

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

St David's Day



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

Issue no. 96, 1st of March 2015.

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the March edition.

Although we have had some beautiful days with blue skies, February has been quite chilly. It was certainly the coldest start to the month in Valencia for the last fifty years.

There was a minor earthquake at 9:17 on the morning of February 11. It registered just 2.1 on the Richter Scale, its epicentre seven miles off the south-east coast of Torrevieja. Locally we felt a slight rumble.

This is the time of year when the Spanish celebrate Carnival. After the rigours of winter (well it did get to 5° at one stage!) And with the frugality of Lent almost upon us, the Spanish pull out all the stops and throw themselves into the celebrations. This photo from Informacion was taken during the carnival celebrations of *La Jira* in the town of Aspe in Alicante. Here, more than a thousand people take part, with 18 performing groups of singers/dancers and 200 musicians. Everybody dresses up for a fiesta which lasts about three days. Most Spanish towns have something organised. I have included some photos from various towns celebrations throughout the newsletter. There were no celebrations on the Orihuela Costa, although Torrevieja and Orihuela City did enjoy their festivities.



So it's '50 Shades of Grey' is it? I thought that with St. Patrick's Day on March 17 it was '50 Shades of Green'! So here I am stuck with a whole load of green rubber plants & palms and green hoses.....can you please help get them off my hands? Also, don't forget St. David's Day on Sunday, March 1st.

In what can only be a moment of weakness, Stefan Pokroppa has invited me to be on his radio program at Siesta Radio, 91.6FM, on Friday March 20th at 12 noon. You can get the radio station online, though I don't know why you'd want to listen to me!

Property sales are showing a slight increase, particularly for private dwellings in the Valencian Community, which showed a 2.2% increase during 2014. But it is the re-sales which are doing well, not the new builds. A lot of the new builds are not realistically priced.

There are no Red Days in March, although Thursday March 19 is a local fiesta, *San Jose*.

I have noticed that during the month, diesel fuel at the Alcampo petrol station in Zenia Boulevard was 10 cents per litre cheaper than the local garages. That's a lot!

Many, many thanks to Pauline & Con, the Acotts, Kath & Bill and Peter & Brenda for the generous donations.

The next Dream Scene subscription year starts with the month of April.

Hoping you all have a wonderful month, Mick & Tid.

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Angela's Cartoon



"So I told her - lose a couple of stone and you won't need new frocks."

My mate Harold is a little bit slow. He thought that *Screwfix Direct* was a dating agency.

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:

TRANSLATIONS

- HOSPITALS / DOCTORS
- POLICE REPORTS
- OFFICIAL TRANSLATIONS (STAMPED)
- UNOFFICIAL WRITTEN TRANSLATIONS
- NIE / RESIDENCIA
- DRIVING LICENCES
- COURT
- TOWN HALLS
- SCHOOL MEETINGS

COMPUTER TRAINING

- WINDOWS XP, VISTA, 7
- MICROSOFT OFFICE (WORD, EXCEL, POWER POINT, ACCESS, ETC.)
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The Great Plan.

God was missing for six days. Eventually, Michael, the archangel, found him, resting on the seventh day.

He inquired, "Where have you been?"

God smiled deeply and proudly pointed downwards through the clouds, "Look, Michael. Look what I've made."

Archangel Michael looked puzzled, and said, "What is it?"

"It's a planet," replied God, and I've put life on it. I'm going to call it Earth and it's going to be a place to test Balance."

"Balance?" inquired Michael, "I'm still confused."

God explained, pointing to different parts of Earth. "For example, northern Europe will be a place of great opportunity and wealth, while southern Europe is going to be poor. Over here I've placed a continent of white people, and over there is a continent of black people. Balance in all things." God continued pointing to different countries. "This one will be extremely hot, while this one will be very cold and covered in ice."

The Archangel, impressed by God's work, then pointed to a land area and said, "What's that one?"

"That's Yorkshire, the most glorious place on earth. There are beautiful mountains, rivers and streams, lakes, forests, hills, and plains. The people from Yorkshire are going to be handsome, modest, intelligent, and humorous, and they are going to travel the world. They will be extremely sociable, hardworking, high achieving, carriers of peace, and producers of good things"

Michael gasped in wonder and admiration, but then asked, "But what about balance, God? You said there would be balance."

God smiled, "Right next to Yorkshire is Lancashire Wait till you see the idiots I put there!"

We live in a country where John Lennon takes eight bullets, Yoko Ono is walking right beside him and not one hits her. Explain that to me.

Denis Leary

What's Up?

In late January, the new left wing party, Podemos (We Can) held a political rally in the centre of Madrid. Called 'The March for Change' over 260 buses brought protestors to the city and an estimated 200,000 took part. (See photo, El Mundo.) Podemos are a party founded by



a number of university academics. Their platform calls for the cancellation of "unjust debt", a reversal of labour reforms, public control over energy, the banks, and the commanding heights of the economy, and for withdrawal from NATO. But the party has no manifesto, just the usual far left-wing rhetoric of wishful thinking and utopian goals.

But many are now aware of the links of several of the top officials of Podemos with less than savoury South American regimes, particularly Venezuela. One of the top three of the party were 'rumbled' when it was revealed that he was paid €25,000 by the Venezuelan government. Juan Carlos Monedero, has now paid the Treasury €200,000 to avoid a fine, but that will not stop the investigations for fraud or tax evasion.

These latest revelations have certainly cost them some support, but the Spanish can sometimes be very forgiving. But it is the main Spanish socialist party, the PSOE, who are being traumatised by Podemos. Similarly the far-left Izquierda Unida - the United Left - are also suffering. Members from both parties are leaving in droves for the new Podemos.

The socialist regime in Andalucia under the clever Suzana Diez have used some very fancy footwork in calling for an early regional election in March. This is to stop Podemos from gaining more ground in her region.

Although Murcia's San Javier airport has won an international award, see page 15, the nonsense and contradictions surrounding the proposed Paramount Park and Corvera airport continue.

With regard to Paramount, despite assurances that the Park would be completed between December 2015 and January 2016, little has happened other than part of the site has been cleared. First of all the amount of land available to the project was reduced by 30% due to the failure in purchasing all of the land in February 2012. It was then found that around 325,000 square metres of the remaining land fell in a protected area of a neighbouring natural park. But the biggest barrier to progress in this project is the lack of investors. Would be investors are savvy to the problem that theme parks in Spain are mostly unsuccessful.

Similarly, the Corvera Airport project goes from many missed deadlines to more promises, none of which happen. Although the facility has been built, the new concessionaire will be expected to absorb the debt from the Murcia regional government of around €182 million plus interest charges up to December 2014 of €7 million. Now this is probably an insurmountable barrier to most would be investors. There is also the compensation due to AENA regarding the major works carried out to the San Javier facility. The new regional president of Murcia has said that he will not open Corvera 'at any cost.'

According to PM Rajoy, foreign tourists spent €3 billion in Spain last year. This was up by 6.5% on the 2013 figures. The biggest spenders were the British, Germans and French.

When it comes to property purchases, forget all the talk about the Russians being a major factor here. The weakness of the Rouble alone, is keeping the 'Ruskies' out. A pity. Similarly with the Scandinavians; although we love to see them (particularly their beautiful women), their importance in the property purchasing league is now overstated.

Málaga City Council is to prohibit circuses which use animals. A circus without animals? Reminds me of the definition of a Shih tzo: a zoo without animals. The environment councillor in Málaga, Raúl Jiménez, who has come up with this proposal has said 'The training techniques in circuses are inadequate; they are not compatible with animal rights, because there are techniques definitely aggressive'. The proposal will also establish control on the colonies of wildcats; in Málaga province it is estimated there are around 119 colonies, containing groups of 15- 20 city cats each. Now the City Council will collect these felines and will vaccinate and sterilize them, and return them to where they were collected. Any member of the public who wants to feed these wild or street cats will have to ask for permission in which at least two people must give their personal details and the characteristics of the cats they want to feed.

Until now a university degree in Spain takes four years to complete and a following master's degree one year. A new regulation gives the universities the choice of a three year degree course or degree and a two year master. It would bring Spain into line with a European law from 2010 which wanted Europe-wide policy for further education, known as the Bologna Plan. It makes a lot of sense as a 'Spanish degree' is often looked down on in European educational circles. However, the unions, including the student unions are not happy with this. There have been demonstrations against the proposed legislation and a 'grand strike' is promised if the new law is passed by Congress. The university rectors are none too happy either and want a lead-in period of a couple of years or so.

The wine sector in Spain last year recovered their position in the foreign market which they lost in 2013 because of the higher prices after a poor harvest.

