.9 million - 10% of the total bank assets! This four and another director are now charged with criminal mismanagement and fraud.

And of course the failed CAM is still rarely out of the news. The former director general, Roberto López Abad, and former chairman of the savings bank's oversight committee, Juan Ramón Avilés, face the prospect of between six and 10 years in prison for misappropriation of funds and deliberate mismanagement. They are alleged to have inflated their already substantial expenses by a factor of ten and granted unauthorised substantial loans to their own property companies. CAM lost €16 million out of a €75-million investment in hotel and real estate projects in which Abad had a personal involvement. CAM was sold to Banco Sabadell for one euro in December 2011.

The newspaper, El País, has reported that the Chairman of the Bankia has forecast that the bank will be back in private hands in 2016. José Ignacio Goirigolzarri left it in the air as to whether the bank would return the 22 billion € of public money which had been used to rescue the bank. The government are also keeping quiet about it.

The Catalan government, which is currently immersed on a self-rule drive, will ask the central government to lend it €6.347 billion this year from the Regional Liquidity Fund (FLA), the region's economic and financial commissioner stated. The FLA was set up in 2012 to help fund cash-strapped regions that have been cut off from the debt markets because of prohibitively high interest rates. Meanwhile Mas, the Catalan president, has asked for a dossier to be drawn up of pro-independence journalists.

Mundo reports the Development Ministry has refused to pay 280 million € to Andalucía to cover the unprofitable local routes of the AVE high-speed trains.

- I got a new stick deodorant today. The instructions said: "Remove cap and push up bottom." I can barely walk, but whenever I fart, the room smells lovely. (Kev the Rev)
- After going to see '12 Years A Slave' at my local cinema, I now understand how it feels to be exploited and robbed of your dignity by ruthless, mercenary overseers. €4 for a Coke Light!!

ABC reports that Spain was the largest producer of wine in the world in 2013. Olive oil exports from Andalucía have risen by 42% in just five years.

El País reports that Santander Football Club has stood up to the abuses seen in football. The modest football team in the Segunda B division was meeting Racing in the King's Cup. They have not been paid for four months and they refused to play unless the managers of their club resigned.

February 4 was World Day against Cancer. The mortality rate in Spain from the disease has fallen by 13% over the last decade.

The Diario de Mallorca headlines that Mallorca has to halt the use of 120 million plastic bags a year before 2018. The Consell forecasts fines of up to €45,000 for shops who continue to give plastic bags to their clients.

Work on the proposed Paramount Theme Park in Murcia has been delayed once again. The excuse this time is the failure of the Alhama de Murcia council to complete the various administrative procedures. This is of course a joke as this project has been hovering around for some years now. The real issue here is the lack of investors. Work on the proposed theme park may not begin until well into the summer months, but another €300 million is needed.

Meanwhile, Tumbit reports that the opening of Corvera Airport continues to be postponed. The Supreme Court of Murcia has moved to suspend the litigation between the Regional Government and the former & potential concession holder of Corvera Airport - Aeromur - for a period of 60 days. This news follows an announcement by Aeromur that they had given the Government one week to decide whether to reinstate them as the operator of the new airport. The measure allows time for both parties to negotiate a new contract to ensure that Corvera Airport is opened with as little delay and expense as possible, at a time when both have already been pushed to the limit. Should an agreement be found within this time it is hoped that the facility may still be in a position to be open to the public in September of 2014. However, the sticking point will undoubtedly be the repayment of the €82 million loan guarantee and it is difficult to consider how negotiations can progress until this has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. As ever, Murcia's Minister for Tourism, Pedro Alberto Cruz, has spoken of his confidence that good news is just around the corner (although this 'corner' has lasted a couple of years!).

To date, Spanish banks have closed 27% of their branches and reduced their workforce by 23%. The target is 35% and 30% respectively. There is no doubt that the quality of service is being reduced, not that it was anything to shout about anyway! Sabadell has closed down its large office in Los Balcones together with the two ATM's. The Sabadell ATM in the Consum Centre in Punta Prima has also been shut down.

Ferrovial, the Spanish multinational, has made an offer to Heathrow Airport Holdings (HAH) for British airports Aberdeen, Glasgow and Southampton. HAH (previously known as the BAA) and Ferrovial are keeping quiet on the matter but it is thought that an offer the equivalent of €1 billion is involved. Ferrovial bought Heathrow, Britain's busiest airport, and a number of other UK airports as part of its acquisition of BAA in 2006 for £10.3 billion. However, it was revealed in early February that Ferrovial is one of a number of private operators of Spain's toll-roads who have asked the Government to accept €3.5 billion of losses! Why not? It's only taxpayers money!

Wife texts husband on a cold winter's morning: "Windows frozen, won't open."

Husband texts back: "Gently pour on some lukewarm water."

Wife texts back 5 minutes later: "Computer really screwed up now."  
Liz Wright.



#### 4 What's Up? continued

On the left of this photo from Twitter is Paco González. This



gentleman is a well know sports journalist in Spain who used to direct the country's most popular radio sports' program, *Carrusel Deportivo*. The lady on the right is 25-year-old Fernández Gallego, a fan who it is alleged was secretly besotted with

González. On the morning of February 5, González's partner Maite was driving their 19-year-old daughter to university in Madrid when they were stopped by a man and woman armed with knives, who forced themselves into the family car. A scuffle ensued and González's partner was stabbed five times and his daughter twice. Maite managed to escape and get help from a truck driver but the violent couple had escaped. Miss Gallego and her accomplice, Iván Trepana Palao, were later arrested. Their car was found to contain two sets of handcuffs and blankets. The injured couple are in a stable condition in hospital. Sources close to the investigation believe that the accused is also alleged to have hired Bulgarian hit-men to murder his partner; however, the 'hit-man' kept the money, believed to be substantial, and thankfully did nothing.

King Juan Carlos's youngest daughter, Princess Cristina (photo-El Mundo), is the target of a tax-evasion and money-laundering inquiry stemming from an investigation into her husband Urdangarin's business dealings in the Nóos case. Cristina has denied any wrongdoing. She was questioned by the investigating judge in early February for more than six hours. The 45-year-old royal gave 550 evasive responses, answering 'I don't know' 182 times and 'I can't remember' 55 times. It is the first time a direct member of the royal family has been subpoenaed by a judge in a criminal inquiry. Coinciding with other major corruption scandals affecting Spain's political parties, big business and the labour union movement, the Nóos case has caused serious damage to the royal family's prestige. The prosecutor has asked for a 17 year jail sentence for her husband, the 'dodgy duke', if he is found guilty. She would then have to return €600,000. The establishment has 'closed ranks' around the princess, but the 'dodgy duke' will be hung out to dry.



Freemasonry has always been a major bugbear to the reactionary element in Spain. There were certain times when membership of a lodge was sufficient to have you placed against a wall and shot. But times change and it was unusual to see a large billboard advert for the society on a road leading into the town of Jávea. The billboard outlines some of the degrees of Freemasonry and refers specifically to the Scottish Rite. The majority of lodges on the southern and eastern coastal areas of Spain have, almost exclusively, British members.

Three Rumanians were arrested after stealing 4,000 litres of fuel from a number of industrial estates in Elche. Sixteen protected premises were breached and the fuel sold later on the black market.

Following the recently discovered fraud in Andalucia, where it is alleged that the UGT trade union embezzled up to €7 million in training funds destined for the unemployed, police now report that there is a €15 million hole in public funds, this time in Madrid. Once again it is believed that the fraud relates to money set aside for training the unemployed. Basically, private training companies received massive funding for non-existent students and non-existent training courses.

#### Dumb Ass!

A wife asks her husband: 'Could you please go shopping for me and buy one carton of milk and if they have avocados, get 6.' A short time later the husband comes back with 6 cartons of milk. The wife asks him, "Why did you buy 6 cartons of milk?" He replied, "They had avocados."

