

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

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

Issue no. 87, 1st of May 2014.

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the May edition.

Well, it looks like summer has arrived at last, after what has been a very mild and dry winter. The absence of the cooler weather and rain has not been good for the local citrus crops. Quality and prices are expected to drop.

As the warm weather edges its way in, unfortunately so too do the tragedies. A three-year-old drowned in a pool in Javea on April 1. This is a tragedy which is destined to be repeated several times this year, not only in Spain, but throughout Europe. Young children need constant supervision where water is involved. Two British doctors drowned off the coast of Tenerife while trying to rescue two children who had been swept into the sea by a wave. As often happens in these cases, it was the rescuers who drown.

The high winds at this time of year has also been spreading plenty of pollen around with lots of sore eyes being reported. The strong winds also caused havoc in one location in Alicante when five bouncy castles full of children were blown up to five metres into the air, one landing 100 metres away in a parking lot. 23 people were injured, mainly children, with eight adults and six children being taken to hospital, some with fractures to the arms or wrists. One unlucky chap was knocked off his motorbike by a flying bouncy castle. His accident report form should bring a few smiles! "It was just like *The Wizard of Oz*, honest! And no, I wasn't drinking!" (Photo - Informacion.)



The Easter holidays brought the usual carnage to the roads, with 32 fatal accidents nationally, but these figures only relate to accidents on the motorways and freeways. (10 years ago, a total of 102 people died in traffic accidents during the Easter break!) Locally, a 14-year-old boy died after being knocked off his bicycle by a car in nearby Lo Pagán and three people died in a car crash on the N332 by the San Jaime/Quiron hospital exit in Torreveija.

On the plus side we are all looking forward to a good summer, meeting old and new friends. Spain has welcomed more than 10 million international tourists so far this year up until March. This is 7.2% more than last year for the same period. The most popular destination was the Canary Islands with more than 3.1 million foreign visitors.

Vanessa has opened up a new unisex salon called '*Treat Yourself*' in Via Park III. She is offering a very generous discount of 20% to Dream Scene readers for the month of May - see Page 19 for coupon and details. So do pop in!

Also new to Via Park III is a new bar on the first floor - *The Bar Next Door*. This bar, which is a 'sister bar' to the Lime Bar, has been completely refurbished and is well worth checking out, especially if you enjoy pool and darts.

The Chinese restaurant in Via Park V is reopening shortly with a new team, a new name and thankfully, a new menu!

As the Dream Scene has been going now for more than seven years, there have been a few great jokes in the past that new readers may also enjoy. I will include the very occasional 'old' joke from two, three or more years ago, but I will give it an annotation of ® to indicate that it is a repeat.

Thank you to Laura, Carol & Barry and Søren for the extra donation last month. Also thanks to Stefan for helping to deliver the March and April Dream Scenes. Steve, the oldest paper-boy in town, is now 'back in the saddle' again.

Wishing you all a great month and hoping we see you soon. Mick & Tid.

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Angela's Cartoon



"Keep reading - you can get an ice-cream when my towel's dry!"

How beautiful it is to do nothing and then to rest afterwards.

Spanish proverb

TRANSLATOR & COMPUTER TRAINER

If you find computers too complicated or need assistance in your everyday Spanish life, then, I'm your man! Computer training and translations are my speciality. I live in the Dreams Hills area. I'm originally from Spain, and have two years of experience as a translator, and many years dealing with computers, since I have two computer-related college degrees from the US. Please, let me know if you need any assistance with the following:

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|---|--|
| <p><u>TRANSLATIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HOSPITALS / DOCTORS •POLICE REPORTS •OFFICIAL TRANSLATIONS (STAMPED) •UNOFFICIAL WRITTEN TRANSLATIONS •NIE / RESIDENCIA •DRIVING LICENCES •COURT •TOWN HALLS •SCHOOL MEETINGS | <p><u>COMPUTER TRAINING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •WINDOWS XP, VISTA, 7 •MICROSOFT OFFICE (WORD, EXCEL, POWER POINT, ACCESS, ETC.) •INTERNET •EMAILING •MESSENGER •PRINTER & SCANNER •SECURITY & ANTIVIRUS •VIRUS REMOVAL •PC CONFIGURATIONS |
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Did you know that

...the health authorities in Murcia are investigating what appears to be a possible contagion of hepatitis in the region. There has already been one death; so no kissing in murky Murcia for the moment!

... El Corte Inglés has decided to shed its image of being more expensive, particularly in relation to food items. It has now reduced the pricing on 3,000 products by 20%. They plan to maintain their food prices at the average of their three main rivals, Mercadona, Alcampo and Carrefour.

...IKEA in Spain have had a difficult year with turnover in the country down by 6%. This brings their turnover down to pre-2007 levels.

...Toyota have recalled 6.4 million cars worldwide, including over 20,000 in Spain. The cars and vans are being recalled for precautionary checks and there will be no charge. Vehicles produced between 2005 and 2010 are in the spotlight.

...if you are over 30 and unemployed in Spain, you can now draw your unemployment in a single lump sum to assist with setting up a business. The government is keen to see the over-45's taking advantage of the scheme.

...a new labour agreement in France means that employees must ignore their bosses' work emails once they are out of the office and relaxing at home – even on their smart phones, after 6pm. Now employers' federations and unions have signed a new, legally binding labour agreement that will require employers to make sure staff "disconnect" outside of working hours. While the deal was signed by unions representing one million employees, it will affect only 250,000 workers directly.

...Spain overtook Norway last month to become Western Europe's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas. The oddity is that Spain has never produced any of the fuel. Spanish buyers, including Iberdrola and Endesa, are obliged to buy LNG volumes under their long-term contracts, most of which have so-called destination clauses, meaning the cargoes can't be diverted to other countries at sea. But with a much weakened economy, Spain no longer requires so much gas and is now exporting the surplus.

•My dad's dying wish was to have his family around him. I can't help thinking he would have been better off with more oxygen.
Jimmy Carr

•Doctor: Did that medicine I gave your uncle straighten him out?

Man: It certainly did. We buried him yesterday.

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(Cut out & keep.)

As expected, an overwhelming majority of Spain's Congress voted down a request from the Catalan parliament to transfer powers that would allow it to organize a referendum on independence for the region on November 9. 86% of national lawmakers said no to the Catalan nationalists' demands, agreeing that the Spanish Constitution did not give the region the right to hold such a vote. The bill was rejected 299 to 47, with one abstention. The vote constituted a rare display of political unity by the ruling PP with the various Socialist parties.

The Catalan President, Artur Mas, has stepped up his efforts to promote Catalan independence. He has commissioned a British lobbying organisation, Independent Diplomat, to find support abroad for the region's independence drive. Independent Diplomat's fee for this year will be €720,000! Founded in 2004, they are supposed to be 'a non-profit advice group in the world of diplomacy.'

The training course fraud in Andalucía is already threatening to exceed the huge ERE frauds there, which was the largest in Spain. What's particularly galling about the training course frauds is that the Socialists were screwing the unemployed!

Questions were asked in the Orriols neighbourhood of Valencia City as free food was distributed to Spaniards only. Orriols, a fast growing and densely populated area, has a non-Spanish population of around 30%. Some shouted 'Racist' after a Ecuatorian was denied assistance. The food distribution was organised by a far-right group *Hogar Social Patriota María Luisa Navarro*.

El Mundo reports, 'Spain has seen six months of falls in unemployment and has created 84,000 jobs, with temporary contracts up by 26%.'

Following a report by Transparency International, the parliament of Cantabria in the north, has emerged as the most transparent in Spain. A questionnaire with about 80 indicators was sent to 19 Spanish parliaments, to assess six areas of transparency. The regional parliament which came out as the worst was Murcia. Next to bottom came the Valencian parliament, the assembly at Madrid and the parliaments of the Balearics and the Canaries.

During a sermon at the state funeral of the former prime minister, Adolfo Suárez, the Cardinal Archbishop of Madrid - Rouco Varela, warned of the possibility of a new civil war. This led to much 'jaw-dropping' and rejection from all sides. The socialist party, the PSOE, said that state funerals should not be religious.

María del Carmen García (photo), was the mother who sprayed the rapist of her 13-year-old daughter with petrol and set alight to him. The rapist, Antonio C.V. later died. Although the rapist was found guilty in 1998, he was given 'day release' in June 2005, when María was surprised to see him near her home in the nearby town of Benjuzar. María was originally sentenced to nine and a half years in jail but this has now been reduced to just over five years, on appeal. Despite support from collectives, unions, political parties and public institutions, among them the Alicante Provincial Government and several town halls, together with a petition of 13,000, efforts to get the sentence quashed have failed.



Dumb Ass!

Voice on the phone: 'Hello? Is that the maternity hospital?'

Receptionist: 'Yes.'

Voice on the phone: 'Can you please send an ambulance round, my wife is about to have a baby.'

Receptionist: 'Is this her first baby?'

Voice on the phone: 'No. This is her husband.'

The latest figures released by Spain's central statistical office reveals that in the month of February, only 25,717 residential properties were sold nationwide. This is almost 28% fewer than in Feb' 2013. In Murcia the drop was 35%. The total for January this year was also down on the previous year by 16%. Although 'experts' continually state that the property market has finally settled, the statistics continue to contradict them.

Two Spanish journalists were released after spending six months in captivity in Syria. They were captured on September 16 2013, when trying to leave the country after two weeks reporting on the consequences of the Civil War. It happened at a control point in the province of Ragga, a few kilometres from Turkey. A contingent of Turkish Soldiers found them on the Syrian border from where they were taken to an airport in Turkey and repatriated to Spain.

Ryanair is threatening to cut 20 flights a week to Cataluña, following the imposition of an environment tax. Michael O'Leary claims if they paid the tax to the Catalan Government it would result in a loss of €1 million.