The declared bankrupt self-employed will soon have, when the law is approved, three years to pay off their debt in Spain. If at the end of the three years they still have money to return, and the judge agrees, they could be totally relieved from paying any more. The idea comes from the IMF who says it gives the self-employed a second chance.

El País has reported that those involved in the ERE redundancy scandal in Andalucía have to pay back all the money. The Accounts Tribunal claims 252 million € from 27 companies and six town halls. Fat chance of that! This figure is only a fraction of the total amount fiddled in what has come to be a monetary black hole.

Spanish football only reduced its debt by 2.5% in the 2013/14 season. In total, the teams in the Primera and Segunda divisions owe 3.44 billion €, 669 million of it to the Treasury. Income was up by 9.4% which just covered increased costs of 7.6%.

A pack of 20 cigarettes will now cost double than before the recession. A packet purchased in 1985 for 55 cents, was €2.50 in 2008, and now €4.45. Sales have been falling for the last six years and there has been an increase in contraband supplies. Cough! Cough!

⁴What's Up? continued

In early Feb', police arrested a father and son, aged 70 and 43, as they came to shore in a boat in nearby Torre de la Horadada. A search of the boat discovered 465 kilos of cocaine, valued at 16 million euros.

The Valencia Provinc destroyed 8.7 tons of drugs during the past year 2014, against the 11.5 in 2013, according to the data provided by the center of intelligence on terrorism and organized crime (CITCO). The autonomous community with the greatest volume of drugs seized and burned was Andalusia with 277 tons. In all Spain, 377 tons burned.

Around a ton of drugs is destroyed each day in the six ovens spread across the country after their previous storage in health deposits, police stations or Guardia Civil barracks. Last year 364.7 tons were burnt, 20% less than in 2013, according to data from the Intelligence Centre against Terrorism and Organised Crime. (CITCO). Last year 20,365 cannabis plants were destroyed, 4,000 litres of precursors, 1,500 kilos of fraudulent medicaments, 3,026 bottles of poppers, 2,600 ampoules, and 100 kilos of substances to cut the drug. The toxicology institutes in Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla and Tenerife are used in cases where different hauls of cocaine, for example, can be analysed to see if they came from the same batch. Cocaine is the most complicated to burn among the normal drugs because of the chlorine which slows down the burn. For the less conventional drugs, which contain acids, the authorities opt for inerting – mixing with cement, flour or other substances. In 2013, Government, Judges and Prosecutors signed an agreement which allowed drugs to be burnt after a month of storage.

Police arrested two men who are suspected of stealing over 300 manhole and sewer covers. The men were caught with several metal grid covers in their van. See photo *Informacion*. There has been a wave of this type of theft in Alicante, the *Cabo de las Huertas* area being the worst effected.



The Guardia Civil has detained 11 people allegedly members of a criminal organisation involved in more than 100 burglaries in

Alicante and Murcia who were also dedicated to drug trafficking. In October 2014 the agents were informed of a violent burglary in the town of Ciudad Quesada-Rojales and obtained the keys using a long pole with a hook which, like a fishing rod, they put through a window they had previously forced open. This method led the police to focus their attention on a group of people, mostly Moroccan, with a previous record for violent burglary and who were residents of Redován and Callosa de Segura, both in Alicante province. Their modus operandi was first to select the house and then to park nearby, the driver would stay in the car as a lookout and would warn the others of any appearance of the Police. Part of the items they stole was sent to Morocco for sale, and the rest was sold by receivers in Spain, and with the profits obtained they would buy consignments of hashish which they would then sell on.

20/20.

I bumped into an old school friend today. He started showing off, talking about his well paid job and expensive sports car. Then he pulled out a photo of his wife and said, "She's beautiful, isn't she?"

I said, "If you think she's gorgeous, you should see my girlfriend." He said, "Why? Is she a stunner?"

I said, "No, she's an optician."

There were 87 fatalities on Spanish roads this January. This is 26 more than in January the previous year.

The toll motorways in Spain have been a financial disaster. El Mundo reports that after nearly two years of a chain of complaints by the concessionary owner of the toll motorways, the Government has now warned their creditors that they face dozens of litigations if the State is obliged to assume the 3.8 billion € debt which has accumulated.

Información in Alicante reported that a woman has been sent to prison for a year for selling her baby for €5,000. The woman gave birth in Denia and spent all the money on debts.

Spain has become a major financing hub for jihadist terrorists in Syria and Iraq through an extensive network of 250 phone call centres, butcher shops and neighbourhood grocery stores, where money is transferred through an informal and virtually untraceable system, according to Spanish intelligence agencies. This network, which uses the so-called hawala system – is defined by Interpol as money transfer without money movement – manages the savings of over 150,000 Muslims without any legal oversight, and is also being used to help fund terror groups such as Islamic State (ISIS) and al-Nusra Front, an Al Qaeda affiliate. The secret network used by hawaladars, or hawala dealers, is also a conduit to pay the salaries of Spanish jihadists for their work in brigades at camps in northern Syria. They receive about \$800 if they are single and \$1,200 if they are married, according to police sources.

Guardia Civil in Caravaca, Murcia, have arrested a 23-year-old male and four male minors. It seems they became friendly with a young 15-year-old girl while walking home. The 23-year-old and one of the minors then forced the young girl into a building where both raped her, while the other three young males kept watch. The five were arrested the following day; the young man is now in jail and the four male minors have been detained in a juvenile facility.

Two of the three mayors of Jerez who have been elected since the return of democracy in 1979, have now received prison sentences. The latest is the socialist Pilar Sánchez, photo. It seems that while she was mayor or mayoress, government funds provided under Plan E were diverted by her to pay council staff. The Plan E funds were meant to boost economic activity and increase employment after the housing bubble bust. Pilar received a two year sentence for this which she is appealing. While lodging the appeal, she was informed that she was also being investigated in relation to the multi-million fraud relating to the funds supposed to go to training courses for the unemployed, which were redirected elsewhere. The police state that they expect around 90 arrests in connection with the fraud.



The FROB (Bank Restructuring Fund) has asked Price Waterhouse Cooper for a forensic audit on 15 ex-directors of Caja Madrid (the embryo for Bankia) and PwC has established that the ex-directors paid themselves €15 million in an irregular manner. The FROB thinks these high wages could be a crime and they have placed the matter before the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor.

• I asked Rolf Harris "Are you that bloke from the seventies who did 'Two Little Boys'?" Rolf replied "No, that was Gary Glitter!"

• What is the definition of 'endless love'?

Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder playing tennis.

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I had a Trivia Competition in the bag until the very last question, which I got wrong. The question was, "Where do women have the curliest hair?" Apparently the correct answer was Fiji. I took my biology exam last Friday. I was asked to name two things commonly found in cells. Apparently "young Jamaicans" and "Romanians" were not the correct answers.
Pete Dudman

You may recall Angel Fenol, the garbage magnate, who received a 35-year jail sentence last July for several frauds. 14 others who assisted him were also condemned. But Fenol is back in the news and in the *merde* again. In what is being described as a major environmental crime, it is alleged that his refuse companies have buried at least one million tons of



untreated rubbish in various plots around Orihuela. Fenol's companies collected rubbish from many areas throughout the Vega Baja and Murcia, charging incredibly low prices for the service. Many of these plots have now begun to leech and become unstable with high concentrations of chlorides, sulphates, ammonium and other heavy materials. See photo *Informacion*.

Councillor Manuel Gallud (the Greens/Los Verdes) accused ex-PP mayor Monica Lorente of turning a blind eye to the illegal dumping as Fenol had financed the PP election campaign.

In an unprecedented move, the Partido Popular (PP) expelled six of their councillors from the party in February. One, Pepa Ferrando, was the president of the PP in Orihuela! The six councillors refused to vote on a motion which stipulated that candidates who are imputed (being investigated) may not appear on the electoral list. All the six have already been imputed including one, José Antonio Anierte, who was for several years the councillor responsible for Orihuela Costa. You have probably never heard of him, which is why he was known among expat's as 'The Invisible Man.' Famous for telling his council staff - 'Don't bring me any problems!' - he would only materialise if say, a new bridge was being opened. He certainly did bugger-all for the coast anyway.

Many of you will recognise this building which lies between the Lago Jardins off the Orihuela Road. This once attractive building has been in a dilapidated if not dangerous state for



several years. The owners have finally placed some supports to the walls to stop them falling down. The cost of restoring the building has been put at €700,000. The Torrevieja council has begrudgingly taken over responsibility for the restoration, but don't hold your breath!

There have been grumblings in the Torrevieja council meetings over the cost of 'extras' for The Three Kings parade, this year. It seems that the council spent €4,236 on animal rentals for the parade. There were 12 donkeys (why didn't they use the councillors) rented for €129.47 each; four sheep at €5.55 each; eight pigs at €17.77 each and 15 geese (photo) at €90 each! Some councillors believe that it was highly extravagant bearing in mind the hardships being endured by some residents.