The director of the private school, 'Yago', in Castilleja de la Cuesta in Sevilla has refused to accept a two year old boy to the school because his parents are gay. The director at a school in Sevilla has been charged with a Crime against Fundamental Rights

At the end of September, there were 67,950 prison inmates throughout Spain, the latest figures from the Penitentiary Institutions section of the Interior Ministry show. Of that amount, 21,766 are foreigners.

The Civil Guard recently inspected 109 establishments in Granada, Jaén and Almería relating to the sale of animals as pets. More than half of them have committed criminal or administrative offences. Then on February 1, the Guardia Civil reported that they seized almost 600 animals which were imported illegally from the Slovak Republic. Many of the animals are only a few months old. Over 300,000 dogs and cats are abandoned each year in Spain. Despite having one of the highest rates of animal neglect in Europe, Spain also remains one of the main recipients of pets from other countries, especially Slovakia. This time 595 pets have been saved from a lucrative and illegal business and probably indifferent care. (Source: <http://alzalapata.ideal.es/>)

Over 600 police investigators have raided 88 establishments throughout Spain which buy and sell gold. 6.5 tons of gold and silver has been seized together with €1.69 million in cash, several pistols, ammunition, 52 vehicles and two boats. 164 arrests were made in Murcia, Málaga, Madrid, Barcelona, Tarragona, Castellón, Alicante, Córdoba, Granada, Toledo and Valladolid. They are accused of money laundering and tax fraud. It is believed that the group issued false invoices for 1 billion € which has allowed them to defraud 9 million € of company tax and 10 million € in IVA returns.

14 Guardia Civil were found guilty of taking bribes at Malaga airport. They allowed foodstuffs, valuables and one Chinese citizen to pass through customs after receiving payments of cash or valuables.

Banco Santander have been fined €7 million for two infractions committed during the sale of securities in 2007. The National Securities Commission fined the bank €10 million for failing to provide clients with adequate information about the product. The watchdog imposed another fine of €6.9 million for failing to adequately manage a conflict between the bank's own interests and those of its clients. About half of the customers who bought the securities ended up losing up to 55% of the value of their investment.



David Moyes, the Manchester United manager, has promised fans that they will be in a major European competition next year... even if he has to write the song himself.



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If you ever wondered why the wheels of justice turn so slowly in Spain, take a look at this photo (Informacion) of the storage system for records at the Attorney Courthouse Benalúa of Alicante. Although the staff have been requesting

new shelves for years, no action has been taken. Staff also have to bring in their own heaters from home as the heating provided in the offices is totally inadequate. Still, with a bit of luck your traffic fine might be in there somewhere!

A community of owners in Elda, Alicante, are contemplating taking the giant trade union, UGT, to court for fraud. It seems that for the last 18 years the regional UGT headquarters next to the urbanisation had been taking its electricity by way of a supply cable linked to the urbanisation supply cable. The issue only came to light when a new administrator took over the urbanisation accounts and could not understand why they were paying so much for such a small common area in the urbanisation. It seems the bills were in the range €600-€800 bi-monthly. The UGT say they will settle with an appropriate amount if the complaint does not go any further, although the police may have different ideas on the matter. It will surely be very difficult to reconstruct the bills for the last 18 years! So much for the capabilities of the previous administrator.

A new promotional video for Torrevieja has been released. It lasts around four and a half minutes. It's worth viewing and is here - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNeUCOL5yDs&feature=youtu.be>

Torrevieja sets aside €20,000 every year so that people without resources or relatives can be buried. The council have also increased the price of burials by 95% from just over €500 to around €1000. Yet this figure is only half of the actual cost of a municipal service. The fact that the cemetery was one of the cheapest in the province has led many insurers to guide their customers to choose this municipality as a place of burial. But as you will see in the gallery on page 19, they are chock-a-block with bodies.

There has been chaos regularly outside the Civil Registry in Orihuela. There are only two clerks who work in the registry, which deals with official paperwork (plenty of that in Spain!) such as marriage, birth, death and nationality certificates. However these clerks only deal with around 25 applicants a day. Queues start outside the building just after 3am in the morning, with the usual accompanying frustration and aggravation. The police have had to be called on more than one occasion and an ambulance once. This reminds me of the bad old days queuing for the *residencia cert* in Alicante. The council should correct this 'third-world' bureaucratic vestige a.s.a.p. Its citizens deserve better.

More than 150 doves and pigeons have been poisoned in Murcia city centre. It seems that a powerful pesticide was mixed with wheat grains which were deliberately laid down for the birds.

Another grandiose public building project has 'bitten the dust'; this time it is the *La Paloma* grand cultural centre (photo-La Verdad), on the northern edge of Pilar de Horadada. Work started on this whimsical building in 2001, and had a budget of €2.4 million. When work halted in 2006, €4 million had been spent and the project was still unfinished. The council has now decided to dismantle the tower, at a cost of €64,000 and may complete the remainder of the work to the quickly deteriorating building when funds are available.



The Sixth Drag Queen Contest was held in Torry during February. The prizes of €1,000, €750 and €250 for the best acts bring contestants from all over Spain.

The first prize was won by Violetta Carson (photo) from Elche, the second and third from Madrid and Valencia. All three prize winners will be taking part in the Carnival procession in Torrevieja on



Saturday evening March 1<sup>st</sup>. Personally, I find 'drag-queens' a bit weird - men dressing up as women!? I think women do it so much better; although the Germans and Spanish seem to 'love it.' However, the costumes and dancing by those locals taking part in the colourful Carnival processions are well worth a look. You can catch a brief bit of last year's colourful Carnival procession here -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dkBrNfCBFY>

Police recovered 37 rucksacks containing a total of 2,000 pounds of cocaine (photo) in the sea, south of the city of Valencia. The rucksacks were anchored and



sealed in a sophisticated flotation device fitted with a location signalling device. Drug smuggling has become more sophisticated following increased vigilance by the authorities. Police in Spain have reported finding drugs hidden under smugglers' wigs and inside their bodies in breast implants, as well as in cargos such as bananas, roses, toys and cakes.

But the best 'catch' was in the sea off Cartagena in early February when a combined police and navy operation boarded a boat which was found to be carrying 22 tons of hashish. The Spanish police believe that the cargo was bound for the coast of France or the Netherlands as surveillance of the southern and eastern coastlines of Spain responding to illegal migrants and drug smuggling is now very effective.

There is no Local Police coverage in Los Montesinos between the evening hours of 10pm and 6am. However, residents may phone the Guardia Civil on 062.

The Department of Aging Torrevieja organized on the occasion of the celebration of Valentine's Day, the 14th of February, from 18:00 in the Municipal Leisure Centre (BMC) a party designed to celebrate and reward couples who have attained 50 years of marriage (Golden Jubilee). Also during the ceremony special recognition to the couple with the longest marriage among attendees, with prizes and gifts for all those involved in this act, whose inscriptions are now open in the CMO itself and houses were also held Senior.

A 79-year-old cyclist died from his injuries, after being hit by a car in nearby Almoradi. Cycling on Spanish roads can be daunting enough, but surely doing it when you are almost in your 80's, it is a bit dumb.

There was a knock on the door this morning. I opened it to find a young man standing there who said: "Hello Miss, I'm a Jehovah's Witness ..." I said "Come in and sit down." I offered him coffee and asked, "What do you want to talk about?" He said, "Bugged if I know, I've never got this far before." Liz Wright

*"My dad's Irish and my mum's Iranian, which means that we spend most of our family holidays in Customs."*

Patrick Monahan



# LIME BAR



VIA PARK III

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

The golf societies venue for the 12th February 2014 was held at the Vista Bella Golf Course.

On a clear cold sunshine morning 28 members assembled at the tee, the course proved to be in good condition and some interesting golf was played and enjoyed.

The competition was in the Stapleford format and the scores recorded are as follows:

Nearest the Pin in 2 on the 10th Hole (par 4) was Alun Hewitt.