Veuling, the low-cost airline which is part of the International Airlines Group which includes British Airways and Iberia, has increased its direct flights from Alicante-Elche by 35%. It now includes a flight to Rome and from June there will be two new weekly flights to St. Petersburg in Russia. The airline is now the third most frequent operator at Alicante after Ryanair and Easyjet.

Flybe are now operating an Alicante Elche to Birmingham on every day of the week except Tuesdays and Thursdays. They are using an Embraer E-175 aircraft - photo, which has a capacity of 88 passengers.



The CEO of Marks & Spencer has confirmed the company is returning to Spain. Marc Bolland, said in a meeting with investors that the company is in negotiations to establish its brand in Spain, a process which started in the middle of last year with the search for premises in Madrid and Barcelona. Until 2001 the British company had nine large establishments in Spain, in Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla and Bilbao, which they sold to El Corté Inglés when they decided to leave the country. This featured in the Dream Scene three years ago. Now, after a three year rethink, the brand wants to have 250 trading shops in the country. But don't hold your breath if you are a 'Mark's' fan. They re talking about a return in 2016/17, with the big cities being a safe bet.

While Mark's & Spark's may be coming back to Spain, two Spanish newspapers, El Pais and Expansion, have reported that Barclay's Bank is looking to sell off its crisis-hit Spanish subsidiary. The subsidiary lost €681 million from 2011 to 2013 and has halved the number of offices in that period, while staff numbers have been slashed by a third. The bank with some 2,800 staff and 271 offices in Spain has contacted possible advisers including Goldman Sachs, Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley to get a feel for what the bank might fetch on the market, the newspapers reported.

Leroy Merlin, the 'builder's merchants - hardware - almost everything - store' plans to open a further 22 more branches across the country. They are expecting to create an additional 3,500 jobs, investing €370 million.

Lidl's are also planning to 'beef-up' their operation in Spain. A further 20 stores are in the pipeline and they plan to increase their stocks of fresh produce across the board.

The number of mortgages taken out in Spain fell for the 46th month in a row in February, a further sign that the country's troubled property market is still a long way from recovery, new figures released last week show.

I was a ballerina, but I had to quit after I injured a groin muscle. It wasn't mine.
Rita Rudner

4 What's Up? continued

An 83-year-old woman was murdered by a number of youths in Murcia on the evening of Friday, April 4. An 18, 17 and 16-year-old have been arrested. An 11-year-old is also thought to have been involved but the Spanish law prohibits anyone under the age of 13 from being arrested. It is alleged that the youngest gained the trust of the victim enabling the others to gain access. The woman was stabbed in the throat and some jewellery was taken.

The ex-chairman of Valencia football club, Juan Soler, has been arrested on a charge of attempted kidnapping. It is alleged that he hired a 'professional' to kidnap the current president of the club Vicente Soriano, in relation to €9 million worth of shares in the club, which he says Soriano owes him. Another report says the debt is €85 million! Soler has been released from jail but must not leave the country or come within 15 metres of Soriano.

Okay, it's no secret that I place many of the Spanish banks in the same categories as Bernie Madoff for honesty and Worzel Gummidge for efficiency; but look at the US. Here, the Bank of America have now been hit with a massive \$727 million fine for misleading customers about its credit card products relating to identity protection and minimum payments. Big is certainly not beautiful at least in the moral and ethical sense. The pharmaceutical giants Eli Lilly and Takeda were fined \$9 billion in the 'States. A US jury found that they hid the cancer risks of their diabetes medicine Actos. Takeda was ordered to pay \$6 billion, and Eli Lilly \$3 billion. So who can you trust? You can read more here - <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-04-07/takeda-actos-jury-awards-6-billion-in-punitive-damages.html>

We are all aware of the proliferation of 'Oriental' supermarkets which seem to abound in this area. A big scandal is brewing concerning them in the city of Badalonia, part of the metropolitan area of Barcelona. In October 2011, the Tax and Customs Agency raided around 20 Chinese warehouses in the area. They found that 70% of the goods the warehouses sold went undeclared and the businesses never paid tax on their imports. The inspectors also noticed that the Chinese low-cost shops which sold these products had very few receipts for the products they bought from these wholesalers. The shopkeepers explained that if they asked their suppliers for receipts, the wholesalers threatened not to supply them. The mark-up charged by the wholesalers was a minimum of five times the original cost, so it is no wonder that they were all driving around in black BMW's. Officials now believe that the total tax bill owed by the wholesalers is in the region of €64 million. Prosecutors are now looking for jail sentences of up to 16 years and no doubt equally hefty fines as well.

A British serial paedophile, has been sentenced to jail for 20 years in Morocco. Robert Edward Bill had already served a two-year sentence in the UK. He then came to Spain and tried to kidnap a 12-year-old girl but she escaped from his car. He then went to Morocco where he tried to kidnap a 6-year-old girl. She escaped but on the same day he tried to kidnap two other 6-year-olds in the poor area of Tetuan. Fortunately the locals stopped him and handed him over to the police. His trial was postponed on six earlier occasions as the various defence councils assigned to him refused to represent him. He should find the 20 years in a Moroccan jail interesting!

A father and daughter in nearby Almoradi have been convicted in Orihuela Criminal Court of defrauding the tax office of €3.4 million. It seems they acquired supplies of beer from a Dutch supplier, sold it through 'front' companies and held on to the IVA. The man and his daughter were given sentences of nine years and four years respectively, but will not have to serve more than three years and 18 months because of the four-year delay in bringing the case to trial.

I see the Rolling Stones are performing in Madrid on June 25. The 54,000 tickets, priced between €85 and €225, were snatched-up within a few hours. I saw the Stones in the 60's and then they were superb. Now, if I want to see a geriatric who thinks he can still 'rock,' I just look in the mirror!

Police have warned about a large increase in theft from parked cars, particularly near the beaches.

Herbert's wife was trying to take a photo of him so she shrieked: 'Herbert! You're not trying again. Get in focus!'

The wildcat strike by Spanish air traffic controllers that caused chaos at the country's airports over a holiday weekend in December 2010 following the closure of national airspace was neither "legitimate" nor a protected right, a Madrid magistrate has ruled. Judge Francisco Javier Teijeiro identified evidence of a possible crime of sedition, punishable by up to six years in prison, in the actions of 113 controllers and 8 members of the board of the Controllers' Labour Union (USCA) who incited their colleagues to abandon their posts. He also saw signs of alleged counts of abandonment of public duties and falsifying evidence. The judge said the controllers' "legitimate demands" did not justify the methods and the forms of the protest, which consisted of a sudden avalanche of staff calling in sick as a result of alleged "anxiety and psychological pressure" that, he said, never had credence.

Some years ago, we reported on the arrest of the ex-Socialist Mayor of Alcaucín near Malaga in Andaluci, José Manuel Martín Alba (photo). Along with the mayor, another 48 are now accused in this case. This is the 'fishing-net' approach of prosecutors in Spain. Ultimately only five or six may face charges! Alcaucín is scarcely a metropolis, with just a population of



2,800; however, it is amazing that even in these pokey little villages how those in power can generate significant amount of money, albeit corruptly. In this case there has been illegal building in the town for more than 10 years, with urbanisations and individual properties being built on protected land, all with the approval of the town hall. At the time of his arrest the mayor had €160,000 in cash under his bed. The prosecutor is looking for a 226-year prison sentence for him, and 111 years for the ex-assistance chief architect in the Málaga provincial government. The joke is the Penal Code only allows a maximum term of 20 years. The case summary comes to 28,568 pages, with the accusations alone 200 pages long.

While still in Andalucia, I see that nepotism is not confined to the PP. It seems that the former general secretary of the Socialist party (PSOE), José Antonio Viera, has funnelled €32.6 million into a group of companies that his daughter has an involvement in. It seems that 18 of these companies 'lacked any substance.' The Guardia Civil are investigating.

Barcelona's 32nd International Comic Fair is due to open in May, but there has already been controversies concerning recruitment for the event. The organizers are fuming after a recruitment firm placed a job ad on their website for hostesses with a minimum bust measurement of 95 centimetres (37 inches). The giant CCOO trade union commented "To use a woman's body as a billboard, or for the success of an event" is not part of life in a "civilized and advanced society." Obviously, they have never looked at a magazine or a billboard.

The Easter Sermon.

After attending church on Easter Sunday, a man says to the priest, 'Father, your sermon today reminded me of the peace and mercy of God.' The priest is very flattered and asks the man to explain further.

The man replies, 'Your sermon passed all understanding, and it endured forever.'



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I am always surprised by the lack of tourism marketing by the Spanish for the Orihuela Costa. Other Europeans will have heard about Benidorm, Alicante etc., but few will have heard of Torrevieja and much less so Orihuela Costa. Which is why it is very surprising that so many Brit's settle in Orihuela Costa, more than in any other community in Spain, including the ghastly Benidorm and the crook-ridden desert of the Costa del Sol. Clearly, the property sellers here are much more effective than the professional tourist advocates, or so it would seem. I have asked several expats why Orihuela Costa or the inland villages are so popular and many say they came here because of being recommended by a friend. What do you think?

Elche Police have arrested a man in nearby Bigastro for trading as an osteopath without any formal Spanish qualifications. He was also practising as a specialist in physiotherapy and naturopathy. Police reported that he had lots of medical and surgical equipment, together with a wall covered in certificates and diplomas - all ornamental and worthless. But here is the 'kicker': this fake doctor was arrested some years ago for the same offence. So, Agnes, that nice man who was feeling your legs last month and telling you it was good for you, may have been enjoying it more than you were!

It is around this time of year that many urbanisations hold their AGM's. These are often turned into long ordeals mainly due to a vociferous and bad mannered handful of owners. My urbanisation, Dream Hills (1), is holding its AGM at the Orihuela Costa Resort (as last year) at 16:00 hours on Friday, May 16th, 2014.