Speaking of animals, this is probably the appropriate time to remind people that a dog is not just for Christmas. In other parts of the world, such as Korea, Vietnam, China and Indonesia, it is also for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Definition

Countryside: the killing of Piers Morgan.

(Stephen Fry)

Ryanair will be offering 46 routes to Alicante-Elche Airport this year. This will include two new routes to Gdansk and Cologne, as well as offering increased flights to and from East Midlands, Eindhoven, Krakow, Kaunas, Leeds Bradford, Manchester, Shannon, Milan and Warsaw.

Hospitals in the Murcia area have been overwhelmed by the flu epidemic. All operations were suspended in one hospital, Virgen de la Arrixaca, due to the acute shortage of beds with around 43 patients waiting for a bed early one morning. The president of the Murcia Society for Family and Community Medicine, Bernardina Tudela de Gea, said 'The cause of the collapse is in First Aid. If it takes a week to see your family doctor, is normal for the patient to seek help at the hospital; it's totally logical'. Between January 18 and 25 the health centres and hospitals in the region treated 3,850 people with flu symptoms, compared to 2,667 in the previous year. However it was felt that worse was to come.

The airline, Norwegian, now competes with Ryanair and Air Berlin on flights to Germany. The Norwegian company has now introduced direct links to Cologne, Hamburg and Munich. The company has focused on the Costa Blanca as the preferred destination rather than say, the Costa del Sol or Barcelona. From April, they will fly to 23 European airports from Alicante.

German tourism grew by 10% in this province with a total of 850,000 visitors last year second international market after the UK and one of the major surprises. The Germans are spread over the Marina Alta and Vega Baja coast, with its profile of a tourist who runs away from the crowds and used for hosting the rented apartment or home ownership.

Repsol is to create 1,700 vacancies at their Cartagena refinery by the end of this year, which involves an investment of €20 million.

The Torrevieja desalination plant set to lose 55 million euros in European funding as it has not been supplying any water to its intended destinations particularly in Murcia. This 300 million euro project has been a catalogue of disasters and delays. It was not a secret that the now jailed ex-mayor of Torrevieja delayed the project for political reasons but on the face of it blaming environmental issues. Since when has the Torrevieja council ever been concerned about environmental issues?

The Spanish DGT traffic authority is to publish and make visible the location of the traffic radars. Most of the mobile radars will be moved to secondary roads, where 80% of the accidents take place. The DGT website is periodically revised to show the 1,200 locations of the radars. The legally established margin for error, which involves the photo being taken when the speed is 8 km/h over the speed limit from 30 km/h to 90 km/h; the triggers in 9km/h over the 100km/h speed limit, 120km/h over a speed limit of 110 and finally 131 km/h on a 120km/h limit. The information on the location of the radars will be published in two months.

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Different Standards.

Acquitted in Spain but facing 40 years in prison in the United States. The case of privileged information by Cedric Cañas, who was the assistant to the ex CEO of Banco Santander, Alfredo Sáenz, showed differing vigour when pursuing market values frauds in Spain and the United States.

Cañas was acquitted in Spain after using privileged information in the purchase of shares in the Canadian company Potash, in a controversial sentence because the vote of one of the judges was critical.

In the United States, however, he attempted a plea with the US Securities and Exchange Commission to pay a large fine to close a legal demand from the supervisor of the Securities and Exchange Commission, which presumed he was admitting his guilt, but in any case the plea was rejected.

The prosecutor in the South District of New York, Preet Bharara, and the deputy director of the New York office of the FBI, Diego Rodríguez, announced last month in a statement, that they were opening two cases against him for fraud with a penalty of a maximum 20 years in prison each and a fine of five million dollars. Cañas has not been detained and the United States would find his extradition difficult after he has already been judged innocent in Spain for the same case.

The Good & the Bad?

You will be aware that many Spanish corporations do very well abroad. Telefonica, Inditex and Iberdrola are now major multi-nationals. Mapfre, the Spanish insurance company it also doing quite well internationally. The US of A now contributes more than two billion to the Mapfre income and 10% of the profit.

But size and profitability does not protect the vulnerable consumer from the greed of many Spanish multinationals. Cepsa, now a global oil and gas company, has now been fined €2.5 million for fixing petrol prices. The National Commission of Markets and Competitiveness judged that they failed to heed a previous warning. The fine is of course laughable. BP have also been fined €750,000.

If you ever had any doubts that the petroleum companies in Spain, and indeed elsewhere, were thieving swine, note this comment from El Mundo - "The petrol companies increased their margins by 5% when crude fell by 22%."

The Royal Coffers.

It seems King Felipe VI is being paid 20% less than his father and will collect €234,204 this year.

The total budget for the Royal Family is €7,775,040 and Doña Letizia sees her pay increase since she become Queen by nearly 26% to €128,808. Likewise for King Felipe VI, photo, his payment is up over the time he was Prince of Asturias when he was paid €146,375.



It is the King's duty to set his own assignation and that of his family, except for his daughters, and for his mother Queen Doña Sofía; he

has granted her €105,396 for this year, 20% lower than when she was Queen last year.

All the royal budget comes from the General State Budget which destines every year, specifically for the King 'the maintenance for his family and home' which the Monarch can 'distribute freely' as outlined in article 65 of the Constitution.

Regarding the daughters, neither Infanta Elena nor Infanta Cristina, received any royal salary at all, as they are no longer members of the Royal Family. All this information was placed on the palace webpage on Monday and shows the total budget is the same as last year.

A spokesman at the Zarzuela has explained Don Felipe has decided his own salary following two fundamental criteria, firstly looking at the retributions received by the top State authorities and secondly, taking into account the wages of other heads of State in neighbouring countries.

(Typically Spanish)

 **The Royal Oak**
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Reach Out, Extienda La Mano, has been established for three years and helps the needy and homeless in Torrevieja.

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(Submitted by Sue Birchenough)

The Sell-Off.

Bankia is to offer more than 3,500 homes with discounts up to 50%. The repossessed properties are resale and located on the coast, the main cities and small villages. Eight out of ten on offer are now at a price under €80,000. Bankia hopes to pick up thousands of new clients with the offer.

You can find out what they have in Alicante here - almost 1,800 homes for sale - with prices and brief description - <https://www.haya.es/comprar/viviendas/todos/alicante/ofe>



Being British.

On a train from London to Manchester an Australian was berating the Brit sitting across from him.

"You British are too stuffy. You set yourselves apart too much. You think your stiff upper lip makes you above the rest of us. Look at me... I'm ME! I have Italian blood, Greek blood, a little Irish blood, and some Aborigine blood. What do you think of that?"

The Brit replied, "Awfully sporting of your mother, old chap!"

Mel Bettell


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LOCAL NATURAL GAS INSTALLATION - NEARING COMPLETION!

The natural gas installation in Dream Hills is now well advanced and should be expanding into Lago Jardin II soon. If you are still undecided about whether to have it installed or not on your property, **I would urge you to contact Virginia or Deibi URGENTLY on 645 113 316** (who speak several languages including English) and they will be pleased to meet with you and answer any questions you might have about the natural gas installation, without any obligation on your part. **They can also be contacted at - comercialecnor@gmail.com**

Spoiled for Choice

Guy goes in a sex shop and asks for an inflatable doll.

Guy behind the counter says, 'Male or female?'

Customer says, 'Female.'

Counter guy asks, 'Black or white?'

Customer says, 'White.'

Counter guy asks, 'Christian or Muslim?'

Customer says, 'What the hell does religion have to do with it?'

Counter guy says, 'The Muslim one blows itself up.'

Sue Robinson



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LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT BEING BADLY LET DOWN!

January and February can be wicked months for bars and restaurants. After what is usually a financially draining Christmas, private coffers are at an annual low. This coupled with much colder weather - and it has been very cold in the evenings locally - encourage people to stay at home in the warm and semi-hibernate. This of course means a very lean time for many bars and restaurants in the area, who can only look forward to improved trade in the late spring and early summer.

But life goes on and one bar in particular, Bentor's, opposite Mercadona in Los Balcones, maintains its weekly entertainment offerings - live music and karaoke - on a regular basis. Now Bentor's is a small bar, but it has character, plenty of charm, very reasonable prices and can be very atmospheric at times. Their first year anniversary came up on February 7, so it was decided to celebrate by bringing in a 'big act'; so Stevie Spit was contacted and booked for the evening. Spit's fee is relatively expensive so it was decided to put on a buffet and charge € per ticket to help with the cost. The bar sold approx' 30 + tickets which for such a small bar, is capacity.

At lunchtime on the scheduled performance day, Spit was telephoned to confirm the timings and stated that he would be arriving to set up at around 6:30pm.