Nearest the Pin in 2 on the 12th hole (par 4) was Nev. Greenwood.

Nearest the pin on the 15th hole (par 3) was Tony Jones.

Longest drive on the 17th hole was Kevin Jackson.

Silver Class 3rd place was Dave Railton with a score of 28 points.

Silver Class 2nd place was Colin Clarke with a score of 28 points. ( on count-back)

Silver Class 1st place was Dave Everson with a score of 31 points.

Gold Class 3rd place was Pat Heaney with a score of 29 points.

Gold Class 2nd place was Arthur Jones with a score of 30 points.

Gold Class 1st place was Steve Cottle with a score of 31 points.



A very good day in pleasant company; thank you to Captain Mick Slater for organising the event and mentioning Mick's wife Angie who helps considerably behind the scenes. 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.

### Unlucky Uncle Hamish.

My uncle Hamish in Scotland has to be the unluckiest man in the world. He was told to wear white at night to be seen on the roads without pavements. So he wore a white cap, white sweater and trousers, and just to be safer he bought some white trainers as well. First time he went for a walk last week, he got knocked down by a snow-plough!



**INHERITANCE TAX PART 5, WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW.**

**Time Scales & Penalties.**

Heirs are obliged to pay within six months from the not much time, particularly nature of administrations After the six months the claim the tax. The tax penalties and interest for three months (after the six tax) there is a 5% penalty; months the penalty is 10% and after one year the penalty is 20% plus interest.



the inheritance tax (IHT) date of death. Now this is because of the bureaucratic and systems in Spain. tax office has four years to office can and will impose late payment: during the month allowed to pay the during the following nine

**Non Disclosure.**

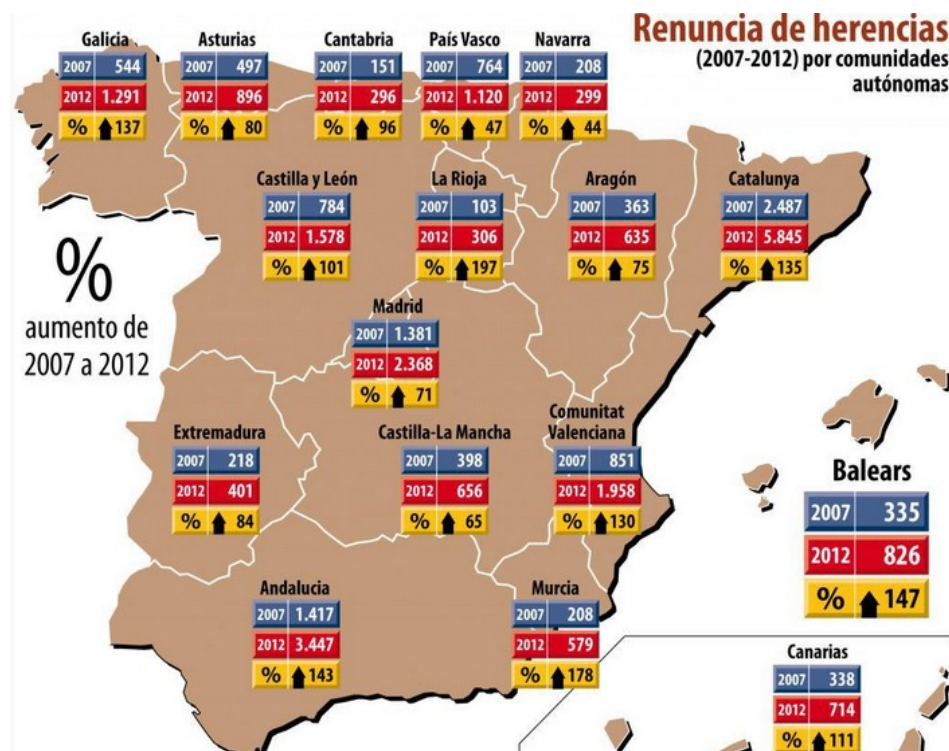
But if the tax office does not claim inheritance tax during the 4½ years following the death, the tax office cannot impose penalties and interest for late payment **after** those 4½ years. So if a person who owns a Spanish property dies in their home country and the Spanish authorities are not informed of the owner's death, it is possible after this period for the heirs to transfer the property into their own names without paying any IHT. Nor can the Spanish government impose a penalty on the heirs of a Spanish property due to non disclosure of the death of the Spanish property owner in their home country. If the property owner died in Spain, the death has to be registered. Then details would probably come up in a search by the tax authorities. Similarly, a visit to the notary to change the name on title deeds would also draw attention to the matter. The amount of information about citizens available from computer records to the various government agencies in Spain would shock you.

**Waiving the Inheritance.**

During the research for these articles I was very surprised by the number of inheritors who waive their claim to the inheritance. These 'legacy waivers' are not only due to the tax which is payable within just 6 months but also due to the debt and liabilities that can be attached to the inherited property. So not only may the heirs have to pay between 7.5% and 34% of the net value of the inherited assets (depending on region and allowances) in IHT, but if these assets have loans or mortgages attached then the inheritor would have to absorb these as well. This would mean that someone who inherited a property which had negative equity could find their own personal assets at risk as well!

Legacy waivers, which have to be processed through a notary, have been increasing at an alarming rate as the image below illustrates, with almost 2,000 inheritances in Valencia alone, waived or declined in 2012. I have no doubt that this figure increased substantially during 2013 due to the crisis.

In our final article on IHT next month we will take a brief look at avoidance.



**NATURAL GAS AND DREAM HILLS.**

Whereas the introduction of Natural Gas was launched with great 'ballyhoo' in Torrevieja, it was a much more muted affair here in Orihuela Costa. I found this baffling especially as 'The Greens' lead the Orihuela Council.

However, the arrival of cheap natural gas is a boon to any community, particularly when you take into account the ever-increasing cost of electricity in Spain. Natural gas is less than half the cost of electricity per Kw.

You will no doubt have noticed that the pipework is already being laid in Calle Lagunas de Ruidera. But it will not be connected to the side roads and the houses who have requested it until after the next A.G.M. gives approval.

Some people are adopting a wait-and-see attitude, but they may very well lose out on the heavily subsidised offer which is available now and will no doubt not be available once the engineers have left the area.

Basically there are two options to have the natural gas:

Depending on your location you can have a gas connection inside your garden wall or patio with no connection charge and just a minimum monthly rental of around €3 approx.

Or you can have two gas connections to say a boiler and a cooker for just €21. The installation charge of €1,089 being waived in both options.

Should you wish to know more or to sign up, I strongly suggest you contact Virginia (who speaks perfect English) of Elecnor, a partner company of Gas Natural Fenosa, on 645 113 316, who will be pleased to meet you and to talk you through this very beneficial offer.

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**OTHER NEWS STORIES**

AENA, the Spanish Airports Authority, has been fined €900,000 by the National Commission for Markets and Competition. This resulted from an investigation into illegal practices which hinder free market competition in the car rental sector. Regular readers of these columns will be aware that foreigners are regularly being 'stuffed' by the car-hire companies. Eleven car rental companies were also fined a total of €2.2 million. These were operating at more than 30 airports nationwide, including Murcia and Alicante and included some 'blue chip' names such as Hertz (fine €19,000), Europcar (fine €30,000) and Atesa (fine €52,000). It was found by the Commission that commercially sensitive information was exchanged by the car rental companies at the airports in question, with the 'necessary collaboration' of AENA over a period of 13 years up to September 2012.