Our existing president, Maribel, is standing once again for the voluntary position. I hear that she is being challenged again this year, but once again the challenger has provided no information about themselves. We live in a democratic society so obviously any owner can apply, but do you really think that a person whom owners know nothing about should be given the responsibility of managing a large urbanisation and its budget? It would be irresponsible, but that is democracy and it is entirely down to you - the voter. Maribel we know from her C/V, which was circulated previously, is a Spanish law graduate and has extensive experience in the property business, particularly in the administrative and legal side, and with the utility companies, agencies such as the police, town hall and statutory bodies. Her track record demonstrates that she can preside effectively over an efficiently managed urbanisation, while maintaining urbanisation fees at a very reasonable level. Just ask your friends in other urbanisations what they are paying!

I notice from the AGM agenda that owners are being asked to vote to allow natural gas access to private roads. I am very surprised that approval has to be sought for this. Natural Gas is after all a cheap source of natural energy which should ideally, be available to everyone. Just as with water or electricity, how can one neighbour deny another the use of it? If you don't want natural gas - fine, don't have it, but don't deny your neighbour the right to have it! Personally, if I was aware that a neighbour of mine had denied me access.....well!

(Sorry to bore non-Dream Hills residents with the above but we have lots of readers on that urbanisation.)

I notice that some of the empty properties in Dream Hills II are now being sold as 'Victoria Hills.' This will no doubt lead to major confusion. The same company, registered in Madrid, has also acquired a number of properties and land in the Punta Marina area.

Shall I compare Thee To.....

After being married for thirty years, a wife asked her husband to describe her. He looked at her for a while ... then said, "You're A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K." She asks ... "What does that mean?"

He said, "Adorable, Beautiful, Cute, Delightful, Elegant, Foxy, Gorgeous, Hot.

She smiled happily and said ... "Oh, that's so lovely ... What about I, J, K?"

He said, "I'm Just Kidding!"

(The swelling in his eye is going down and the doctor is fairly optimistic about saving his testicles.)

Derrick.

Registered taxi drivers in Elche held a 24-hour-strike and complained about the number of non-Elche registered taxi drivers who are collecting fares from the Alicante-Elche airport. This has been compounded by the 'pirate taxis' as well. The regional authorities have now agreed with AENA that non-Elche registered taxi drivers will be restricted to six runs per month. A registration plate reader will be installed at the taxi entry point at the airport so that those entering and leaving can be monitored, and any 'foreigner' caught exceeding the new quota will be either fined or bared entry.

A senior employee of Bankia in Santa Pola sued a demonstrator from the Platform of People (photo) affected by Mortgages (PAH). He claimed he was insulted and 'coerced' for several days by the demonstrator and the prosecutor demanded compensation of three euros a day for the twenty days of the protest. In the end the judge awarded compensation of one cent a day - a total of 20 cents - together with a restraining order of six months and 500 metres proximity ban, on the alleged assailant.



AP-7 tolls are to be scrapped after 2019. In the Vega Baja, Orihuela council and the Torrevieja opposition parties, the Socialists (PSOE) and Greens (Los Verdes) have asked the Government several times to liberalise the AP-7 in order to decongest the traffic on the N-332, which has become considerably busy since the opening of the large commercial centre in La Zenia. If you ever travelled from Benidorm to Alicante on the N-332, the volume of traffic on it is staggering, all trying to avoid the toll roads.

Some of the local 'freebies' have been carrying details of the British couple, Peter and Katrina Etherington, who arrived at their holiday home in La Nucua, Costa Blanca, to find the locks changed and a 'For Sale' sign on the property. When they gained entry, with the assistance of the Guardia Civil, all their personal possessions and furniture were gone; removed by Banco Sabadell and disposed of. The couple never had any dealings with Sabadell or its affiliates and there had obviously been a major 'cock-up.' The bank have now done a 'Pontius Pilate,' washing their hands of the matter saying that they were not responsible and only acting in accordance with the courts. I suppose it is at times like these that one can be relieved that the Spanish do not possess any nuclear weapons.

Which brings me nicely to the news that SabadellCAM are putting European residents in their sights. The company plans to re-launch Solbank with the aim of capturing 140,000 new customers. They believe that this group of expats tends to have greater purchasing power than the average Spaniard and has been less affected by the recession.

Who?

Husband's call: "Honey it's me. I don't want to alarm you but I was hit by a car as I was leaving the office. Paula brought me to the hospital. They have checked me over and done some tests and some x-rays. The blow to my head was severe. Fortunately it did not cause any serious internal injury. However I have three broken ribs, I have a compound fracture in the left leg, and they think they may have to amputate my right foot."

Wife's Response: "Who is Paula?"

And if you find that hard to believe, you've never been married!!

(Brian H)



LIME BAR



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LIME BAR GOLF SOCIETY, LOS ALTOS, ORIHUELA COSTA

The golf society's venue for the 9th April 2014 was held at the Vista Bella Golf Course.

On a clear warm sunshine morning 32 members assembled at the tee; the course proved to be in good condition and some interesting golf was played and enjoyed. Ruth Malcolm, our first lady player to join us, was made welcome.

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

Nearest the Pin in 1 on the 4th Hole (par 3) was Ruth Malcolm.

Nearest the Pin in 3 on the 7th hole (par 5) was Mick Slater.

Nearest the pin in 2 on the 10th hole (par 4) was Paddy Gribbin.

Nearest the pin in 1 on the 15th hole (par 3) was Tim Ryan.

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

Silver Class 2nd place was Barry Sawyer with a score of 30 points.

Silver Class 1st place was Pat Gibbon with a score of 30 points. (on count-back)

Gold Class 3rd place was John McGregor with a score of 30 points.

Gold Class 2nd place was Tim Ryan with a score of 32 points.

Gold Class 1st place was Bob Adair with a score of 34 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.



Father Ted.

- No, Dougal, you can't stay up and watch the scary film. The last time you stayed up and watched a scary film you ended up having to sleep in my bed. I wouldn't mind, but it wasn't even a scary film.

- Come on, Ted. A Volkswagen with a mind of its own. If that's not scary, I don't know what is.

A TAXING TIME!

New Changes to Inheritance Tax (IHT).

After compiling six monthly articles on Spanish IHT, I now find that the government plans to introduce significant changes to the tax. Sometimes I think God hates me!

As part of its programme of fiscal reforms and in an effort to eliminate the huge differences that exists between the autonomous regions, Madrid has announced that a minimum limit of 4% inheritance tax will be introduced. But the regions will still be able to increase the percentage if they wish.

No details have been made public yet particularly in relation to any allowances that may be applicable before the tax is charged and whether non-resident owners will continue to be discriminated against. These are crucial issues yet to be answered.

If the government accept the recommendations of its advisory panel, the new amounts of tax payable will be greatly increased, as the previous generous allowances before tax are applied, would be lowered to just between €20,000 to €25,000. This would be a savage increase.

As soon as any firm details are released, I will pass them on.

Spanish Income Tax.

The income tax campaign for 2013 is now underway. The agency began accepting returns from April 23. The deadline for filing your return is June 30. The Tax Office has launched a new certification system on its website this year to allow people to access and confirm their tax draft form and perform other secure transactions. To use the system, which is called Pin 24 Horas, you need to register first on their website at www.agenciatributaria.es; part of the site is in English.

El País reports that the number of complaints with the Hacienda has shot up because of the crisis, with 224,417 complaints registered in 2012, up more than 80% in five years.

The Tax Man (*Hacienda*) Auctions.

The usual embargos of homes, shops or cars, is now only a small part of what *Hacienda* will auction. And there is a large public interest in these auctions where the tax-man attempts to salvage some cash in place of taxes owed.

In the first quarter of last year 824,244 people attended these auctions either physically or online compared to 711,318 in 2011, and this year's figure is expected to be over a million.

The list of items which people have negotiated in exchange for paying tax range from four shares in a tennis court in Málaga, the Jarazmin Tennis, worth €2,000, or 21 shares in Terra Mitica in Benidorm worth €4,284.

In addition all sorts of art, catalogued paintings, luxury glasses, and in clothing shirts, jackets and dresses.

In Madrid €20,431 was collected for a lot of chairs, a coffee machine, cava, 55 cigars (Montecristo and Cohuba), wines of differing quality and several spirits.

In Málaga, an 11 metre yacht painted with the name Caribbean Lady and flying the British flag for €40,000.

This list is almost infinite, 1,570 bicycles, 450 kilos of coal, dog leads and pooper-scoopers, 20,000 tap-washers and 26 kilos of coffee.

On the Canaries a Jacuzzi went for €1,000. Other cars, in Málaga a 2009 petrol driven Maserati, 4,244 cc, went for €50,000; in Asturias an Audi with keys but no documents fetched €30,000, and in Badajoz, a BMW 730D without a starting motor went for €9,418.

Perhaps the strangest item auctioned by *Hacienda* was a lot sold for €30 which consisted of 50 women's bras (empty unfortunately!), 35 glasses cases, 34 sunglasses, 27 pairs of sports' socks and 24 'fiesta' bags. (Abridged from Typically Spanish.)



Unusual Dinner.

Henry: 'My wife made me a very unusual dinner last night: toad-in-the-hole.'

Claude: 'What's so unusual about that?'

Henry: 'She used real toads.'

Claude: 'Thank goodness she didn't try to make spotted dick.....'

Vodafone in the Dock.

When it comes to complaints from customers, it is the telephone companies who are the worst offenders in Spain, closely followed by the banks. Typically Spanish have reported on a not unusual case.