Spit then telephoned around an hour later and stated that he would not be turning up as he did not want to perform for a crowd of less than 30! This was regardless of his fee being guaranteed. Now at Bentor's, 30 is almost a capacity crowd as it is such a small bar, but staff had already purchased the food and prepared the buffet. So not only was money wasted on food, but also the customers arrived that evening to find that the entertainment was cancelled!

So here you have yet another small bar being dropped in the shit because of a performer who is just too big for his boots...or high hells! But then I heard that this was not the first time that this performer had let down this particular bar. I understand it happened once before with the previous owner. Now I know this chap raises money for charity, etc, etc, but there is no excuse for this sort of behaviour. It is bars like this that are trying to keep live entertainment going on the Costa. The very least the artists could do is keep their word and turn up. So I wondered how to finish this story off, and initially thought that it might be appropriate to respond using the tenor and content of Spit's own performances, but that would just be more smut. So, what a **W**  !

BUT, ON THE POSITIVE SIDE!

Together with a number of friends, we went to the Venetian Masked Carnival/Ball which was held at the Casino on Friday, February 13. As this was the first such event held there, which was organised by Siesta Radio, I confess to some trepidation in attending. However, all doubts disappeared when we arrived and were greeted first by the friendly casino staff and then by the event stewards, who were decked out in fancy dress with masks.

We arrived at about 7:45pm and the casino, which occupies a large open floor, was already a hive of activity with gaming tables and what have to be the quietest slot machines anywhere.

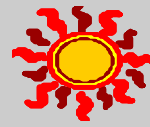
The event was held at the far end of the open casino in the poker area. There were already more than a hundred revelers there, all masked but with many in fancy dress, some in elegant dresses and some very casual and all having a good time. The bulk of the crowd were from the German Costa Blanca Association, and I confess that I never saw so many Germans smiling - it was almost unsettling!

There were tables placed in the centre of the event area and these were full of trays of freshly prepared hors d'oeuvres which were being constantly replaced. Now these were not the usual brown 'Iceland-type' fodder but tasty nibbles with a touch of class. Later, tray after tray of delicious mini-cheeseburgers were brought out and my diet then went west! These were followed by mini-desserts, again sumptuous! All this time several waiters were walking among the guests offering generous glasses of wine and beer all included in the €20 ticket! Spirits & mixers were also available. All in all, the casino were excellent hosts, friendly and professional.

Music was provided by a DJ and there was a live act by Robert Bonovox (688677914) which had everybody up dancing. See photos opposite.

A wonderful evening; looking forward to the next event!

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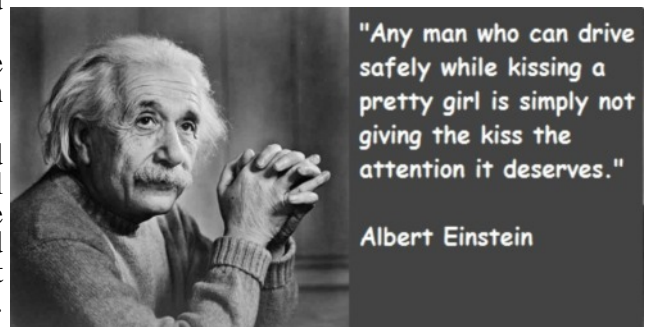
The €80 Kiss!

A driver in Spain's Galicia region has been slapped with an €80 fine after police spotted her boyfriend kissing her while she was at the wheel. "I was so shocked — I thought it was a joke and that there must be a hidden camera," the driver said after police in the town of O Carballiño explained why she had been fined.

"I couldn't believe it. I keep asking myself if they didn't have more important things to do" said the woman who was hit with the penalty after being pulled over.

Officers on the scene justified the fine by saying the kiss had restricted the woman's ability to drive, but she told regional daily La Voz de Galicia this was not the case. She told the newspaper her boyfriend had kissed her "in the way you would kiss your mother, but I didn't turn my face or my body. I didn't do anything strange. He just leaned over and gave me a kiss". When the driver realized that police were determined to implement the fine, she asked them to specify the reasons in writing.

They responded by noting she had been "engaging in affectionate behaviour with" her passenger. The woman now plans to appeal the fine.



"Any man who can drive safely while kissing a pretty girl is simply not giving the kiss the attention it deserves."

Albert Einstein

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Not sure which Spanish carnival this photo (Informacion) relates to, but.....who cares!

Smart Ass!

A teacher at West Australian High School reminded her pupils of tomorrow's final exam.

"Now listen to me, I won't tolerate any excuses for you not being here tomorrow. I might consider a nuclear attack, a serious personal injury, illness, or a death in your immediate family, but that's it, no other excuses whatsoever!"

A smart-arsed teenager at the back of the room raised his hand and asked, "What would happen if I came in tomorrow suffering from complete and utter sexual exhaustion?"

The entire class was reduced to laughter and sniggering..

When silence was restored, the teacher smiled at the student, shook her head and sweetly said.....

"Well, I would expect you to write the exam with your other hand."

Brian H.



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(The Telegraph, July 12, 2013)

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A wife was making a breakfast of fried eggs for her husband. Suddenly, her husband burst into the kitchen. "Careful," he said, "CAREFUL! Put in some more butter! Oh my GOD! You're cooking too many at once. TOO MANY! Turn them! TURN THEM NOW! We need more butter. Oh my GOD! WHERE are we going to get MORE BUTTER? They're going to STICK! Careful. CAREFUL! I said be CAREFUL! You NEVER listen to me when you're cooking! Never! Turn them! Hurry up! Are you CRAZY? Have you LOST your mind? Don't forget to salt them. You know you always forget to salt them. Use the salt. USE THE SALT! THE SALT!"

The wife stared at him. "What in the world is wrong with you? You think I don't know how to fry a couple of eggs?" The husband calmly replied, "I just wanted to show you what it feels like when I'm driving."

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Murcia's San Javier Wins EU's Best Airport Award.

Will AENA close commercial flights at Murcia's San Javier following the facility being awarded the title of the EU's best Airport (in the under 2 million passengers per year category) for 2014 ?

If anything, this recognition by the International Airports Council makes it a laughable suggestion to close the facility in favour of Corvera Airport during 2016, as previously suggested.

The award came as result of a satisfaction survey conducted among passengers, and coincides with negotiations between AENA, the Ministry of Development and the Regional Government to agree on the closure process.

There is still no official announcement to confirm or deny whether the airlines flying into San Javier will transfer their operations to Corvera Airport, and with Alicante Airport being both more convenient to get to, Cheaper, and with a better range of flight frequencies and destinations, the logic that 100% of San Javiers (falling) passenger numbers will transfer to Corvera remains questionable.

The International Airports Council holds quarterly surveys at 270 airports in 50 countries, to gauge opinion on a range of criteria from facilities to customer service to overall cleanliness.

(Abridged from Tumbit.)

THE PHOENIX GOLFING SOCIETY.

In January, we played for the John Gillishan Trophy at Roda Golf Course in Murcia, photo. John's wife, Pearl, presented the trophy to the winner, John Walls. An enjoyable day was had by all at this very attractive location.



In February, the venue for our outing was Alenda Club de Golf at Monforte del Cid, Alicante, photo below. The weather was ideal for golf and it was a hugely enjoyable day. John Walls decided to go via Benidorm!!! (got lost) but arrived only just in time to tee off.

The overall winner was Mick Highway who also won "nearest the pin".



Once again we had food courtesy of Donna at the Phoenix, many thanks Donna.

Sex! Sex! Sex!

I'm a bad lover. I once caught a Peeping Tom boogie me.

Rodney Dangerfield

Australian foreplay: Brace yourself, Sheila.

Anon.

'I Just Died In Your Arms Tonight' is a song about post-coital feeling. Rejected titles include: 'I'm done, bacon sandwich, please', 'Now just finish yourself off', and 'Do you take Switch?'

Mark Lamarr, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*

She could be in a coma but put a man within five miles of her and she'd roll over and shave her legs.

Dorothy, *The Golden Girls*

- What was it like (with a German prostitute)?

- I'll tell you one thing, man. Sex is in its infancy in Gateshead.

Neville & 'Oz', *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet*

Holly Madison, 27, has got engaged to Hugh Hefner, 80. Asked what the founder of *Playboy* liked best in bed, Holly said, 'The guard rail.'

Anon.

Jordan said Gareth Gates was very inexperienced and didn't know where to put his hands. If anyone is in that position again: round her throat and squeeze till her eyes pop.

Mark Lamarr, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*

I was in bed last night with my boyfriend, Ernie, and he said to me, 'Sophie, the trouble with you is you've got no tits and a tight box.' I said, 'Ernie, get off my back!'