Although Valencia's public television and radio stations (RTVV) went off the air over two months ago, their associated costs keep rising, as the regional government is finding out. First there is the fact that the staff of 1,660 keep getting their paychecks and will continue to do so until the RTVV liquidation procedure is completed, representing a monthly cost of around 4.5 million euros. Then, worker representatives disclosed that RTVV has just paid 16 million euros for failing to honour its four-year contract with the broadcast company Mediapro, owner of the Formula 1 rights in Spain. The contract stipulated that RTVV would air the championship in 2012 and 2013. The workers' committee notes that Valencian deputy premier José Ciscar had described the liquidation of Canal 9, RTVV's television station, as "a measure that will bring savings to the public coffers." The Valencian government also cancelled two races that were scheduled to be run in Valencia, according to a deal between F1 chief Bernie Ecclestone and former Valencian premier Francisco Camps. The Popular Party (PP) regional government has already paid out over 275 million euros for the annual fee and the costs of maintaining the necessary infrastructure in good shape. Unfortunately, when it comes to business and politics in Spain, one must add ineptitude as one of its characteristics next to corruption.

Over the course of the last 12 months, Spain has seen a steady influx of new vocabulary, with words like 'autofoto' (selfie) and 'expapa' (or ex-Pope) entering the lexicon. Now the Fundéu BBVA — a non-profit group that promotes the proper use of the Spanish language by the country's media — has sifted through these new words and chosen their winning word for 2013: 'escrache'. The term *escrache* refers to a targeted demonstration outside the home or workplace of a public figure. It gained currency in Spain when the county's anti-evictions lobby, the PAH, used these tactics to protest against the country's home evictions laws.

Ten patients at Marina Baixa Hospital, in Villajoyosa, Alicante, were infected with hepatitis C due to medical negligence. This happened back in 2011 but it is only coming to light now. It seems that the same saline multi-dosage solution bag with an infected needle for intravenous transfusions was used on several patients. The investigation has revealed that 13 others may have also been infected, but these have since died! Others may be infected, including one British ex-patient, but these cannot be traced.



**Random Shots!**

I was reading that a dwarf was pick-pocketed in Torrevieja last week. How could anybody stoop so low?

A boat carrying red paint and a boat carrying blue paint collided with each other off the coast of Torrevieja. Apparently the crew were marooned.

My wife, kids two dogs and myself are upstairs in our house. We have been cut off by the floods from the outside world. I saw a boat from The Red Cross coming towards us. "Thank God" I cried. "Have you come to rescue us?" I asked. "No" came the reply. "We're collecting for the Syrian refugee crisis".

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**The Union.**

The shop steward announces the results of negotiations with the employers. 'From now on,' he tells his members, 'all wages are going to be doubled, holidays will be six months a year, and we are only going to have to work on Fridays.' 'What!!' comes a cry from the back of the hall. 'Ever bloody Friday?'

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Ahmed's Chimney.

Ahmed has just finished building a chimney in the middle of the Sahara Desert. He's standing back to admire his work when his boss drops by and points out that he's been holding the plans upside-down; it was supposed to be a well!



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**Fiddle! Fiddle! Fiddle!**

Ninety-five percent of Spaniards believe corruption is generalized, according to the first continent-wide study on the issue by the European Commission. Only respondents in Greece (99%) and Italy (97%) outdid Spain. The report, which was presented on Monday in Brussels, underscores the magnitude of the issue in Europe: three out of four EU citizens believe corruption is an institutional problem.

In two areas of the survey Spain topped the charts. Asked if the level of corruption has risen in the past three years, 77% said yes, more than in the other 27 member states. Two out of every three respondents said that corruption affected their daily lives, more than in any other nation. The survey was conducted in February and March 2013, when a series of corruption scandals involving the government, labor unions, political parties and the monarchy occupied the front pages in Spain. Scandinavian countries registered the lowest perception of institutional corruption. In Denmark, 75% of people answered that they viewed corruption as exceptional, not the rule, followed by 64% in Finland and 54% in Sweden.

The report concluded that legal mechanisms in place across the continent to tackle corruption "are not satisfactory," and that in many cases "political will to eradicate corruption is absent." (Source:El Pais)

*"The only difference between the women I've dated and Charles Manson is that Manson has the decency to look like a nutcase when you first meet him."*

Richard Jeni.



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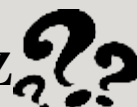
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**The New Bike.**

There was a City cop on his horse waiting to cross the street when a little boy on his new shiny bike stopped beside him. "Nice bike," the cop said " Did Santa bring it to you?" "Yep," the little boy said, he sure did!" The cop looked the bike over and handed the boy a \$20 ticket for a safety violation. The cop said, " Next year tell Santa to put a reflector light on the back of it." The young boy looked up at the cop and said "Nice horse you got there sir, did Santa bring it to you?" "Yes, he sure did," chuckled the cop. The little boy looked up at the cop and said, " Next year tell Santa the prick goes underneath the horse not on top."



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*I found out the ideal weight for my mother-in-law: about one kilogram, excluding the urn.*

### Is your dog magnetic?

Well, maybe not magnetic, but your pooch is very sensitive to small variations in the Earth's magnetic field.

The German University of Duisburg-Essen and the University of Life Sciences in the Czech Republic published research findings in December 2013 which validate this. Between them they observed 70 dogs of 37 breeds while they were crapping (1,893 observations) and urinating (5,582 observations) over a two-year period. It seems their

study proved unambiguously for the first time that dogs are sensitive to variations in the Earth's magnetic field

(MF) and that dogs preferred to excrete with the body being aligned along the North-South axis under calm

MF conditions. This directional behaviour was abolished under unstable MF. The best predictor of

the behavioural switch was the rate of change in declination, i.e., polar orientation of the MF. Since

the MF is calm in only about 20% of the daylight period, this may explain why many experiments regarding magnetoreception are difficult to replicate or expand on because of scatter. No doubt the behaviour of humans during stable MF conditions will be researched in due course.

The other thing which struck me about this is that somewhere in Germany or the Czech Republic, there is a mum and dad proud that their son or daughter got a Phd for watching a load of dogs crap for over a period of two years!

If you are really bored, you can read the research findings here - <http://www.frontiersinzooology.com/content/10/1/80>



### Rex.

Little Johnny has a sick dog called Rex. After a visit to the vet, Dad tells Johnny that Rex probably won't live for more than a couple of months. 'But Rex wouldn't want you to be sad,' says Dad. 'He'd want you to have happy memories of him. 'Can we give him a funeral?' asks Johnny. 'Sure,' says Dad. 'Can I invite all my friends?' asks Johnny. 'Sure you can,' says Dad. 'And can we have cake and ice-cream?' asks Johnny. 'You can have all the cake you want,' says Dad.

'Dad,' says Johnny. 'Can we kill Rex today?'

### Dish Washer.

After many years of service, a rich lady decides to fire her maid and hire someone younger. When the maid hears the news, she takes a steak out of the fridge and throws it to the family dog. 'Why did you do that?' asks the lady of the house. 'I never forget a friend,' replies the maid. 'That was for his help cleaning the dishes all these years!'

### Deal!

A man walks by a table in a casino and passes three men and a dog playing cards. 'That's a very smart dog,' says the man. 'He's not so clever,' says one of the players. 'Every time he gets a good hand, he wags his tail.'





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### Idiots of the Month.

First we have a Valencian couple who, it seems, have been submitting fraudulent insurance claims for several years. A 37-year-old man and a 35-year-old woman have been submitting false claims relating to the theft of bullfighting equipment at the end of the bullfighting season. However their greed overcame their common sense as they made three successive annual claims at the end of the 2011, 2012 and 2013 seasons. False invoices were presented and the robberies faked. To date the investigation has found that at least €140,000 has been claimed for the theft of bullfighting suits, capes, swords and other related items.

There are two US military bases in Spain. Both are in the south - Rota Naval Base and the unfortunately named Moron Air Base. The latter is near Morón de la Frontera in Andalucía. So imagine a 'Top Gun' fighter pilot chatting up a young lady in a bar in the States: She asks him, 'Where are you stationed?' He replies, 'Moron Air Base!' Yikes! Why didn't they call it La Frontera Air Base, which sounds so much sexier? Obviously who ever named it had a sense of humour and was probably from the Navy!