A judge in Gandía has ruled against Vodafone for putting a client on a debt black list. The client, a small leather shoe maker, signed a contract with Vodafone in May 2009 with a permanency of 18 months. In December 2010 when the permanency had ended, he started to port his line to Movistar. A month later he received a bill from Vodafone for €2,090 where as well as his phone use, a extra charge called '*Cargo Incumplimiento Acuerdo Descuento*' for an amount of €1.652.

The client paid for the phone use but not for the extra charge, telling Vodafone that he was not in agreement as he had respected the 18 month agreement. At this point Vodafone added his company's name to a black list of debtors, and this almost closed the door to obtaining any credit from any bank, Bankinter and Banco Pastor were among those who closed the tap.

Now the judge, in first instance court 1 in Gandía, has ruled against Vodafone, and charged them to pay €24,000 plus interest, for the 'illegitimate intromission into the fundamental right to honour of the complainant.' They also ordered the company to remove his name of the black list. Vodafone admitted the charge was incorrect and has issued another bill to correct it.

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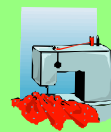


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Update: The body found on a beach in Orihuela last month, has been identified as 25-year-old Francis Brennan, who was believed to have been kidnapped by men posing as police officers in Alicante. Brennan left the UK ahead of a sentencing date last October for an assault he committed in the Thames Valley area during a pop concert in 2012. Merseyside Police have confirmed that it was his body that was found on an Alicante beach. Mr Brennan was last seen alive in Alicante on January 24, 2014.



The former Madrid region premier is unapologetic about a recent 'hit-and-run' incident. Esperanza Aguirre, photo, is not worried about the fuss she inadvertently created after illegally parking her car in the middle of Madrid's main thoroughfare to withdraw money from a nearby ATM, speeding away when police officers attempted to fine her, knocking down one of their scooters as she made off, being chased all the way to her house and refusing to come out to collect notice of the fine. In fact, it is the other way around. She is positively indignant about the police's version of events, and is not considering apologizing for her actions. "I am shocked at the lies that are being spread; I did not run anyone over," said Aguirre, a well-known figure in Spanish politics, in a telephone conversation with EL PAÍS. "What happened is that the car I drive now is very long, to carry my grandchildren in, and I accidentally hit and knocked down a police motor scooter, but without hitting anybody. They were holding me there to get a photograph. They were hoping that someone on the street, in the middle of Callao square, would take a picture and be able to create a fuss. That's why I left, to prevent them from getting that picture." She has been described as Spain's 'Iron Lady.' (El Pais)



Spain's "bad bank" is set to change how it markets and sells around €50 billion worth of properties and real-estate loans, a move that could open the door for international investment funds to deepen their involvement in the country's real-estate market. No more than four investment firms will be selected in coming months to market and sell the pile of properties and real-estate loans held by the bad bank, according to an executive at the company, known by its Spanish acronym Sareb. The executive declined to be named. SAREB recently said it made a loss of €261 million last year. The bad bank was created in November 2012 as a depository for the most troubled Spanish banks to unload €1 billion in risky real-estate loans, residential foreclosures, unfinished commercial properties and undeveloped pieces of land. (Wall Street Journal)

A northern Spanish village is voting on whether to change the second half of its name - because it means 'Kill Jews' in Spanish. The 60 residents of Castrillo Matajudios - which translates as 'Castrillo Kill Jews' - will meet next week to decide on whether to change its name after Mayor Lorenzo Rodriguez submitted the proposal. He has suggested the name be switched to Castrillo Mota de Judios, meaning 'Castrillo Jews' Hill'. It is believed this was the original name of the village before it was changed to Castrillo Matajudios during the Spanish inquisition. There has been talk of changing the name before, but it is not until now that there has been a firm proposal. Mayor Rodríguez told local Spanish daily newspaper Diario de Burgos: "The majority decision will be respected, even if it is only by one vote." Mr Rodríguez says the original name came after a number of Jewish people were massacred in nearby Castrojeriz in 1035, prompting survivors to move to the Castrillo hill. A second massacre occurred there in 1109.



The Matajudios name is similar to a common expression used across northern Spain to describe a drink of lemonade and alcohol - 'matar Judios', meaning 'kill Jews'. The drink is consumed particularly at festivals around Easter. Leon, which is near Castrillo Matajudios, holds its annual 'matar Judios' event on Good Friday during which 40,000 gallons of lemonade is expected to be sold. The name is believed to come from medieval times when converted Jewish people were sometimes publicly executed at show trails around Easter in Spain. (The Independent)

It is a historical fact that the Spanish Inquisition had no power or authority over Jews or Moors (Muslims). Their evil machinations were directed against the *conversos*. These were the Jews or Muslims who converted to Catholicism but were thought to be faking their new beliefs. However both sects were still treated abominably by the Spanish throughout history.

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This letter of complaint was received by the creators of a body-building course.
 Dear Sir, Since taking your body-building course, I now have a 44-inch chest, a 32-inch waist, 17-inch biceps and an 18-inch neck. I feel absolutely marvellous but at the same time, I do feel that my chances of marriage are spoiled.
 Yours faithfully, Mary Goldberg.

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NO VARIATIONS; EXTRA VOUCHERS CANNOT BE EXCHANGED FOR EXTRA WINE!
CUT-OUT AND PRESENT WITH ORDER.**

A man was amazed to find a restaurant advertising: 'Chicken Dinners - only 90 cents.' He decided to try one of these dinners so he paid 90 cents and his taste buds began to anticipate the pleasant chicken dinner that was to come - until the waiter brought him..... a plate of corn.

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Chorizos al Infierno!

Two Dutch tourists, a 51-year-old man and his 48-year-old wife, suffered extensive burns during a trip to a restaurant in Nerja, Malaga. A signature dish of the region is *Chorizos al Infierno* - Sausages from Hell, where some local spicy sausages are flamed in alcohol and then eaten with some bread. Due to some form of mishap, the couple suffered extensive burns to the face, shoulders, thorax and hands. They were treated initially in a local hospital before being taken to a hospital in Malaga, where their condition was described as 'serious.'

The dish is very popular with locals and tourists but accidents with it are not uncommon. Some months ago a secondary school teacher suffered similar burns and is still recovering.

Some of you may recall the 70's when the popular choice for a meal out was Prawn Cocktail, followed by Steak Diane (Flambé) and then Black Forest Gateaux. You never ever got burned by the Steak Diane but you surely were later when you got the bill!



I got kicked out of Scouts for eating a Brownie. Ross Noble



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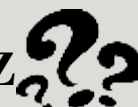
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"A Poem"

By Pam Ayres.

I have a little Satnav, It sits there in my car
A Satnav is a driver's friend, it tells you where you are.

I have a little Satnav, I've had it all my life
It's better than the normal ones, my Satnav is my wife.

It gives me full instructions, especially how to drive
"It's sixty k's an hour", it says, "You're doing sixty five".

It tells me when to stop and start, and when to use the brake

And tells me that it's never ever, safe to overtake.

It tells me when a light is red, and when it goes to green

It seems to know instinctively, just when to intervene.

It lists the vehicles just in front, and all those to the rear

And taking this into account, it specifies my gear.

I'm sure no other driver, has so helpful a device

For when we leave and lock the car, it still gives its advice.

It fills me up with counselling, each journey's pretty fraught

So why don't I exchange it, and get a quieter sort?

Ah well, you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed

It washes all my shirts and things, and keeps me warm in bed!

Despite all these advantages, and my tendency to scoff,

I only wish that now and then, I could turn the bugger off.

The Letter.

Father O'Leary finds a note pushed through his letterbox. It has only one word written on it: 'Bastard'. Father O'Leary takes the note to mass and holds it up. 'Now,' he says. 'I have had more than one letter where the writer has written a message but forgotten to sign it. However, this is the first time someone has signed the letter & forgotten to write it.'

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Second Chance.

A 65 year old woman had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital.

While on the operating table she had a near death experience.. Seeing God she asked "Is my time up?"

God said, "No, you have another 33 years, 2 months and 8 days to live."

Upon recovery, the woman decided to stay in the hospital and have a face-lift, liposuction, breast implants and a tummy tuck.



She even had someone come in and change her hair colour and brighten her teeth! Since she had so much more time to live, she figured she might as well make the most of it.

After her last operation, she was released from the hospital. While crossing the street on her way home, she was knocked-down and killed by an ambulance.

Arriving in front of God, she demanded, "I thought you said I had another 33 years? Why didn't you pull me from out of the path of the ambulance?"

God replied: " I didn't recognize you."



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The Unfortunate!

Firefighters in a city in central Spain were called to rescue a half-naked, 21-year-old woman who was suffering from shock and hypothermia after falling into a 10-metre deep waterwheel well-shaft while having sex. They were canoodling on top of the well-shaft when she plunged 10 metres into the well before hitting the water. It is believed that the couple had inadvertently loosened the boards covering the well while making love and had been too distracted to notice the impending peril. The young man did not, unfortunately, respond in a heroic or Mills & Boon manner. Instead of trying to rescue his beloved, he hitched up his trousers and fled the scene. What a pig! She could have been badly injured or drowned! Emergency services later received an anonymous call which they believe was made by the fleet-footed Romeo, but he did not return to the scene of the accident. When firefighters eventually rescued the woman she was found to be soaking wet and wearing no underwear. The poor creature was taken at midnight to Ciudad Real Hospital to be treated for symptoms of hypothermia before being discharged the following morning.

Not one to condone violence normally - unless of course it is fully deserved - I do hope this unfortunate young lady has a large hairy-assed brother or uncle who can locate this very negligent absconding Casanova and administer some corrective therapy.



Idiot of the Month Award.

A child was playing in a park in Montilivi, Catalonia, when she discovered two human fingers, a carving knife and a small cutting-board covered in blood near some bushes. Using the fingerprints, the Catalan police located a 31-year-old Pakistani, who had been admitted to a local hospital in Girona the previous day, claiming that he had accidentally chopped his fingers off while slicing meat at home.