Bette Midler



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Charlie's Bit on the Side,
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The idea of Prince Charles conversing with vegetables is not quite so amusing when you remember that he's had plenty of practice chatting to members of his own family.
Jaci Stephens

Penal Law Reform.

It is fair to say that many of the laws in Spain are in drastic need of being brought up to date in this, the 21st century. You will surely be aware of the inordinate amount of time it takes cases to come to court, all to often several years. A photo of a Seville court document has just gone viral on the Spanish social networks. It shows a hearing for 10.20am, February 6, 2019 – four years from now!

There have also been weird anomalies: for example, up until now having sex with an animal was not illegal. If you were arrested, for example, for screwing your donkey, you were not charged with bestiality but with cruelty to animals! Similarly, the law in relation to organised dog fighting and cockfighting was very vague and led to an explosion in both activities.

The PP government have been using their overall majority in parliament to hurry through a whole raft of Penal Law changes relating to everything from terrorism to life sentences. There were still 900 amendments tabled to the legislation of which roughly a quarter were accepted.

One of the earlier decisions was to instruct judges to complete the instruction (investigation) part of the case in six months for most cases and only up to eighteen months in the case of 'difficult' cases. Many of the judicial associations are objecting to this as unrealistic and that they would also need large increases in skilled staff to meet these deadlines. But many will agree that the judiciary have had a comfy time up until now and need to pull their finger out.

Another change which brought many objections has been that of 'life sentences.' Those convicted of serious crimes such as regicide or the murders of foreign heads of state can be sentenced to a form of life imprisonment. These prisoners will initially be sentenced to 25 to 35 years, after which time the sentence will be reviewed to see if inmates are ready to return to society. Serial killers, members of organized criminal gangs, those who commit genocide and those who commit crimes against minors will also fall under this regime. Opponents have criticized this reform which they argue goes against the spirit of the constitution and its focus on preparing prisoners for reintegration into society. Well, boo hoo!

One big problem with the new legislation is the term 'terrorist.' This category has not really been defined clearly and Amnesty International believe that the range of crimes defined as "terrorism" includes vague language and overly broad categories of offences which would infringe people's basic human rights.

One long overdue change has been the regulation of donations to the political parties. Anonymous donations above €50,000 to political parties are now banned. Fines equivalent to three to four times the amount of money that was illegally donated will be levied. If the donations surpass €500,000 — or just €100,000 if the money came from a foreign body — jail terms ranging from six months to four years could apply. The bill also stiffens penalties for public workers found guilty of fraud or influence peddling. Most agree that the reform on funding does not go far enough and is full of holes.

Teachers with terrorist backgrounds will not be allowed. This is designed to stop people convicted of carrying out terrorist activities with the Basque separatist terror group ETA from working as classroom teachers.

Anyone imprisoned for corruption will not be granted any conditional release until he/she pays back the money stolen from the public accounts, or repairs the damage done.

Oh by the way, you can now be arrested and charged for 'humping' your domestic animals, with a sentence of three months to one year in prison. Organising dog fights can now bring imprisonment of between six months to two years, together with a ban on owning animals for between ten and twenty years. However cockfighting is still allowable in the Balearics (and Andalucia) as it is 'part of its culture.' More next month.

The Goyas.

The 29th Goya Awards were held in Madrid on February 7th to celebrate and honour the best in Spanish film during 2014. This is Spain's equivalent of the Academy (Oscars) Awards.

The big winner of this year's Awards was *La isla mínima* (or Marshland), a crime thriller - set in Andalucia and directed by Alberto Rodríguez which scooped 10 prizes at the ceremony. The movie took both Best Film and Best Director, as well as Best Actor for Javier Gutiérrez, and Best Female Newcomer, for Nerea Barros.



Regrettably, the organisers of the event were not nearly as efficient or professional as the actual movie makers. The ceremony, which was covered live on TV and viewed by some 3.34 million people, was supposed to run for three hours but it overran its scheduled time by a full hour. The slow pace and interminable duration of the broadcast was not helped by numerous technical mistakes, such as shots of the floor and other parts of the auditorium.

These events also do not provide protection from dumb commentators, one in particular who, during the 'red carpet' parade of fashionistas etc., commented on one beauty, "She is Colombian but very beautiful, she looks Spanish."

On the positive side, the ever popular Antonio Banderas collected an Honorary Goya recognising his film career.



Also as it is now becoming normal in these events, many use the platform as a political forum to criticise the government for the lack of funding in the movie business, the arts and austerity generally. Chief among those was the well known Spanish director and doyen of the left-wing, Pedro Almodóvar.

But the reality is that for many years the Spanish film industry has been pampered with state subsidies and forced funding from TV stations. Even then, ticket sales were frequently inflated. In August 2013, the New York Times highlighted that some producers inflate ticket sales to reach audience thresholds that enable them to receive big state subsidies worth as much as a third of the cost of production. The NYT reported that one movie, "Holmes and Watson, Madrid Days," was met with little enthusiasm. It got a lukewarm response when it was released and over six weeks, its audience steadily decreased. Then, in its seventh and final weekend, ticket sales rose 5,300%! Smell a rat?

The Institute of Cinematography and Visual Arts said it is trying to clamp down on abuses and levied fines of €470,000 in 2011 and €243,000 in 2012. Now, as there is little public money left in the system, the abuses are hopefully, minimal.

Hollywood is a place where they shoot too many pictures and not enough actors.
Walter Winchell

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Sadly Maris won't be joining us at Orsini's. She had a bad experience there one Christmas Eve. The Italian soccer team was at the next table. Maris announced she was in the mood for a goose, and, perhaps inevitably, tragedy occurred.

Niles Crane, *Frasier*

SNIPPETS!

The opposition have criticised the Treasury Minister, Cristóbal Montoro, for using tax data to attack his political rivals. They accuse the minister of being 'a professional leaker' and playing a dirty game. This is quite true and tax officials are incensed. They believe that Montoro is hampering their investigations and tipping off suspected miscreants before the officials have completed their investigations.

There are more than 1,200 patients on the island of Ibiza waiting for an operation and 5,186 for an appointment with a specialist. The Balearics health councillor admitted the figures 'are not good'. 'Appalling' I would say!

Spain has dropped charges against 11 of the 12 suspects in the country's biggest ever clerical sex abuse scandal, given that the statute of limitations had expired. One of the priests is still charged with the more serious offence, where he faces a 10-year jail sentence if found guilty. The alleged victim claims he was raped and made to perform sex acts with one of the priests at a villa with a swimming pool, while others allegedly took part or turned a blind eye to the acts.

The National Court, the judicial body which pursues terrorism and organised crime, is to open an investigation into the bogus gasmen. To date over 500 bogus installers/inspectors have been charged, with more than 2,000 victims, mostly elderly, defrauded. The frauds have ranged from €50 to €1,200. Most of the bogus gasmen have no technical qualification, and many have a criminal record and use fake ID. Because of the simplicity of the fraud it is difficult to determine the full extent nationally. However, the Andalusian authorities estimate that these conmen take around €150,000 a month in their region alone.



Spain has lent €7 billion to Greece and has been a guarantor for a further €18 billion and is now decidedly nervous.

One of the far left parties in Spain, Izquierda Unida, has called for the removal of the nationality test/interrogation used on foreigners applying for Spanish citizenship, as does the Attorney General in the European Court of Justice. The IU state that most Spaniards would be unable to pass the test.

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Grandma's Boyfriend...

A 5-year-old boy went to visit his grandmother one day. Playing with his toys in her bedroom while grandma was dusting, he looked up and said, 'Grandma, how come you don't have a boyfriend now that Grandpa went to heaven?' Grandma replied, 'Honey, my TV is my boyfriend. I can sit in my bedroom and watch it all day long. The religious programs make me feel good and the comedies make me laugh. I'm happy with my TV as my boyfriend.'

Grandma turned on the TV, and the reception was terrible. She started adjusting the knobs, trying to get the picture in focus.. Frustrated, she started hitting the backside of the TV hoping to fix the problem.

The little boy heard the doorbell ring, so he hurried to open the door and there stood Grandma's minister. The minister said, 'Hello son, is your Grandma home?'

The little boy replied, 'Yeah, she's in the bedroom bangin' her boyfriend.' The minister fainted.....

Simon Kennefick

Idiot of the Month.

A job test in Northern Spain went horribly wrong after examiners handed the budding employees a sheet with all answers to the exam questions on it. Their scores made the mess-up all the more embarrassing.

Last December, a total of 120 people sat an exam for a single job at a retirement home in the city of Castro Urdiales (Cantabria region), a clear sign that jobs are few and far between in crisis-hit Spain. The candidates were in luck though. The examining body had given them all the answers to the 30 questions that were part of the job-entry exam, Spanish radio station Cadena Ser reported. Even though they were handwritten on the sheet, the vast majority of the people sitting the test must have thought someone was calling their bluff. Sixty% somehow managed to fail!