Our final candidate this month is the Spanish Football Federation. Why is it that most national football associations - including the English F.A. - fall into the 'bell-end' category and are all as clever as a rock? February 15 was International Childhood Cancer Day. After scoring a goal during a football match on the same day for Real Jaén against league rivals Unión Deportiva Las Palmas, Jona Ruiz lifted his shirt to reveal a t-shirt with the following message written on it in pen: "Courage Little Ones. International Childhood Cancer Day." See photo. An



admirable message but the 'jobs worths' at the Spanish Federation have now fined him €2,000! Rather than address the real issues such as the rampant racism in Spanish football, the federation dummies have fined him for the serious offence of 'displaying any publicity, slogan etc' after scoring a goal. The Barcelona striker, Leo Messi, was once fined under the same regulation for revealing a "Happy Birthday, Mum" message.

### Telling him straight!

A woman is talking to her friend. 'That bloke I picked up in the bar last night turned out to be a complete bastard. We'd just finished having sex when he called me a slut!' 'Never!' says her friend. 'What did you do?' The woman replies, 'I told him to get out of my bed and take his mates with him.'

*Paco Rodriguez, Spain's smallest man, died in a freak accident last week. He fell into a bowl of muesli and got pulled in by a strong currant.*



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**(The Telegraph, July 12, 2013)**

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**Show & Tell.**

The teacher asked her class to write down on a piece of paper the type of work their daddies did. The children, very excitedly, scribbled their answers. One by one, the teacher asked each child to stand and describe the job. There was much laughter and screaming, that is apart from little Tommy. "Tommy, why do you look so sad?" asked the teacher.

Tommy slowly rose to his feet, and replied: "My Dad's a stripper in a gay bar." The other children remained silent, as Tommy continued. "Sometimes, he doesn't come home, and my Mummy sits crying ." There were gasps around the classroom.

The teacher acted quickly and dismissed the children, telling them to go out and play. She then walked up to little Tommy, put her arm around his shoulders, and asked: "Is all that true, Tommy?"

"No, not at all Miss. He really plays cricket for England, but I was too embarrassed to say."



## Black Economy Flourishes in Spain.

The crisis has caused Spain's black market economy to grow significantly over the past few years, according to a study released Wednesday by the union of the technical staff of the Finance Ministry (Gestha).

Gestha's report calculates that the value of under-the-table business in 2012 amounted to 253 billion euros, equivalent to 24.6 percent of GDP – that's 6.8 percentage points, or 60 billion euros, more than at the start of the crisis in 2008.

The report, entitled "The Underground Economy Takes Its Toll. The Increase in Fraud during the Crisis," calculates that black market deals increased annually by 15 billion euros in the period 2008-2012.

"The underground economy has increased particularly in the regions most affected by the problem of unemployment and the bursting of the property bubble, such as Andalusia, the Canaries, Extremadura, Castilla-La Mancha and other regions in the central belt," the report said.

The provinces with "strikingly low" levels of black market activity are those with a concentration of large national and international companies such as Madrid, Tarragona, Lleida, Barcelona and La Rioja. However, this fact is offset by the fact that such companies are more prone to use financial engineering to reduce their tax burden.

The report, drawn up by Jordi Sardà of the University Rovira I Virgili, does not include figures from the Basque Country, Navarre and Ceuta and Melilla, which have different tax systems. The report highlights that almost 70 percent of cash transactions in black market activity use 500-euro notes. (El País)

### Be on the lookout for....

**Bogus gas inspectors.** Yes these are doing the rounds again after being chased out of the Murcia region. No one will come from the gas companies unless you request it.

**Scrap metal thieves.** These will steal any metal. Many urbanisations, including Dream Hills, have had several of the metal doors to the water meters outside their houses stolen. These are just ripped off. If you see anybody hanging around them suspiciously call the police.

**Service station thieves.** Take particular care when stopping at motorway service stations. These small gangs of two or three, watch the parking areas of motorway service stations. Their preferred targets are elderly couples particularly women with handbags. After you leave your car for a snack or the *servicios*, they will slash one of your tires. Later they will be very friendly and offer assistance, but by clever distractions will steal handbags etc. A local couple relayed their experience of this to me and they did not even have enough money left to make a phone call with passports, cash, cards and driving licences all gone! The police were less than helpful saying that this was a classic and common crime.

### The Flying Dog!

Spanish football matches, even the minor ones, are never passive affairs. Spanish players may have learnt 'diving' from the Italians, but the Spanish supporters are second to none in terms of noise and shouting abuse.

But things went a little further in a recent football match in Andalusia. In the 86<sup>th</sup> minute, the referee went to remonstrate with some supporters who were being excessively abusive, when one of the supporters threw a dog from the stand (photo) at the referee. The dog missed the ref' and was naturally hurt and stunned after hitting the ground. Okay, it was bad enough to throw the dog a distance of more than two metres but the dog wasn't even his! The dog owner then got stuck in to the offender with the help of others. The man was charged with animal abuse and the dog is now fine.



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### MORE ELECTRIKERY!

The consumers' association, Facua, has said the Government is putting up the fixed part of the electricity price by 18% and taking the variable part down by 6%.

A January study by the EU which showed that electricity costs in Spain have risen by 46 per cent since 2012, the second-biggest increase in Europe. Electricity in Spain is now 48% more expensive than in the cheapest European countries. Last year, news that the government planned to 'tax the sun' by forcing owners of solar panels to connect them to the national grid and pay IVA on the electricity they generate was widely mocked in the international press.

The electricity suppliers have just started a program to install 'smart' meters to replace the existing ones. 10% of homes already have these fitted and it is expected that all homes will have them by 2018. The new meters will give the power companies lots of information about power consumption and enable them to read the meters remotely. However, consumers will benefit little from this new technology as they will not have access to the information, which could help them plan their appliance usage with greater economy. The rental of the new meters is predicted to double to €0.81 monthly.

**(Late News from Typically Spanish:** From April 1 a new system to calculate your electricity bill will come into force. The price will from then be determined by the wholesale market price, and not as previously in three-monthly auctions. The Spanish Interior Ministry has claimed the new system will mean a 3% fall in prices. (If you believe that I would like to sell you a map to the Lost Treasure of Los Altos!) Customers will also be able to pay on a yearly basis - in advance - if they wish. With the new system, suppliers will also be able to charge a different price every hour if they so wish.)

The chairman of Spanish power utility Iberdrola, Ignacio Sánchez Galán, on Wednesday lashed out at the government's energy policy and announced that his company "will make a testimonial reduction in its investments in Spain in the period 2014-2017" and not invest any more in developing its domestic renewable's business, at least until 2016. Galán said during the three-year period Iberdrola plans to invest €9.6 billion, but will concentrate its efforts on Britain, the United States, Mexico and Brazil. Investment in Spain will be reduced to 15 percent of the total. "Iberdrola feels more British, Mexican and American than Spanish," he said.

Chairman Galán is paid €7,443,000 per annum plus more than a million euros worth of Iberdrola shares.

•Did you hear about the cannibal who ate his mother-in-law? She still didn't agree with him.

•Small cannibal: 'I hate my teacher.'

Mother cannibal: 'Well, just eat your chips then.'

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### UK Passport Renewal:

All Britons resident in Spain must now make their passport applications online at [www.gov.uk/overseas-passports](http://www.gov.uk/overseas-passports)

This new process is part of a worldwide changeover to cut delays and reduce errors. The new procedure, which includes online payment, generates a personalised pack that must be completed, signed and sent with photographs and any additional documentation to the Passport Office in the UK. A new passport will take at least four weeks to process and six weeks in the case of a lost or stolen passport. Once the application has been submitted, you will get instructions on how to track its progress online. Remember you can apply up to nine months in advance of the expiry date, and any unexpired time will be added to your new passport.

The Passport Advice line is on 0044-300 222 0000.

### Some British expats in France and Spain to lose free healthcare.

British expatriates living in Europe having taken early retirement will lose their access to free local healthcare services, after the government decided to scrap the facility. In the past, those living in countries such as France or Spain have found their treatment covered by the NHS, but this is about to change.