The police had some suspicions as the severed fingers were found quite close to a primary healthcare centre. Investigators then discovered that the victim had taken out six insurance policies since late 2013, and that he had already started the paperwork to claim compensation for his alleged accident, in the sum of around €122,000! But, it also emerged that this same man collected €24,000 last year from two insurance companies for supposedly losing two fingers on his right hand. These, however, remain in place and incredibly no one from the insurance companies bothered to check the claim. The man was arrested and released two days later pending trial. The local police chief commented, 'It was not done out of despair, because the injured man has a functioning business. He renounced part of his own body for financial profit. We discovered that it was an attempt at making easy money.' I would hardly call it 'easy'!

I bought a self-help tape called *How to Handle Disappointment*. I got it home and the box was empty.

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(The Telegraph, July 12, 2013)

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Boo or Baah?

A preacher is making a sermon about the supernatural. 'Has any one of you ever seen a ghost?' he asks the congregation. 'No!' they reply. 'Has any one of you ever spoken to a ghost?' asks the preacher. 'No!' replies the congregation. 'Has any one of you ever made love to a ghost?' he asks. 'Yes!' cries a voice from the back of the chapel. 'What?' says the preacher. 'You've made love to a ghost.' 'Sorry,' says the man. 'I thought you said a goat.'

Prime ministers are wedded to the truth, but like other married couples they sometimes live apart.

Saki.

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Letters to the Editor.

Hi Mick,

Is it possible to put something in the next Dream Scene.

I am sure you knew Granville. He died last year after a battle with Motor Neuron disease. We had a collection and a darts tournament and raised €300 for the Granville Annable Memorial Fund: €130 was raised at Jukes and €170 was raised at a darts' tournament at the Phoenix. (The latter was reported on in the January 2014 edition.)

After speaking with his widow, Pamela Annable, she requested the money be donated to Nottinghamshire Hospice who cared for Granville in his last days and allowed him to stay in his own home. A very worthy cause I am sure you will all agree. You can view the donation here <https://www.justgiving.com/nottshospice>

Donation receipt reference D54699474, 01/04/2014, Charity name - Nottinghamshire Hospice; Charity registration number 509759. Donation amount £250.00.

A word from Nottinghamshire Hospice:

Thank you... thank you... thank you! Thank you for your support. Your donation means so much to us and to our patients. If you would like to find out more about what we do and why people fund raise for us please have a look at the 'About Us' pages of our website - <http://www.nottshospice.org/NottinghamshireHospice-AboutUs>.

Granville lived in Dreamhills and is sadly missed by all. I attach a photo of Granville & Pam.

David Holtom.



Cutbacks to Spanish Freeview.

Nine DTT (Digital Terrestrial Television) channels will be shut down before May 6. These are nine channels out of 24 that four private operators currently run. This shutdown is the result of a 2012 Supreme Court ruling that cancelled out the concession of additional channels to existing broadcasters, on the grounds that the concession was made without a public bid and that new operators were thus deprived of a chance to join the market. The broadcasters — Atresmedia, Mediaset, Unidad Editorial and Vocento — have appealed to the Constitutional Court, claiming that their rights have been violated.

The channels to go include La Sexta 3 - a movie based channel (much enjoyed by expat's) and La Siete, which specialised in South American soaps.

And this from *El Economista* on April 24: Households that wanted to get TDT's full selection before 2015 will have to adjust their antennas. Service disruption results from the fact that television stations will have to give up 800 MHz frequencies so that mobile phone operators can use them. Eight million homes will be affected by the change, and it will cost them 200 million euros.

Zapatero's government promised that the state would take on these costs by dipping in the funds it raised selling telephone band waves, but that plan failed when the crisis erupted and paying down the national deficit was deemed more important. As usual, citizens are now carrying the weight.

Toll Motorways hung-out to dry...for the moment.

Traffic on Spain's toll motorways has fallen to the level it was 18 years ago. The Ministry for Development has said there was a slight improvement in January and February. The *autopistas* to have been rescued by the State have seen the largest falls, but now the Government has decided to delay the rescue of the bankrupt toll motorways. It is considered the cost involved could cost the Government votes at the General and European elections.

Electricity Companies at it again!

Many of you will be aware, particularly in this area, that there is still a chap going around with a clipboard, who will have your Iberdrola details and name. What they are trying to do is to get you to sign-up to a new contract, where the price will be fixed for a year or more. This might look enticing except for the fact that the basic Kw price you will be signing-up for will undoubtedly be in excess of what you are paying now!

The other problem is that, when you sign this new contract, you are also signing-up for additional services to the supply of electricity, such as insurance or free maintenance for a few months, after which a charge is levied.

But if you do sign-up and wish to cancel, you may be charged a penalty fee - see letter from Elaine Baker in Issue No. 86 - for early cancellation of the contract. If you do cancel, make sure that the rate per Kw is exactly the same as the previous one.

The Spanish consumer associations are incensed at these so called 'deals,' one - Facua, Consumer in Action - stating that they are an 'insult' to citizens. There is a good article (link below) in Spanish, concerning the issue of 'fixed deals' and alternative suppliers. It also has a couple of interesting links. You can translate it with Google or Bing, or translate it yourself if you are a smartypants.

I suppose the message is 'Beware of utility companies bearing gifts.'

http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2014/04/25/actualidad/1398428692_237092.html

I learned to swim at a very early age. When I was three my parents used to row me out to sea in a little boat until they got about a mile or so away from the shore - then I had to swim back. I quite liked the swim - it was getting out of the sack that was difficult.

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Fáilte

Sláinte

O'neill's

IRISH PUB

GROUND FLOOR,
VIA PARK III



céad míle fáilte



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EXCELLENT RANGE OF BEERS,
WINES & SPIRITS.**



ceol cáint agus craic

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ON BIG FM FROM 2PM.



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ALL YOU CAN EAT

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SERVED THROUGHOUT THE DAY

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ADVANCE BOOKING ONLY - JUST €6.95 PER PERSON!**

Mr & Mrs Ellis look forward to sharing the day with you.

LAST FOOD ORDERS 4pm please.

OPEN: DAILY 8am - 7pm; SUNDAYS 8am - 4pm.

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The Dilemma.

A student asked his English professor, "What is the definition of a dilemma?". The professor said, "Well, there's nothing better than an example to illustrate that". "Imagine that you are laying in a big bed with a beautiful naked young woman on one side and a gay man on the other". Who are you going to turn your back on?"

Liz Wright.

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How Much?

A man and his wife went to the ticket office at Manchester United football ground and handed over a fifty pound note and said: 'Two Please.' 'Thank you,' replied the man in the ticket office. 'Would you like the goalkeeper and the centre forward - or are there two other players you'd like to buy instead?'

The Most Expensive Restaurant in the World.



The most expensive restaurant will be opening shortly in the Hard Rock Hotel in Playa d'en Bossa, Ibiza. There will be only one sitting every evening for 12 guests only, each of which will pay €1,500 for a 20-course gastro-sensory meal.

The new restaurant is called SubliMotion and is the brain-child of chef Paco Roncero. Roncero is one of Spain's most famous chefs, having trained at the now-closed elBulli and earning two Michelin stars for his restaurant La Terraza del Casino in Madrid. The chef and restaurateur currently has five restaurants around the world, not including the new SubliMotion. The restaurant's walls are a virtual light show, and moving pictures are projected on the tabletops, including a garden scene with fluttering butterflies and Versailles-style paintings. The decor is controlled by an operator who watches diners and changes the lighting or scene accordingly, to coordinate with a customer's first bite or the 'flourishing' of a new plate. You can see the special visual effects on the promotional video (together with the usual verbal bullshit) for the restaurant here - <http://vimeo.com/90455043>

Having seen the video, I do think that these lighting effects could very easily bring on nausea, especially after a glass or four of wine. Certainly, €1,500 for a 'food-porn' extravaganza would make me throw-up. Now where is that tin of Spam I opened yesterday?



'Oh! Dear God! Not Elton John & Paul McCartney again!!'



Shark experts say you should avoid swimming alone. Always try to swim with a group of people - or as sharks call it, a buffet.

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Ladies, Gents & Children Welcome.

**THIS NEW & ATTRACTIVE SALON
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Hours: Mon - Sat 10:00 to 18:00 hrs.

Spain's Olive Oil Up for Grabs!

The leading Spanish olive oil company, Deoleo, has agreed its sale to the British investment group CVC Capital Partners. A series of ill-timed acquisitions has left Deoleo €472 million in debt at a time when Spanish banks are trimming their industrial holdings in an effort strengthen their capital ratios and focus attention on retail banking. CVC will pay €56 million for 29.9% of the capital. The London group will buy the shares from Bankia and BMN and then launch a take-over bid for 100% of the company. Deoleo accounts for 22% of global sales of bottled olive oil, making it a prized asset in the food industry and is the maker of household brands such as Bertolli and Carbonell. Italy's state-owned Fondo Strategico Italiano and Qatar Holding LLC, an arm of the Gulf emirate's main sovereign-wealth fund, would also like to purchase Deoleo but this caused an uproar from Spanish olive-oil farmers and government officials, who frowned on the idea of Italian control over the biggest player in a Spanish-dominated industry. Oddly, they appeared to feel more comfortable with CVC's bid.

Italy has traditionally bought cheap oil from Spain to repackage and sell abroad as its own. As news emerged that CVC had beaten off competition from Italy's state owned investment fund, Matteo Renzi, Italy's new prime minister, said the Spanish government appeared to have "an ideological aversion" to an Italian company taking control of the world's largest olive oil maker by sales. "If the English fund wins the deal, evidently the fund has made the best offer, but two days ago there appeared to be a kind of ideological aversion to having an Italian owner, which is unacceptable," Mr Renzi told reporters.