If it's any consolation to them, one of the job candidates told the examiners about their glaring mistake, leading them to schedule a re-exam in due course.

Catalonia is one of the many Spanish regions with massive debt, an ailing health service with everything taxed except the sun. But Catalonia has an extra weakness, its infatuation with the idea of independence. Some of the main purveyors of this have been the Pujol family dynasty (now being investigated for fraud and money laundering) and the current president of the region, Artur Mas. Mas now wants to open 50 new 'embassies' abroad - not Spanish but Catalan ones. It seems they have five existing 'embassies' in London, Paris, Washington, Brussels and Berlin. The 50 new ones are supposed to include Vienna and Rome. Might I also suggest Pyongyang, Tehran, Islamabad and Buenos Aires. Their own brand of lunacy would compliment your own. But even in these very austere times, Mas can still drum up funding for his international pretensions. The budget of the Generalitat on international politics has been raised from €6,500,000 in 2014 to €9,700,000 in 2015. Of this, €8.6 million is devoted to 'cooperation' and the remainder (11.1 million €) is reserved for "diplomacy". Still, it's not like they need to spend that money on something important, like child poverty, evictions of mothers with babies, domestic violence, the unemployed, the health service.....

Our next challenger for the title this month is Michelle, photo, the Dutch wife of the mayor of Mijas in the Costa del Sol. During a political meeting, Michelle decided to literary sing the praises of her husband. The performance reached the Richter Scale for cringe-worthiness and embarrassment. The lovely Michelle sang..



*You created an amazing Mijas,
You cleaned up beaches, the mountains and the city...,
I vouch, I will vote for you again,
I want you as mayor for four more years,
You've created vegetable patches for the elderly,
And congratulate them as they turn a year older.
And thank you for all those new roundabouts.....
I will always respect you.....*

If you would like to share in the 'joy' of the performance, you can catch it here -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHZwlc9tsnQ>

Afterwards, her husband commented, 'Perhaps I got married too quickly.'

So I went down to my local supermarket and said to the guy, 'I want to make a complaint. The vinegar's got lumps in it.'

He said, 'Those are pickled onions.'

Tim Vine.



Carnival in San Pedro del Pinatar. The bride looks a bit nervous! Check out the padre!

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Entrance Exam.

Bruce, an Australian guy, has applied to join the Sydney police force. The Sergeant doing the interview says: "Your qualifications all look good, but there is an attitude suitability test that you must take before you can be accepted."

Then, sliding a pistol across the desk with a few spare clips of ammo, he says "Take this pistol and go out and shoot six illegal immigrants, six drug dealers, six Muslim extremists, and a rabbit."

"Why the rabbit?", asks Bruce.

"Great attitude" said the Sergeant. "When can you start?"

Jenny Reader



Carnival at Aguilas, Murcia.

Municipalities Tightening the Belt.....or Noose!

Now that the building boom is no more, Spanish municipalities, particularly the coastal ones, are finding it difficult to generate funds and investments to progress the efficient management of their boroughs. As more services are withdrawn and more roads are in need of repair, these municipalities are forced to become more creative and indeed tough, when it comes to raising additional funding.

The province of Málaga is leading the way in this by initially focusing on two areas where they hope to generate significant revenues - unauthorised building works and motor vehicles.

But have no doubt that these revenue raising efforts will be coming to an area near you soon. The only reason we are not subject to these inspections and fines is down to a lack of staff and a lack of will by what seems to be an imploding political situation.

In Málaga, the land registry expects to detect as many as 39,000 irregular buildings. A new round of inspections will affect another 12 towns in the province, including Estepona and Marbella.

Over this year a total of 758,000 homes will be revised in the province, and it follows a previous inspection which ran from the end of 2013 and during 2014 and concentrated on 29 towns in the province.

The land registry inspectors are looking for any illegal building, modification or extension and where the IBI local rent has not been paid in sufficient quantity. Of the 758,000 dwellings, some 390,000 are in Málaga City where a 10% infraction rate is expected, according to Beatriz Navarro Heras, the General Director of the Land Registry, writing in their magazine. She explained

compared with what is on the ground and once an irregularity is detected, the owner would be paid a visit. She said the 10% includes people who have carried out small, but unreported alterations and fines start at €60, which means in Málaga City alone, during this year some €2.3 million will be collected.

Of course, the size of the fine corresponds to the seriousness of the change, and the lower fines are dictated by simple maths - If an undeclared new built new work is over 15 square metres or, in the case of extension, more than 15% of the ground originally built on, it would in both cases generate an automatic fine and revision of the IBI charge. This should also, at least in theory, increase the urbanisation fees for the said property.

New swimming pools, a building on a previously vacant plot, and extra story or extension, and even clearing a space for parking, are some of the most common which have been detected since the start of this year and who will from July 1 will be told of the fine to pay.

This is part of a national four-year campaign which will affect all the localities in Spain, and has been established after the decade of irregularities during the 2000's when 10 million modifications were discovered.

The DGT traffic authority in Málaga has also focused on vehicle and motorbike owners and is catching more drivers with no legal MOT/ITV. They are using their cameras and radars and recent offender numbers have been dramatic. In 2013, the number caught without an ITV/MOT in Málaga province was 26,032 and in 2014 it was 38,527, up 12,495 which at €200 each fine brought the DGT €7.70 million last year.

These figures have to be taken in context; according to the public company Industrial Verifications in Andalucía, which manages the testing stations authorised by the Junta de Andalucía Council; some 150,000 cars on the roads of Málaga province have no ITV, and almost 24,000 motorbikes are in the same situation.

The DGT, which usually lists on their website the location of speeding cameras, is giving no information on which of their current cameras or radars the new system is being used, but say anyone caught speeding would automatically have their ITV checked anyway.

Current the number total vehicles registered in Málaga province is 745,000, and in addition 120,000 motorbikes.

I couldn't settle in Italy. It was like living in a foreign country.
Ian Rush, ex-Liverpool footballer.

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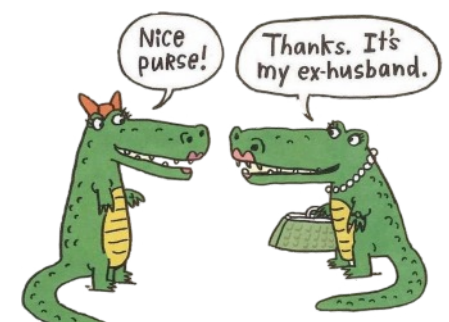


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Spanish Unions Enjoying the Good Life.

You may recall from previous issues how the trade unions in Andalucia have diverted millions of euros to other destinations other than to the supposed destination of training for the unemployed.

One of the trade sections of Comisiones Obreras (CCOO), Spain's largest labor union, spent more than €14 million on meetings and travel, and €3.7 million on bonuses between 2008 and 2012, Spain's worst crisis years, according to internal union accounts to which EL PAÍS has had access.

Members of Comfia, the union's former banking branch – which has since been merged with the hospitality and commerce sections – presented their organization with restaurant bills worth tens of thousands of euros a year, very often for meals at expensive establishments frequented by economic elites.

Millions more were disbursed on a multitude of conventions at the local, regional and national level, some of which cost more than €300,000 to organize. The accounts also show numerous items recorded under generic headings such as "other" or "Visa," making it impossible to see exactly what the union's money was spent on. The accounts show that some of the union leaders dined out three times a week at expensive restaurants with some bills in excess of €1,000.



Águilas Carnival Murcia.

Apologies to Fans!

A Man Utd fan dies on match day and goes to heaven in his Man Utd shirt. He knocks on the old pearly gates and out walks St. Peter in an Arsenal scarf.

"Hello mate," says St. Peter, "I'm sorry, no Man Utd fans in heaven."

"What?" exclaims the man, astonished.

"You heard, no Man Utd fans."

"But, but, but, I've been a good man," replies the Man Utd supporter.

"Oh really," says St. Peter. "What have you done, then?"

"Well," said the guy, "Three weeks before I died, I gave 10 pounds to the starving children in Africa."

"Oh," says St. Peter. "Anything else?"

"Well, two weeks before I died I also gave 10 pounds to the homeless."

"Hmmm. Anything else?"

"Yeah. A week before I died I gave 10 pounds to the Albanian orphans."

"Okay," said St. Peter, "You wait here a minute while I have a word with the governor."

Ten minutes pass before St. Peter returns. He looks the bloke in the eye and says, "I've had a word with God and he agrees with me. Here's your thirty quid back, now fuck off!"



INDICATION?