From April 1st, those who are not covered through employment will have to foot the bill themselves. The move is just one of a number of cost-saving measures that the NHS is planning to roll out in order to bring its budgets back in check. European states will no longer be reimbursed by the NHS for the medical treatment received by non-working Brits below the pensionable age.

The current system works by expats filling in an S1 form, which entitles them to two and a half years worth of healthcare if they have paid national insurance for the previous three years. Those who are already in possession of the document will be able to use it until it expires, but once it lapses it will not be renewed and expat travel insurance will be required instead.

A spokesperson for the Department of Health told the Telegraph: "No other European state offers an equivalent to the residual S1 and the reasons for the UK doing so in the past probably arise because the NHS is different to continental systems."

No figure has been released to state how much money will be saved by the move, but it is thought that the average cost per pensioner to the UK is £4,000 a year. Some 2,355 S1s were issued in the 2012/2013 year, with time left on them to run.

The Department spokesperson added: "We are continuing to work through the operational implications of the change and will make a further announcement once this work has been completed."

Expats over the age of retirement will not be affected, nor will anyone seeking emergency treatment via the European Health Insurance Card. (Expatriate Healthcare)

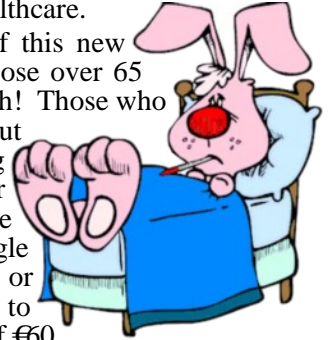
### New Healthcare Option in Valencia.

The Valencian regional health authority has announced the launch of a new plan to secure access to the state healthcare service for those who are currently excluded from it. To qualify, you must prove that you have lived in Spain for more than one year and that you do not have access to any other form of healthcare.

For under 65's, the cost of this new scheme is €60 per month. Those over 65 will have to pay €157 per month! Those who join the scheme can do so without being penalised for existing medical conditions. However you cannot elect to have dependants included in your single payment. If these are children or a partner, then they will have to pay the monthly insurance fee of €60 or €157 as appropriate. Those in the scheme will also have to pay 100% of the cost of any prescriptions.

Applications must be made by post to the regional health authority with photocopies of passport, the green EU citizen's registration certificate, NIE number, an up to date *padron* and the '*Libro de familia*' in the case of a child. This documentation must be accompanied by the completed application forms.

The application forms and information on the scheme can be found on the regional government's website at [www.gva.es:80/es/inicio/procedimientos?id\\_proc=17044](http://www.gva.es:80/es/inicio/procedimientos?id_proc=17044) Although you can view the information in English, the forms will be in Spanish only.



### Model 720: Declaration of Assets and Ownership Overseas.

This unpopular and confusing declaration was introduced last year. Basically, if you are fiscally resident in Spain and have assets (or rights to assets) abroad, which have a value of or exceeding €50,000, then they have to be declared. Three distinct groups of assets are relevant to the declaration. The €50,000 figure applies to each one and not a total of all three.

- 1) Bank or building society accounts or similar, with a value of €50,000 or higher as at December 31, 2013.
- 2) All types of financial assets such as securities, shares or amounts representing the capital stock of all types of entities. This is a 'catch-all' as basically, if you are the beneficiary of annuities or temporary income for amounts in excess of €50,000, the value as of 31 December, 2013 has to be declared.
- 3) Real estate valuation, again where the acquisition value was €50,000 or over, must be reported.

If you made a declaration last year and your individual assets category has not increased by €20,000 or more, then there is no need to make a declaration this year. If however you disposed of or sold an asset which you reported on last year, that has to be reported. Remember to consult a competent professional on these matters.

### Keeping Mum!

We were all dressed up and ready to go out for the St. Valentine's Party. We turned on a night light, switched the answering machine on, covered our pet parakeet and put the cat in the back garden. We then phoned the local cab company for a taxi.

The taxi arrived, but as we opened the front door to leave the house the cat darted back in. We didn't want the cat shut in the house because she always tries to eat the bird, so while my wife went out to the taxi, I went back inside to put it out. It ran upstairs with me in hot pursuit. Waiting in the cab, my wife didn't want the driver to know that the house would be empty for the night, so she told the taxi driver that I would be out soon, "He's just gone upstairs to say goodbye to my mother."

A few minutes later, I got into the cab. "Sorry I took so long", I said, as we drove away. "That stupid bitch was hiding under the bed. I had to poke her ass with a coat hanger to get her to come out! She tried to run off, so I grabbed her by the neck, then I had to wrap her in a blanket to keep her from scratching me. But it worked: I hauled her fat ass downstairs and threw her out into the back yard! She'd better not crap in the vegetable garden again.....!"

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Cletus.

Cletus the Redneck goes hunting and gets lost in the woods. Remembering the universal distress signal of firing 3 shots, he fires 3 shots into the air and waits. After an hour he fires 3 more shots. Another hour goes by and still no one comes to help. Preparing for the next sequence he says to himself, 'Shucks! I hope somebody comes this time because these are my last dang three arrows'.



## GALLERY



Following last month's article on the architect Santiago Calatrava (Idiot of the Month), I thought you might like to see the progress on repairing one of his projects in the City of Arts & Sciences in Valencia. Calatrava failed in his attempt to sue a website which outlines some of his blunders. You can view the 'offending' website here - <http://www.calatravatelaclava.com/>



Not an example of perfect parking! This happened at Dénia Hospital. How could anyone mistake a stairs for a parking space? Maybe 'substances' were involved? I wonder how they managed to get out of this Ford Focus? No one was injured.



Saint Blaise

The photo above shows a turkey being launched from a church bell tower in Cazalilla, Jaén in Andalucía. This odd celebration is held in honour of San Blas (Saint Blaise) every February. It seems the tradition grew after a dispute by two families as to who owned a turkey. The turkey was thrown from the tower and whoever caught the turkey kept it. These days the turkeys legs are tied and it is launched. Anyone who catches it has to look after it for a year. The person who launches the turkey every year is fined €2,001, for which the locals organise a collection to pay every year.



The storms throughout Spain during February were very severe. The north coastline was battered by large waves (left) and the photo on the right from El Mundo which was taken in Andalucía in the south, clearly shows the power of these storms and that at times, Mother Nature can be a real bitch!



Bared breasts seem to be very fashionable during the many protests in Spain against the proposed changes to abortion legislation. Now I know many of us blokes are prepared to pay good money for this sort of thing, but they could easily take someone's eye out with one of those! One of the ladies pulled her knickers over the cardinal's head. I would guess that the altar boys raffled it the following day. (Not the cardinal's head stupid, the knickers!)



On the left you will see what was given to a cancer patient as a meal in a Valencian Hospital. It is supposed to be a tuna sandwich! The patient also got a little tub of yogurt. Enjoy!

They are having a storage problem in the *tanatoria* in Torrevieja. The mortuary is chock-a-block with cadavers, so they are resorting to storing bodies where ever they can, even in the garage!



(Compilation photo El Mundo)

Acme Computers has announced a breakthrough in personal music. It has developed a sound chip that can store music in a woman's breast implant. This invention solves an old problem; women have long complained that men stare at their breasts and don't listen to them.

By 1933, the coalition dominated by the more extreme Republicans and the Socialists began to disintegrate. After two years of the new Republic, the expectations of those on the left who wanted radical change were not met. During the first eight months of 1933 the Azana government was also shaken by a series of blows.