According to the Wall Street Journal, not all Deoleo's large shareholders supported the decision to sell to CVC. A cooperative of Spanish olive-oil farmers that owns 10% of the company said it "lamented" the Spanish banks' decision to sell to a foreign fund "when there were clear alternatives in the process giving the company a viable future with Spanish ownership."



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Mouthwatering & Varied Menu!

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**DELICIOUS BREAKFASTS - SMALL OR LARGE,
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MONDAY NIGHT - STEAK DEALS!!

INCLUDES A FREE BOTTLE OF WINE.



TUESDAYS - BINGO & RAFFLES. 12PM TILL 2PM.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS -

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GREAT DEALS FOR 2.**



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FROM 9PM**

ENTERTAINMENT ON WEEKENDS!

LIVE FOOTBALL SHOWN INSIDE

AND ALSO ON OUR LOVELY OUTSIDE TERRACE.

FANCY A FLUTTER ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON....

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COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!

BOOKING ADVISABLE PLEASE CALL SAMY ON 673 559 890.

HAPPY HOUR MON TO FRIDAY (5 - 7).

Lime Bar Fishing Sunbathing Club.

On a chilly night at the end of March, we had our darts night in the Lime Bar. As far as the darts went, well done to all the ladies, some of whom put the men to shame. SueBo won the ladies section (another guest the same as last year), with a score of 62. The men's section was similar to one of our fishing competitions, with Ron the hustler beating 3 rods, scoring 249 & 223 points respectively. Anti social Baz & Ron the nomad were next, way back with 103 & 70 points. We thought Fagin was going to pull something out the bag when he started twitching his "pinky" finger..... Instead, he kept us warm with sausage baps (assisted by grumpy Bob). During the evening, Anti social Baz fiddled the scoring and his better half Belinda fixed the raffle. Thank you to everybody who donated raffle prizes even though I didn't win anything L.

The April match (the 1st of the Summer league) was fished at the Eden again. It took place during my soiree in Benidorm so that's 20 points for me already. Bugger! Apparently the fish were hard to find but only 2 anglers blanked. I have heard the sob stories about the ones that got away Baz. Again! Have a guess who came 1st & 2nd? Yep! Hustler with 4kg & 3 rods with 2.7kg. Come on lads, we need to up our game - or nobble them.

The Rods & Reels club also held an open match at El Bosque. 4 of our anglers represented the Sunbathing club, but unfortunately, the "professionals" won in each section L.

More reasons why fishing is better than sex!

Nobody expects you to give up fishing if your partner loses interest in it.

You don't have to be a newlywed to plan a vacation primarily to enjoy your favourite activity.

Your fishing partner will never say, "Not again? We just fished last week - Is fishing all you ever think about!"

Mike the chair ran another "short" monthly meeting, only 1.5 hours this time! I confirmed with Pete that he does have shares in the bar profits.

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

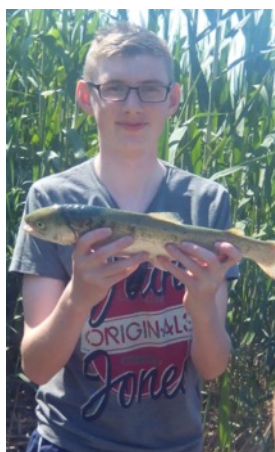
Fishy fingers!
The Ghost



Last month, I reported that Daffy had caught a duck. We need a *twitcher* to ID it.



3-Rods has done it again with a carp of just under 10lbs. He said something about the belly being full of spawn, but I'm not sure which one?



Rare Segura Catch.

Fishing with my grandson on the Rio Segura, when this rainbow took a liking to William's maggots; thought it was a barbel at first as we could see the silver shape flashing about. It was 22 ins long and very lean and fit; anyway, it's in the fridge now!

3-Rods.



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@

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Hair Care For Men,
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O.A.P. Day Every Mon' & Wed'
APPOINTMENTS NOT ALWAYS NECESSARY

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Spain, World Number Two for Vino!

Spain has overtaken France as the second biggest wine producer in the world during 2013, with a whopping 31% increase to 42.7 million hectolitres. Italy remains at number one with 44.9 million hectolitres. France third with 42 million hectolitres, followed by the United States with 22 million hectolitres.

Argentina was in 5th place with 15 million hectolitres, while Chile, with a record production of 12.8 million hectolitres surpassed China, which had production of 11.7 million hectolitres, a decline of 15%.

Next comes South Africa with 11 million hectolitres; Germany with 8.3 million hectolitres; Portugal with 6.7 million hectolitres; Romania with 4.3 million hectolitres; and Greece with 3.7 hectolitres. (A hectolitre is 100 litres.....enough for a good barbecue!)



I am very surprised at Portugal's low output, but then again, the country is so much smaller than Spain. I am not surprised that Greece is at the bottom: any country who produces a bilge like Retsina and calls it wine, should not be allowed to touch grapes. But I am surprised that Australia didn't feature in this report, which was compiled by the International Organization of Vine and Wine.

If you are seriously interested in Spanish wines, I suggest you buy the Costa Blanca News (out every Friday €2) and read the Cork Talk page by Colin Harkness. There is no better regular commentary on Spanish wines, at least to my knowledge. For several years now, my efforts have been wholly devoted to drinking the stuff. I should be ready for the *Internationals* soon!



A toast! To my uncle, who taught me that you should always stop drinking when you can't spell your name backwards....here's to Uncle Bob!

Dab Chopin

Pickpockets: Classic Manoeuvres.

With more and more holiday maker's arriving, it is now 'harvest time' for the thieves and villains who will do their best to deprive you of your hard-earned holiday dosh. You should remember that pickpockets are as skilled as a stage magician. They also do it for a living and they almost always work in gangs. Tourists carry plenty of cash and credit cards and a woman's handbag is usually a cornucopia of riches. The manoeuvres outlined below come from El Pais, but I have altered some of the text to reflect local nuances.

The bottleneck: A group of thieves divides into two and blocks the victim's way forward, thus distracting them. Meanwhile, a second group behind carries out the robbery. This might typically be coordinated on an escalator or at an entrance to a bus, a market, train station, football match, by dropping something on the ground, and then creating a bottleneck while the victim recovers it, allowing one of the group behind to remove a wallet or purse from a bag. Normally, the person who takes the item immediately passes it on to another in the gang. A train carriage corridor or lift are also favourite bottleneck areas..

The stain: One member of the gang spills something on the victim's clothes, another calls the victim's attention to it, while a third comes forward with a handkerchief offering to help, and takes advantage of their proximity to steal the victim's wallet or purse.

The cape: When a lift, carriage or bar is crowded, and customers/passengers are pressed up close, the thief covers one arm with a newspaper or coat, which hides their hand, allowing them to remove a wallet from inside a jacket or bag, for example.

The petition: A member of the gang holding a clipboard approaches the victim asking them to sign a petition for a good cause. If the victim agrees, as the petitioner leaves, he or she hugs the victim in thanks, using this proximity to remove a wallet from their clothing. Variations include sitting down next to somebody at a pavement café to ask them to sign the petition, and at a moment in the conversation, putting the clipboard down over a cellphone or wallet. When they leave, they take the phone or wallet with them.

The police: A group of five or six villains pass themselves off as police officers, telling the victim they need to search him. The typical target would be a tourist, more than likely inebriated and unfamiliar with Spanish police uniforms.

All sound advice I am sure you agree, but bear in mind that the non-violent theft of amounts under €400 are not covered by the criminal code in Spain! Also be on the look-out for the **charity collectors at your front gate**. These people carry colour 'identity' cards and clipboards and say they collect for children's charity. They don't! They may even show you how your neighbour at Number ? paid them €10! Again not true. It is illegal to call at properties and collect for charities. Just tell them no!

Much rarer is the chap who calls and says that he has been locked out of his house/flat and needs just **€50 to pay the locksmith**. This guy is a legend in the Costa Blanca and actually, I am hoping he will call at our house. My camera is ready!



J.J. & Rob welcome you to their Blues Brothers theme bar

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FROM STEAKS & CHICKEN
TO PASTA AND KEBABS
ALL FRESHLY COOKED.

FRIDAY: FISH AND CHIP NIGHT!!
ICELANDIC COD.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!
Thurs' 8th May - JJ SOULMAN
Sat' 17th May - TONY CAPALDI
Thurs' 22nd May - BENNY VAN DEN BERG
8:30 pm START, BOOKING ADVISABLE.
BBQ EVERY SUNDAY 2-5PM

WORLD CUP COMING SOON!!
SEE BAR FOR DETAILS.
Support Help for Heroes; wristbands €3
ALL SPORTS ON BIG SCREENS!
693 985 122 VIA PARK V

Cricket is a game which the British, not being a spiritual people, had to invent in order to have some concept of eternity. Lord Mancroft.

TEST YOUR OBSERVATION SKILLS.

Spot the Birdie!



*If God had meant for Texans to ski,
he would have made bullshit white.*



MAY 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.

THURSDAY NIGHT IS PIE NIGHT!

DELICIOUS AND JUST €7.95 FOR 2!!!

**FRIDAY: Fun Quiz with Brian - Meat Draw &
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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
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FROM 7PM.**



THE BEST PARTY NIGHT ON THE COSTA BLANCA!

COMING EVENTS!

**FROM MAY 1ST THE KITCHEN WILL BE OPEN ALL DAY SERVING BREAKFASTS AND A
FULL SNACK MENU INCLUDING - SANDWICHES, WRAPS, BURGERS, NACHOS,
AND A SELECTION OF DAILY SPECIALS!**



SATURDAY MAY 17TH IS THE BIG ONE!!!