**Twinkle twinkle little light
tell me where you're going
Is it left or is it right
for I've no way of knowing**

**Locals they don't pay no heed
just do what they want
Most ex-pats don't see the need
just intent on their jaunt**

**Whether fast or whether slow
doesn't seem to matter
Oblivious are most of them
till they have a clatter**

**Pedestrian crossings hold no fears
regardless of who's using
They just step up another gear
and find it all amusing**

**Roundabouts are a lot of fun
let's just whack a bollard
They're only plastic and hurt no one
and no one's all that bothered**

**Just phone a friend and hold the wheel
as you know where you're going
It doesn't matter what others feel
when you are sharply slowing**

**Speed is very important to you
you've got to get there fast
What other cars are forced to do
is very quickly past**

**Try and see another's view
and give people respect
It really matters what you do
and it should be correct**

**Change your ways
don't trust to fate
Another day
may be too late.**

The Phantom Poet.

I was hurt to read in Wayne Rooney's autobiography that I'm his least favourite TV celebrity. I mean, what have I ever done to the potato-headed granny-shagger?

Jonathan Ross



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Little Johnny, Again.

A teacher in a Belfast primary school sets the class a homework task every day by picking a word at random from the dictionary and getting the kids to make a sentence using that word. One day she picks the word "contagious" and sends the kids home for the night. Next day, Mary stands up and says "All the cows in England were infected by foot and mouth which is very contagious and they had to be slaughtered." "Well Done" says the teacher.

Frank stands up and says "During the plague in London, thousands of people died from bubonic plague which is highly contagious and spreads quickly." "Good" says the teacher.

Wee Johnny stands up (wiping snotties from his top lip) and says "The man next door to us is painting his house with a two inch brush and my Dad says it'll take the contagious"



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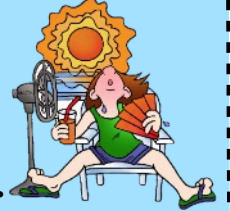


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Never bet on the white guy - that's all I know when it comes to boxing.
Lt Frank Drebin, *Naked Gun*.

THE SIX DAY JOURNEY

By Ken & Heather Billingsley

It all started to go wrong due to the delayed sailing of Brittany Ferries crossing from Portsmouth to Santander. The sailing should have been on Sunday 1st February but due to the high winds in Spain this sailing was delayed until Tuesday 3rd February at 01.00.

We disembarked in Santander at 07.30 Wednesday morning. We had been told by the crew "Spain has had a little snow, so please drive carefully".

We started driving on the A67 in drizzle which quickly escalated to snow which became progressively worse. Due to the falling snow the traffic was only using the outer lane of this road. Having driven approximately 100km we came to a halt in a queue of traffic due to a lorry accident, it was now about 10.30am. We were only about 6 or 7 cars away from this lorry.

The other carriageway had no normal traffic on it but various snow ploughs and Guardia vehicles could be seen going the wrong way down it. Snow ploughs and tractors came to our side of the carriageway and cleared snow at various times but nothing much happened at all until 17.00 when a JCB (photo) cleared the snow from the right hand lane of the carriageway



and it would have only taken a few shovels of snow and we could have moved into the right hand lane and we had hoped been on our way. It was not to be.

Nothing further happened until 02.40 when a snow blower came along and again cleared the right hand lane. At 03.00 a worker knocked on the window and said that "in about 5 - 10

minutes you will be out of here". What he forgot to say it was not the cars but only the people.

We had now been in our car for 17.5 hours. At 04.00 a soldier from UME - this is the unit that deals with disasters - came and told us we were leaving our vehicles and to go with them. We only had to time to grab our handbags, phones and passports. The UME had dug a trench which was knee high through the snow, we then had to climb the central reservation barriers and through another trench on the other side and climb into a snow vehicle. We were then taken 10 km to a school hall but our rescuers were told there was no room for us and we were then transferred into a Guardia 4 x 4 and driven back the way we had come and onto Reinosa which was 20km to a hotel. It was 05.45 when we arrived. We were taken into a large dining room there were no blankets or help and not even a warm drink. So it was sleep where you could, if you could!

At 07.00 the cafe in the hotel opened and that was the first warm drink we had had since 06.00 on Wednesday before we left the boat.

In the Royal Navy in the 1960's, any hint that you were gay would lead to an immediate discharge. Gay rights activist.

At 10.30 the Guardia asked all people heading south to proceed outside and we would be taken back to our vehicles. There was not enough vehicles for us all and so those that could get into the Guardia vehicles and the rest of us had to return to the hotel. Those in the vehicles did not in fact leave the hotel till 12.30.

At 14.00 the Guardia said drivers only who were going south to go outside and they would be taken back to their vehicles, but that no one was allowed to drive south. Unfortunately the Guardia exited the carriageway one junction too soon and we completed the journey on the opposite carriageway. We therefore had to trek through thigh high snow to reach our vehicles. After having my vehicle dug out by the Guardia we were told we could not be given an escort back and we had to find our way on the N611. During that journey there was another snow storm but I eventually found my way back to the hotel.

Although the hotel we were taken to seemed large it did not have that many rooms and the staff were unsure how many would be available that day so a list was started and we were very low down on the list.



On my return I found that my wife had managed to get onto the Internet and had booked a hotel about 5km away in Reinosa North. We had to risk making the journey to this hotel before the roads became impassable.

The hotel we went to was called Hotel Golobar and we arrived at 16.00 on Thursday afternoon. The hotel is owned by Mario Gonzalez. Mario and his staff were very obliging and ensured that our enforced stay was as pleasurable as possible. We stayed at the hotel till Sunday morning by which time I had extricated the car from the snow drifts on two occasions (one with the assistance of a tractor).

The journey from Reinosa to Torre Vieja was free from any mishaps and we arrived home at 1700 Sunday evening.

Looking back on our adventure it was quite challenging and not something to be repeated again in our lifetime.

(Thank you Ken & Heather for the account of your ordeal. It was at about this time that the British government announced that the winter fuel allowance would be withdrawn later in the year from British expats as the weather here is so warm.)

Never try to impress a woman, because if you do she'll expect you to keep up to the standard for the rest of your life.

W.C. Fields

Lime Bar Fishing Sunbathing Club.

Hello all, nothing much to report this month as it's been too cold to venture out & I've had that "man flu" that has been doing the rounds. Obviously, the women had it worse than us men though!

We had our AGM at the beginning of February and as we were expecting a mega bun fight, we decided to start the meeting 30 minutes early. Everybody remembered except 2. Fagin & guess who.... Yep, Anti Social Baz. Each year the club elects a new Chairman, and this year's lucky person to get stitched up (I mean he volunteered) was "Sweeney" Keith Todd. At the end of the AGM the "Quill" handed over the reins so he could close. This meeting only lasted 55 minutes, so keep it up Sweeney.

We also elected a new match committee. Punchy, Snapper & Ball Boy have been running the matches for a couple of years and deserved a rest. The new boys are 3 Rods, Just John & Daffy (to keep the other 2 in check). This "should" stop them griping about the points system. Fagin the money grabber volunteered to do another year and then relieved us of our subs. He demanded a clap, so he got one!

The February match was held at the Eden. 7 anglers "trial" fished it the week before without a bite between them, so the writing was on the wall. The forecast was not good, so everybody wrapped up well and had a hot flask. On the day, the temp ranged from 1° to 15°C with gusty winds from all different directions, it was overcast & we had a 10-minute icy shower. This said, we still had an excellent turn out with 16 anglers fishing. Unfortunately, several of us did not have a bite, including 3 rods.

With the conditions as they were, I take my hat off to the 5 anglers that caught. Just John led the way again with 3.2 kgs followed by Grumpy, Feathers, Fagin and Sweeney. Both Sweeney & Feathers have developed a new tactic for catching fish. They scare the fish out of the margins onto their hooks by launching their umbrellas into the river on a gust of wind.

After waking up, and saying "Is that it then?", Grumpy Bob Cummins used his "Golden Whistle" to finish the match. It sounded a bit feeble but that may have been because his lips were numb. Not much sunbathing done this month!

With only 1 match to go in the Winter League it is really close, half the club are in with a shout to get into the final.

Photo of Grumpy, Daffy & Sweeney wrapped up warm after Daffy had recovered Sweeney's broolly.



My wife asked "What jobs are you doing today?"

I said "I am going fishing!"

She said, "You did that yesterday."

I said "I wasn't finished."

Next ~~meeting~~ bun fight is at The Lime Bar @ 17.30 Mon 2nd March.

Fishy fingers!
The Ghost

Here comes de judge!

'Have you anything to say before I pass sentence?' asked the judge.

'F*ck all,' said the defendant.

'I'm sorry, I didn't hear that,' replied the judge and turning to the clerk of the court, he asked him what the man had said.