On January 8, 1933, there were anarchist uprisings in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and parts of Andalucía. These were quickly quashed. But in the small town of Casas Viejas, the workers fired shots at the Republican Assault Guards, mortally wounding two. The workers then paraded in the streets and *comunismo libertario* (libertarian communism) was declared. More Assault Guards arrived to put down the revolution as a number of workers barricaded themselves in a hut. The Guards set fire to the hut killing eight men and a woman inside. They then collected twelve men from the town, marched them to the smouldering ashes and shot them all in the back. Although a cover-up was attempted, news of the ferocious massacre spread rapidly throughout Spain, together with the assertion by the Republican Guard commander that Azana had ordered a 'take-no-prisoners' policy. The affair brought condemnation of the government from nearly all quarters.

There were more police in uniform under Azana than there were under the dictatorship of Primo Rivera, but it was obvious to the Right that the government was losing control. The chaos throughout Spain confirmed at this stage, to many including a very muted Franco, that the Republic was a failure and couldn't impose order.

The Left began to fragment into separate sections: the more radical socialists under Largo Caballero - known as the Spanish 'Lenin'; the more moderate socialists under Indalecio Prieto; the left Republicans under Azana and of course the revolutionary left of the anarchosyndicalist CNT. Even the communists were split into two main factions: the PCE - the Communist Party of Spain and POUM - the Worker Party of Marxist Unification. The PCE, which was run from Moscow, would happily murder all of POUM, who they considered Trotskyites, whereas POUM saw the PCE as nothing other than Stalin's long arm!

Although their name suggested otherwise, the Radical Republicans were centralist liberals, probably the only moderate party in Spain at the time. Following the anti-Catholic legislation, the Catholic right had now organised themselves into CEDA, the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rightists. By 1933 they were the leading representatives of Spanish conservatism and were led by a young law professor, Gil Robles. His main goal was the restoration of Catholic rights and privilege, refusing to declare for either the republic or monarchy declaring that government forms were 'accidental' and that it was the political values and achievements that mattered.

In 1933 the eldest son of the former dictator Primo de Rivera, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, founded the Falange Española, a party inspired by fascism. José was a charismatic character who once punched and floored a major general during his military service. Fortunately for him he was only demoted as a result. If he had served under Franco he would have been shot. Although the Falange were ultra-nationalist, they called for a 'new Spain' together with the nationalisation of the banks and railways and land reform. Although a minor party numerically compared to the others, the Falange were quick to bring violence to the streets for real or imagined threats. In a violent episode similar to hundreds of others during this period, a Falangist was murdered in the streets of Madrid by a gang of socialist thugs. His eyes were then gouged-out and a socialist girl in the mob urinated in the sockets. In response, the Falangists drove through a working-class district of Madrid, shooting randomly at suspected socialists, managing to kill the squatting girl as well.

Alongside the Falange, were the red-bereted Carlists. These were ultra-conservative reactionary monarchists who wanted the pretender Alfonso Carlos back on the throne and a Catholic ultra-conservative Spain. The Carlists, who had started three wars in Spain during the previous century, were now stockpiling arms and training in Catholic Navarra and Italy.

There were of course a plethora of other minor parties as well, but the ones described here were the 'main players' who would all play a part in the lead-up to and indeed during the subsequent Civil War, which was now less than three years away.

Local elections were held in early 1933 and most of the seats went to conservative and centrist parties. By now women had gained the vote as per the new constitution. (And not during the rule of the dictator Primo de Rivera as I wrote in article number 35. What was I thinking?) Women tended to vote more conservatively than the men. The fact they were given the vote upset many of the socialist leaders, particularly Caballero.

The radical Socialists had now broken away from the Republicans and in September 1933, as Azana was unable to form a government he resigned, and a general election was called for that November.

There was a certain amount of violence associated with the election campaign with a total of 28 deaths caused mainly by the Socialists. This time the Left did not provide a united front, whereas CEDA, now a coalition of right-wing groups, was a credible political force. Consequently, in the November 1933 general election, the disunity among the Left meant that the Left Republicans under Azana were practically wiped-out, with the Socialists losing one third of their seats, winning only 58 seats. CEDA were the largest party gaining 115 seats and the centralist Republican Radicals took another 104. The right-wing Falange received less than 0.5% of the vote, whereas the Communist Party (PCE) secured 400,000 votes nationwide and a seat in Congress.

But whereas the Socialists were happy to accept democracy as long as it maintained them in power, they now made it clear that they would not accept a government made up even in part of what it called the 'fascist' CEDA, with the Left's most vociferous leader Caballero, threatening revolutionary action. Anything that was opposed to the left was now considered reactionary and 'fascist.' The Left, which had demanded full democratisation in 1923, now rejected it as it failed to guarantee their domination.

The Left Republicans under Azana and the Socialists requested the then President Zamora on four occasions to cancel the results of the honest elections. To placate the Left, President Zamora, who was hostile to CEDA and its leader Robles, asked the centralist Radicals under Lerroux to form an administration. As CEDA were the largest party in Congress, they certainly had the right to some ministries but were prepared to 'sit-back' for a few months before demanding its constitutional rights.

The Anarchists, who believed that liberal electoral reforms were futile anyway as they believed they impeded the total liberation of the working class, now organised another uprising in December 1933. Aside from a prison break in Barcelona and some street fighting in Zaragoza, the insurrection was soon quelled by the police.

At the beginning of October 1934, CEDA demanded participation in the Lerroux government and were given three ministries. On the face of it, just three right-wing members in the Cabinet was scarcely revolutionary. But a now more radicalised Spanish Socialism under Caballero saw even this as 'fascist' and 'treasonable.' No longer prepared to accept the democratic system as a method of returning to power, there was now open talk of 'revolution' and as Caballero stated, 'if necessary, the removal of an entire class.'

More next month.



## Lime Bar Fishing Sunbathing Club.

Some bad news first, Cyril "the elder" is not well has had to return to UK. Good luck mate!

We had our AGM in February and John "the Boss" is now a "has been". He is now "just John"!

Mike "the quill" was voted in as this year's chairman. He being one of the founders of the club, we thought we had better let him have a go before he totally lost his marbles. He now thinks that he is happy! Fagin was happy too, after he collected the members' subs.

The only other change is that "Punchy Bob" (another bootneck) took over from Barry Scott on the match committee. Now we will do as we are told.... Or else!

The February match was fished at Nancy's in a howling gale. It was that windy, the "Nomad" nearly lost his chair in the river. He & I bottled out and went home early without catching. Well done to all those who stuck it out to the weigh in. Mike "the chair" showed exemplary leadership, he batted down the hatches and weighed in with 0.0283kgs (that's 1 ounce in old money). "Fagin" (who had to leave early) won the match with 4.36kg. "Just John" came 2<sup>nd</sup> beating "Lucky Bob" by just 1 gram.

This is the first time that we have fished the swims below the boom, but all 3 leading weights were from the established pegs above the boom.

We had a pan day at our secret location, "Ghost Point". Don't tell them where it is "Just John".

We used the day to clear a few swims & catch some big fish. Keith managed to better his PB from last month, this time with a 7.25 pounder. There has to be "even bigger" ones in there. With a bit of luck, 3 rods won't catch them and give us a chance!

Fagin wore his chef's hat, feeding us with burgers & sausages, followed by pancakes (a la Keith) & lemon drizzle cake (courtesy of Jane – as guinea pigs). What a way to spend your retirement!

All that scran wasn't enough for "lucky Bob" though; later on he had a banana in his mouth when his rod exploded into action! Linda Lovelace would have been proud as he landed his fish whilst "swallowing"!

Steve B (one of our new members) has caught his first fish from fresh water. He is well chuffed. Shame about the hat though! See photo.



**Late News:** Ghost got in his best ever day fishing today, the 21<sup>st</sup>, with a total catch in excess of 50lbs of carp, including a 7.25 and a 6.5 pounder. This equals Keith's PB. Celebrating tonight!

### Reasons why fishing is better than sex!

No matter how much whiskey you've had, you can still fish.

A limp rod is still useful while fishing.

You don't have to hide your fishing magazines.

I was given an ultimatum 3 weeks ago. She said, "It's me or your fishing!"

I'm sure I'll miss her..... eventually.

Next meeting is at The Lime Bar @ 17.30 Mon' March 3rd.