**FA CUP FINAL DAY - ARSENAL V HULL CITY (THE MIGHTY TIGERS!!!)
COME ALONG AND HAVE SOME FUN - BBQ ON THE TERRACE FROM 2PM!**



**PLEASE NOTE THAT ON SUNDAY MAY 25TH,
THE BAR WILL CLOSE AT 6PM DUE TO A PRIVATE FUNCTION.**

603 394 929

WiFi

Spanish 15-year-olds have below average problem-solving abilities.

A new survey conducted by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) suggested that the abilities of Spain's 15-year-olds are below the average levels of students in OECD countries in the areas of mathematics, reading, science and problem-solving ability.

In terms of coping with everyday situations, the average levels is placed at 500 points on a scale where Spain registers at just 477, reflecting the fact that teenagers have problems when faced with such tasks as using the remote control for air conditioning units or choosing the best route from one stop to another using different forms of public transport. Although 7.8% of Spanish 15-year-olds can do so brilliantly, an alarming 28.5% are incapable of getting by in these situations: they are unable to use what they have learned. In the OECD as a whole, the equivalent is 21.4%.

Of the 44 countries taking part in the survey, Spain is placed at 29th, and 23rd among the OECD countries. Top of the list are Singapore (562 points), South Korea (561 points) and Japan, with the Europeans being led by Finland.

According to the Spanish Secretary of State for Education, this means that Spanish 15-year-olds have everyday problems with operating MP3 devices, air-conditioning thermostats and other devices. Such deficiencies according to the OECD, could hamper their chances of holding down good jobs in the future and that education should be 're-modelled' to ensure that these abilities are strengthened in teenagers.

One interesting finding of the report is that the ability to cope with these practical problems is not necessarily related to the 'key' academic abilities: in the USA, the UK and Japan, for example, the students taking part in the survey were significantly better at problem-solving than at the academic disciplines tested. In Spain it appears, 15-year-olds are not well prepared for these two aspects of life.

2,709 Spanish students participated in the program – which evaluated 85,000 youngsters from 44 countries.



Having a bad day in Spain!

Cheaper than the Snip!

After having their 11th child, a Liverpool couple decided that was enough, as the social wouldn't buy them a bigger bed and they weren't strong enough to nick one, the husband went to his doctor and told him that he and his wife didn't want to have any more children.

The doctor told him there was a procedure called a 'vasectomy' that would fix the problem but it was expensive. A less costly alternative was to go home, get a firework, light it, put it in a beer can, then hold the can up to his ear and count to 10.

The Scouser said to the doctor, "I may not be the smartest guy in the world, but I don't see how putting a lit firework in a beer can next to my ear is going to help me." "Trust me, it will do the job", said the doctor.

So the man went home, lit a banger and put it in a beer can. He held the can up to his ear and began to count: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5," at which point he paused, placed the beer can between his legs so he could continue counting on his other hand.....

This procedure also works in Birmingham, parts of Essex, Sunderland, Aberdeen and several places in Wales.

Good Medical News.....

In an incredibly complex 12-hour operation, a team of 20 surgeons performed a double arm transplant on a 41-year-old man in the University Hospital in Madrid. This was the second such operation in Spain, the first being in Oviedo.

The recipient, Luis (photo), suffered horrific injuries after being electrocuted, having to have both arms amputated below the armpits and suffering severe injuries to his abdomen and legs. Luis may be able to bend his elbows within three to six months and will not be able to use his hands for at least a year.

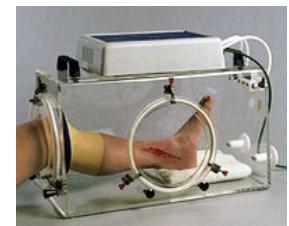


.....And not so good!

I have a number of friends and acquaintances locally who have had either some toes or part of their foot amputated due to diabetes related infections - not a rare occurrence.

Spain is second only to the US in the world, for the most lower-limb amputations caused by Type 2 Diabetes. Seven out of ten lower extremity amputations in Spain are due to the disease. Diabetics have a 25% higher risk of leg ulcers, which due to poor healing, can lead to necrosis and amputation. The increase in blood glucose produced by the diabetes causes a narrowing of the small blood vessels which affects the blood circulation and slows the flow of oxygen and nutrients to tissues located in extreme parts of the body such as the foot.

One of the most effective methods of treatment seems to be the delivery of 100% oxygen under pressure, normally 2.5 times normal. This can be done with a face-mask or in a hyperbaric chamber - photo. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy involves exposing the body to 100% oxygen at a pressure that is greater than what you would normally experience. Wounds need oxygen to heal properly, and exposing a wound to 100% oxygen can, in many cases, speed the healing process. If the wound is on your leg, for example, your leg could be wrapped in a plastic bag that is filled with 100% oxygen under pressure. Although this localized form of topical oxygen therapy is easier to do and more affordable, its effectiveness, compared with the other forms of hyperbaric oxygen therapy, is questionable, according to the latest research.



Specialised hyperbaric unit for treating lower limbs.

'Go Stand in the Corner!' Jokes.

- The UK government says that Scotland could end up as a third world country if they vote for independence. I don't know if things will improve to that extent...but you never know.

- Say what you will about Ryanair, but their tight fuel reserve policy guarantees a search radius of not more than 50 miles if one of their planes went missing.

- Spanish oranges can be either male or female. The males sometimes unexpectedly squirt in your eye. The females are bitter for no apparent reason.

- The UN told the Vatican to remove all paedophile clergy; blow me, there's more chance of Michael Barrymore being on the panel of 'Splash.'

- I've just watched a documentary about children being beaten and bullied in Indian sweat shops. Looking at the quality of stitching on my new trainers the little bastards deserved it!

The History of Spain, Part 41. Events leading up to the Civil War.

Following the collapse of the CEDA/Radical government, the president called for elections to be held in February 1936. Following their defeat in the previous general election, the leftist parties now decided to join together in a Popular Front, as they called it. But Caballero, the leader of the revolutionary left, stated that they would only cooperate for the elections. The right united in a so-called National Front, which included CEDA - the Catholic party, conservative Republicans and the still relatively small fascist party, the Falange.

Now the rhetoric on both sides stepped up several notches. If you were not a supporter of the Popular Front, then you were a 'fascist.' Similarly, if you were against the National Front or Anti-revolutionary Coalition as it was also called, then you were a 'red.' Calvo Sotelo, one of the principal spokesmen for the right, announced that 'a red flag would fly over Spain if they did not vote for the National Front.' Meanwhile, his opposite number in the revolutionary left, Largo Caballero (photo), declared that if the right won, he would 'proceed to declare civil war.' The politics of the centre continued to decline in the face of increased left-right polarisation.



In an electoral campaign increasingly marred by violence, at least 34 deaths were recorded. The election took place on February 16, 1936. Although at first balloting took place in an orderly manner, later in the day leftist crowds interfered with the balloting and registry of votes in more than twelve provinces. In several areas, leftist mobs stopped the voting and destroyed the ballot-boxes. Pressure from the mobs was so great that a number of provincial governors and presidents of provincial assemblies, resigned on the spot, fearful that they would be caught up in another insurrection. The head of CEDA, Gil Robles, urged the president to declare martial law to curb the mob action, but he refused. The council of ministers then gave the head of the caretaker government, Portela, a signed but undated decree to impose martial law whenever he saw fit. However the 70-year-old president was petrified by the left and by the growing violence and disorder, and despite the requests of a young General Franco, the army's chief of general staff, to take vigorous action to restore order, the government remained cowed, resigning on February 19. This surprised and disappointed many, as it was their responsibility to register the electoral results.

A new left Republican minority government under Azana took office immediately and sent new leftist officials all over the country to carry out the official recording of a leftist victory. The actual vote was in fact very close, with 47% voting for the Anti-revolutionary Coalition, 46% for the Popular Front and 7% for the Centre, Basque nationalists and independent candidates.

The new government subsequently refused to publish the official vote totals, which were embarrassing for the left. But because of the heavily disproportionate electoral system, and the subsequent fraudulent manipulation of the results by the left-appointed electoral commission, 257 parliamentary seats were awarded to the left; 133 to the right and 77 seats to the centre. The outgoing president, Alcala Zamora, commented later that 'In the parliamentary history of Spain, which was never very scrupulous, there is no memory of anything comparable to the worst and most scandalous frauds carried out by the electoral commission of parliament in March 1936.'

The only fascist party in Spain, the Falange, performed miserably in the elections, receiving only 46,000 votes out of nearly ten million in Spain. But it was the Spanish Communist Party, the PCE, which while only numbering a few dozen militants in 1921, now boosted its membership from 30,000 to 100,000 in the first half of 1936. For the next two years, the PCE would 'box well above its weight' thanks to considerable assistance from Comintern. Comintern's headquarters in Moscow believed that not since 1919 had so favourable a situation existed for the extreme left in any European country as was presently in Spain.

At this stage the socialist PSOE under Caballero refused to participate in the government, calling for revolutionary *bolchevizacion* (Bolshevisation).

The new government under Azana promised much more radical change than that of their first tenure, opening the jails and freeing all those who took part in the violent revolution in 1934. Many of these offenders were then recruited into the Assault Guards, the shock-troops of the left Republicans. Unfortunately Azana never learned from his first disastrous tenure of the presidency and continued with his intolerant and myopic policies and direction. He was incapable of compromise.

In his excellent book, *The Spanish Civil War*, historian Stanley G. Payne, outlines some of the disastrous policies and events which heralded in the terrible civil war in July.

(I have had to precis some of these because of lack of space.)