Fishy fingers!

The Ghost

I was walking down the road when I saw this Moroccan bloke standing on a fifth floor balcony shaking a carpet. I shouted up to him, "What's up Abdul, won't it start?"



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### Sharing.

The old man placed an order for one hamburger, French fries, and a drink. He unwrapped the plain hamburger and carefully cut it in half, placing one half in front of his wife. He then carefully counted out the French fries, dividing them into two piles and neatly placed one pile in front of his wife. He took a sip of the drink, his wife took a sip and then set the cup down between them. As he began to eat his few bites of hamburger, the people around them were looking over and whispering. Obviously they were thinking, 'That poor old couple - all they can afford is one meal for the two of them.'

As the man began to eat his fries a young man came to the table and politely offered to buy another meal for the old couple. The old man said, they were just fine - they were used to sharing everything. People closer to the table noticed the little old lady hadn't eaten a bite. She sat there watching her husband eat and occasionally taking turns sipping the drink. Again, the young man came over and begged them to let him buy another meal for them.

This time the old woman said 'No, thank you, we are used to sharing everything.'

Finally, as the old man finished and was wiping his face neatly with the napkin, the young man again came over to the little old lady who had yet to eat a single bite of food and asked 'What is it you are waiting for?'

She answered ..... 'The teeth!'

**Stoned!**

A koala was sitting in a gum tree smoking a joint (as they do!) when a little lizard walked past, looked up and said, 'Hey Koala! What are you doing?' The koala said, 'Smokin' a joint, come up and have some.' So the little lizard climbed up and sat next to the koala where they enjoyed a few puffs. After a while the little lizard said that his mouth was 'dry' and that he was going to get a drink from the river. The little lizard was so stoned that he leaned over too far and fell into the river. A crocodile saw this and swam over to the little lizard and helped him to the side. Then he asked the little lizard, 'What's the matter with you?' The little lizard explained to the crocodile that he had been sitting with the koala in the tree, smoking a joint, but got too stoned and fell into the river while taking a drink. The crocodile said that he had to check this out and walked into the rain forest, found the tree where the koala was sitting finishing a joint. The crocodile looked up and said, 'Hey Koala!' So the koala looked down at him and said, 'F\*\*k me.... How much water did you drink!?' (Sue Robinson)

**Who are you?**

A Romanian arrives in London as a new immigrant to the United Kingdom ...

He stops the first person he sees walking down the street and says, "Thank you Mr. Englishman, for letting me come into this country, giving me housing, Income Support, free medical care, and a free education!" The passerby says, "You are mistaken, I am Egyptian."

The man goes on and encounters another passerby. "Thank you for having such a beautiful country here in England ." The person says, "I not English, I am Pakistani."

The new arrival walks farther, and the next person he sees he stops, shakes his hand, and says, "Thank you for wonderful country England !" That person puts up his hand and says, "I am from Afghanistan . I am not British."

He finally sees a nice lady and asks, "Are you an Englishwoman?" The cute lady says, "No, I am from Bulgaria."

Puzzled, he asks her, "Where are all the English?"

The Bulgarian lady checks her watch and says, "Probably at work.."

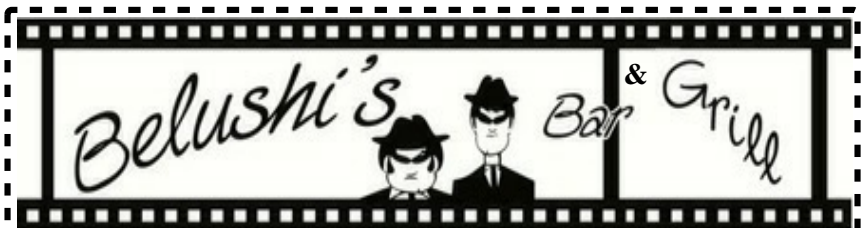
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**MARCH ENTERTAINMENT**

**MARCH 1st, JJ SOUL MAN (Soul & Motown)**

**MARCH 8th, ALAN WARDEN (Rock Guitar)**

**MARCH 15th, PID NORTHERN SOUL (Vinyl)**

**All starting from 8:30pm.**

**Support Help for Heroes; wristbands €3**

**ALL SPORTS ON BIG SCREENS!**

**693 985 122 VIA PARK V**

**COMPETITION!**

Now 'this', as the Bishop said to the Mother Superior 'is a hard one.'

Can you guess the nationality of the naked man in the photo? No prizes!

A previous knowledge of anthropology might help you in reaching the correct answer. Take your time before checking the answer below photo.



The correct answer is either English, German or French.

If the man was Irish, the hats would be reversed.

Happy St.Patrick's Day!





# MARCH AT THE PHOENIX



Via Park V

**MONDAY: Live Football - Selected Bottled Beers €1!!**

**TUESDAY: No More Spanglish!! Spanish Lessons @ 11am  
€ Per Hour. Nice, Friendly Relaxed Atmosphere.**

**WEDNESDAY: Fun Darts with Big Brian. OY, OY!!**



**BINGO**

**BINGO!**

**THURSDAY: Eyes Down for the Phoenix Bingo!**

**Dibbers & Dabbers ready for 2:30pm.**

**FRIDAY: Fun Quiz with Brian - Meat Draw &  
Play Your Cards Right! Big Prizes!!**



**SATURDAY: Soccer Special - Beer & a Burger only €3!!!**

**SUNDAY - Traditional Home Cooked Sunday Lunch,**

**THEN SING & DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY**

**WITH**

**THE NEIL & JANE'S  
KARAOKE & DISCO SHOW  
FROM 7PM.**



**THE BEST PARTY NIGHT ON THE COSTA BLANCA!**

**COMING EVENTS!**

**MARCH 17TH - COME ALONG AND ENJOY**

**ST. PATRICK'S DAY - IRISH STEW,  
BEEF & GUINNESS PIE, CHAMP etc.**

**SEE BOARDS FOR DETAILS.**



**MARCH 30TH - SHOW YOUR MUM HOW MUCH YOU  
LOVE HER WITH A SPECIAL MOTHER'S DAY LUNCH.**

**603 394 929**

*Always something going on!*

**WiFi &  
CIGGIE  
MACHINE!**

*I cook with wine. Sometimes I even add it to the food. W.C. Fields*

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### Murph.

Murphy made a fortune with his last  
invention; it was a 'Stop' sign for the tops  
of ladders. Still, he's not very bright. He  
got a disposable camera for his birthday;  
when he got the prints back, he found 24  
prints of his right eye.

You can find archived copies of The  
Dream Scene together with lots of  
helpful info, at Pat Farnaby's  
website -

www.dreamhills.co.uk

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

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### The Sochi Olympics - an American View.

- "For the 2014 Olympics, Russia said it will send the Olympic torch up to the International Space Station. They've also announced a new Olympic Event - 'Watching Six Astronauts Have All Their Oxygen Used Up By a Burning Torch.'" Conan O'Brien
- "Cher has turned down an invitation to sing at the 2014 Olympics in Russia because of Russia's anti-gay laws. Their anti-gay laws are so strict, men can be arrested just for showing up at a Cher concert." -Jay Leno
- "In advance of the Winter Olympics in Sochi, the Russian government announced that, contrary to popular belief, people in Russia will be allowed to protest. But only in a special protest zone - known as 'Siberia.'" -Jay Leno
- "There are 12 new events in this year's Winter Olympics, 12. The new events include women's ski jumping, luge-team relay, and finding a working toilet." -Conan O'Brien
- "In their hotel at the Sochi Olympics, the Canadian hockey team has to squeeze three players to a room. Even the bobsledders are like, 'Isn't it a little cramped?' When you scare off all the gay people, interior design goes to hell." -Jimmy Kimmel
- "The Slovenian woman who won the gold medal in alpine skiing is also a pop star in her country. So Justin Bieber is not the only pop star going downhill fast." -Conan O'Brien



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