'The variety and volume of constitutional violations in Spain between February and July 1936 were without precedent in the history of parliamentary regimes. They included:

- The great strike wave, featuring many strikes without practical goals but seeking instead to dominate property, often accompanied by violence and destruction.
- Illegal seizures of property, especially in the southern provinces, sometimes legalised post facto.
- A wave of arson and property destruction, especially in the south.
- Seizure of churches and church properties in the south & east.
- Major economic decline...flight of capital...abandonment of cultivation.
- Broad censorship, with severe limitations on freedom of expression and assembly.
- Several thousand arbitrary arrests, culminating in the kidnapping of the principal opposition speaker, Calvo Sotelo.
- Virtual impunity for members of Popular Front parties, who were rarely arrested....
- Politicisation of justice ...purging of the judiciary...policies to facilitate political arrest....the placement of the rightist parties outside the law.
- Dissolution of rightist groups, beginning with the Falangists in March and the Catholic trade unions in May.....
- Increasing electoral coercion and the suppression of opposition activity during special elections in May in Cuenca and Granada.
- Arbitrary municipal and provincial government, with most local administration placed in the hands of appointees of the central government.....
- Politicisation and subversion of the security forces.
- Growth of political violence.....the death toll from political violence between February and July 1936 is estimated to be between 300 and 444.'

The right, of course, saw all this as a policy of persecution, violence and extermination. Although the left knew that some sort of military intervention was inevitable, they felt that a general strike would doom any attempts by the military to take over. Azana said that he was not perturbed by talk of a military coup, which he said were 'as common as acacia trees.' Nevertheless, he decided to immediately transfer those generals whom he thought might be disloyal to the new regime. Although General Franco was then Chief of Army Staff, he was now sent to the Canary Islands, where he would be as far from Madrid and North Africa (where his loyal and best troops were based) as possible. Other 'risky' generals were sent to the four corners of Spain. This was a grave tactical mistake by Azana. If he kept these potentially troublesome generals closer to him, he might have been able to control or at the very least, arrest them. They were now out of his direct influence and mischief was to follow.

The Easter celebrations or devotions, form a major part of the Spanish religious and cultural tradition. Even though today's Spain is a much more secular society than it was say in the 1930's (the period currently being covered by the History article), it would be unthinkable and a horrendous blunder to ban them as was done in the years prior to the Civil War.

This first photo was taken on Easter Sunday in Alicante and shows the two processions meeting - one of the Risen Christ and the other of his mother Mary. People on the balconies are throwing down coloured pieces of paper on which appear the words 'Hallelujah-Christ has risen.' Over 300,000 of these were scattered. The crowds, of which the photo only shows a portion, were massive.



These three photos show part of the Children's processions in Orihuela and Murcia.



The above image shows a very austere image from an Easter procession in the city of Valencia.

The Pagan Easter Procession.

Most of you will be aware that the fiestas for Easter Holy Week, *Semana Santa*, are always serious and reverential. Solemn, quiet processions and definitely no fireworks. Revelling and drunkenness during the period is frowned upon. That is the tradition and it never changes.

But on Holy or Maundy Thursday in León in the north west, a most unlikely and un-religious procession takes place. This is the procession celebrating the life of Genaro Blanco.

Some would refer to Genaro (photo - right) as a bon-vivant, but these days we would probably call him a piss-head! In the 1920's Genaro frequented the bars and brothels of the bohemian sector of León. If he wasn't in one he was in the other. A well known local character, he achieved legendary status on Holy Thursday, 1929, when he was said to have saved the life of a child in the early hours of that morning, sacrificing his own by being run over by a garbage truck. The reality was he was run over by a fire truck while 'having a piss' against the old city wall. Nevertheless, four locals



- often referred to as the *Evangelists*, decided to arrange a procession for the next Holy Thursday in 1930 which would call at all the bars and brothels which Genaro frequented. This four have now also entered into legend: they were Nicolás Pérez (a football referee), Eulogio "the glasses" (a taxi driver by profession but a balladeer by devotion), Luis Rico (a good family man who squandered his fortune in partying with friends) and Francisco Pérez Herrero (a poet).

Over the years the procession grew and grew. Followers would place some *pomace* (a local brandy and favourite of Genaro), cheese, bread and an orange in a niche high up in the wall, A few metres above where Genaro had his last pee.

But then a number of miracles were attributed to Genaro:

- A prostitute was redeemed and returned to her hometown.
- The local Cultural Leon football team were not doing too well. So some of the *Evangelists* decided to bless the football field with Genaro's favourite tippie, *pomace*. Miraculously the ball moved on it own into the opponent's net.
- A man suffering from terrible kidney pains decided to relieve himself at the old city walls. Coincidentally, it was at the same spot that Genaro met his Maker. When he had completed the task the man found that he had peed and passed a kidney stone the size of a walnut.
- One year, a thief decided to steal the offerings left in the wall by the devotees. However the spirit of Genaro caused the man to fall and break his hip while climbing the wall.



The procession continued to grow over the years but things came to a head in 1959 during Franco's ultra-conservative dictatorship, when the numbers attending Genaro's procession exceeded the religious ones. The authorities then banned the Genaro procession although it is believed it was still held in a secret and smaller manner.

With the return to democracy, the procession was reinstated in 1977 by the one *Evangelists* still alive, Nicolás Pérez. The procession still attracts big crowds, see photo. 2005 and this year were particularly good years, with 15,000 taking part. Genaro has been the subject of several poems, a book in 1981 and a docu-drama movie in 2009.

Quickies!

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Your **Spanish car tax** - Impuesto Vehiculos - is normally due around the 12th of May each year. The proceeds of this tax do not go to Madrid or Valencia but go towards Orihuela's coffers.

The use of **electronic cigarettes** in public places is now restricted. Anyone found smoking an electronic ciggy or e-cigarette, in certain areas can now be fined up to €600. Prohibited areas are inside health centres, schools - as well as in or near - children's play areas, all forms of public transport including Spanish airlines and in all education centres except for open spaces in universities. First offenders will be fined €30, but the fine increases to €600 for repeat offenders.

LETTER FROM AN IRISH MOTHER. ®

Dear Son,

Just a few lines to let you know that I am still alive. I am writing this slowly because I know that you can't read very fast.

You won't know the house when you come home. We've moved.

About your father, he has got a lovely new job. He has 500 men under him. He cuts grass at the cemetery. Your sister Mary had a baby this morning. I haven't found out yet if it's a boy or a girl, so I don't know if your an aunt or an uncle.

I went to the doctors on Thursday and your father came with me. The doctor put a small glass tube in my mouth and told me not to talk for 10 minutes. Your father offered to buy it from him.

Your uncle Patrick drowned last week in a vat of Irish whiskey at the Dublin distillery. Some of his workmates tried to save him but he fought them off bravely. They cremated him and it took 3 days to put the fire out.

It only rained twice this week, first for 3 days and then for 4 days. We had a letter from the undertaker. He said if the last payment on your grandmother's plot wasn't paid in 7 days, up she comes.

Your loving Mother,

P.S. I was going to send you ten euros, but I have already sealed the envelope.

Valencia or the Wild West?

You may think that Playa Flamenca Commercial is 'Dodge City' in the summer, but this story in *El Mundo* caught my eye. Back in the early hours of May 31st, 2005, an off-duty policeman visited a brothel in Valencia called 'El Cisne' - The Swan. As I am not allowed to name the policeman, I will refer to him as 'Hair-Trigger,' not because of his sexual prowess or lack of it, but because of his subsequent actions. Now Hair-Trigger was a regular customer at *El Cisne*, but when he got to the brothel, he found that the young lady he wished to join with him in a spot of 'horizontal jogging' was having a discussion with a Rumanian called 'Bogdan.' The lady said she would see him later but the impatient policeman demanded 'action' of a more immediate nature. This led to a scuffle between Hair-Trigger and Bogdan, during which the latter is alleged to have drawn a 'small knife,' probably what we would call a pen-knife. Hair-trigger then took out his weapon (the metal one, Agnes) and fired two shots, one in each of Bogdan's legs. Bogdan had to have his right leg amputated later.

Bringing the story almost up to date; Hair-Trigger was sentenced to a two-year jail sentence in January 2013. He appealed to the Supreme Court and in April this year the sentence was reduced to one year because of the delays in the case. The photo included here is from one of the rooms in *El Cisne*, but I didn't take it and if Carmeleta from the brothel says I am a regular there, she is a lying cow! Still, it might give you some ideas for the spare bedroom!

Geoffrey: 'Did you know that my family has a long military history?'

Harold: 'No.'

Geoffrey: 'Yes. One of my ancestors even fell at Waterloo.'

Harold: 'Why - did someone push him off the platform?'

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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 AGM for the Dream Hills urbanisation will be held at the Orihuela Costa Resort (as last year) at 16:00 hours on Friday, May 16th, 2014.

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!

If the Germans can't stuff it into an animal casing they won't eat it. Tim Allen

You don't eat Mexican food - you just rent it. Alexei Sayle

Romanian-Yiddish cooking has killed more Jews than Hitler. Zero Mostel

Britain is the only country in the world where the food is more dangerous than the sex. Jackie Mason

Two cannibals eating a clown. One says to the other, 'Does this taste funny to you?' Tommy Cooper

Breakfast cereal is made of all those little curly wooden shavings you find in pencil sharpeners. Roald Dahl

- Say Grace, Bart.

- Dear God, we paid for all this food ourselves, so thanks for nothing.

Marge and Bart Simpson

I wouldn't give someone my last Rolo if they were in a diabetic coma. Jo Brand

Just give me chocolate and nobody gets hurt!

Slogan on T-shirt

Outback breakfast: a piss and a look around.

Paul Hogan

Oysters are supposed to enhance your sexual performance, but they don't work for me. Maybe I put them on too soon. Garry Shandling

During one of our trips through Afghanistan, we lost our corkscrew. We had to live on nothing but food and water for several days. W.C. Fields

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