'He said "F*ck all,"' responded the court official.

'Really,' puzzled the judge. 'I could have sworn I saw his lips move.'

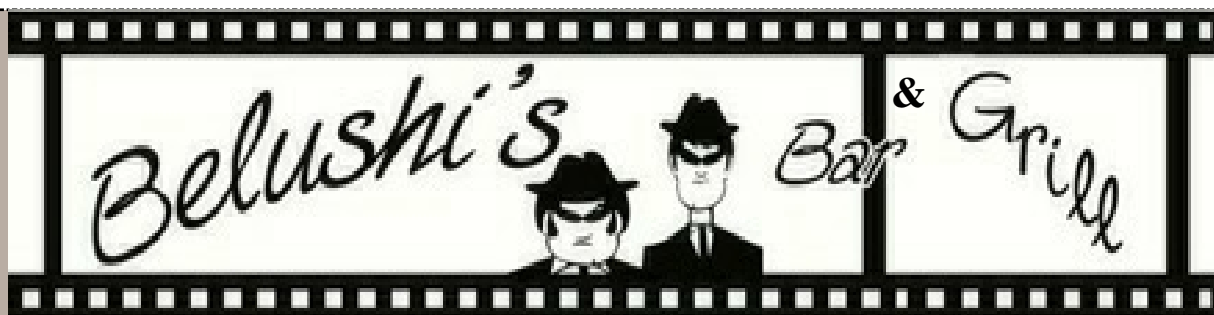
The judge turned to the woman and asked, 'I see you're divorcing your husband on the grounds that he is a slob and uncouth. Can you give me any examples of this?' 'Yes, your honour. Whenever we go out he always drinks tea with his pinkie sticking out.'

'But there's nothing wrong with that,' said the judge. 'It's considered good manners in some circles to drink tea with the little finger sticking out.'

'But I wasn't talking about fingers,' she replied accusingly.

Stewart.

I come from a very traditional family. When I was seven, my Uncle Terry hanged himself on Christmas Eve.
My family didn't take his body down until the sixth of January. Nick Doddy



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Wednesday Evening – Steak and Ribs

4oz Rump Steak with ½ Rack of our own BBQ Ribs only €9,95

Thursday Evening – Lamb Shank in Red Wine
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Saturday Evenings – Steak and Wine Special

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Carnival celebrations on the Orihuela Costa.



Ninja 'Turtles' from the Carnival in Alicante.

Refusing an Inheritance!

Further evidence on the failure of the Inheritance Tax in Spain comes from Malaga. Here around 1,000 residents of Málaga province refuse to accept an inheritance every year. According to the Notaries College in Andalucía the choice depends on how much tax has to be paid. And Andalucía is one of the Spanish regions with higher fiscal pressure on successions tax, which means an inheritance in Málaga can be a poisoned gift. A member of the managing council of the Notaries College, Ramón Blesa, said, 'When this year ends 1,060 malagueños will have rejected their inheritance, so far this year 803 have done so and 6,018 have accepted it, down from 8,013 last year. If the inheritor accepts and is in debt, the creditors can embargo the inheritance, although there are judicial shortcuts for a person to accept. 'It's not clear if we have touched bottom, the number of renunciations should fall in line with the growth of the economy and employment in Málaga'.

(Abridged from TypicallySpanish)

(If any of our readers wish to know more about refusing an inheritance, let me know and I will send you some links. Mick)

Two old men are watching a Great Dane lick his balls. One turns to the other and says, 'All my life, I've wished that I could do that.'

The second one says, 'Better pet him first, he looks mean as hell.'

Billy Crystal



The 'Burial of the Sardine' during Benidorm Carnival.

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The Germans are a cruel race. Their operas last for six hours and they have no word for 'fluffy.'
Captain Blackadder, *Blackadder Goes Forth*.



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ALL €6.50!



THURSDAY - MID-WEEK ROAST

- a Selection of Starters and Desserts Available;
Choice of Meats, Roast Topside of Beef, Roast Pork Loin or Chicken Breast;
All Served with Roast Potatoes, Cauliflower Cheese, Broccoli, Carrots, Peas, Yorky Pud, Stuffing & Gravy
1 COURSE €9.95; 2 COURSE €7.50; 3 COURSE €8.50



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Ooops!

My best mate's girlfriend is six months pregnant. She said to me, 'Do you want to feel the baby?' On reflection I think she meant on the *outside*.

Jimmy Carr

Spain Now World's Largest Exporter of Wine.

Spain's El Economista has reported how the country has now overtaken the likes of France, Italy, Chile, Australia and South Africa to become the largest exporter of wine in the world.

The daily newspaper cited data produced by the Spanish customs and excise agency, compiled and analysed the Spanish Wine Market Observatory (OEMV).

The reported revealed how a total of 2.168 billion litres of wine was sold between September 2013 and September 2014 - up 19.9% on the previous 12 months.

This compared with Italy - who were last year's largest exporter - selling 2.025 billion litres, which was down by 1.7% on the same period the year before.

France came in 3rd position in terms of the total volume exported, yet top in terms of the financial value at EU7.763 billion, whilst the value of Italian wine exported came to EU5.087 billion, with Spain lagging behind at just EU2.524 billion.



Zombies at the Carnival in Alicante.

Motormouth!

A police officer pulls over a speeding car. The officer says, "I clocked you at 80 miles per hour, sir."

The driver says, "Gee, officer, I had it on cruise control at 60; perhaps your radar gun needs calibrating."

Not looking up from her knitting the wife says: "Now don't be silly, dear -- you know that this car doesn't have cruise control."

As the officer writes out the ticket, the driver looks over at his wife and growls, "Can't you please keep your mouth shut for once!!?"

His wife smiles demurely and says, "Well dear, you should be thankful your radar detector went off when it did or your speed would have been higher."

As the officer makes out the second ticket for the illegal radar detector unit, the man glowers at his wife and says through clenched teeth, "Woman, can't you keep your mouth shut?"

The officer frowns and says, "And I notice that you're not wearing your seat belt, sir. That's an automatic \$75 fine."

The driver says, "Yeah, well, you see, officer, I had it on, but I took it off when you pulled me over so that I could get my license out of my back pocket."

His wife says, "Now, dear, you know very well that you didn't have your seat belt on. You never wear your seat belt when you're driving."

And as the police officer is writing out the third ticket, the driver turns to his wife and barks, "WILL YOU PLEASE SHUT UP??" The officer looks over at the woman and asks, "Does your husband always talk to you this way, Ma'am?"

"Only when he's been drinking!"

Brian Horsman

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HOUR**

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Summer.

BINGO

? Quiz ?

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What the doctor ordered!

A doctor and his wife have a huge argument over breakfast. It ends with the doctor yelling at his wife, telling her she's rubbish in bed. He then storms off to work. A couple of hours later, the doctor is feeling sorry about the row, so he phones his wife. After 20 rings, his wife eventually answers the phone. 'What took you so long?' asks the doctor. 'I was in bed,' replies the wife. 'In bed?' says the doctor. 'What are you doing in bed at this time of day?' His wife replies, 'Getting a second opinion.'

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Stefan Pokroppa has launched an English program on Siesta Radio 91.6 FM on Fridays from 12:00 – 13:00 hours.
It will include some interesting interviews and will be a test to determine whether the English broadcast hours should be extended.

Luvvies.

Daniel Radcliffe, the star of the Harry Potter movies, has made loads of money. I believe it's the most money made by a teenage boy without suing Michael Jackson.

David Letterman

David Hasselhoff: more wooden than Pinocchio with a stoffie.

Mark Lamarr

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The New Doctor.

A young doctor had moved out to a small community to replace a doctor who was retiring. The older doctor suggested that the young one accompany him on his rounds, so the community could become used to a new doctor. At the first house a woman complains, "I've been a little sick to my stomach." The older doctor says, "Well, you've probably been overdoing the fresh fruit. Cut back on the amount you've been eating and see if that does the trick?" As they left, the younger man said, "You didn't even examine that woman? How did you come to the diagnosis so quickly?"

"You noticed I dropped my stethoscope on the floor in there? Well, when I bent over to pick it up, I noticed a half dozen banana peels in the trash. That was what probably was making her sick." The younger doctor said, "Pretty clever! If you don't mind, I think I'll try that at the next house."

Arriving at the next house, they spent several minutes talking with a younger woman. She said that she just didn't have the energy she once did and said, "I'm feeling terribly run down lately."

"You've probably been doing too much for the Church," the younger doctor told her. "Perhaps you should cut back a bit and see if that helps."

As they left, the older doctor said, "I know that woman well. Your diagnosis is almost certainly correct, she's very active in the church but how did you arrive at it?"

"I did what you did at the last house. I dropped my stethoscope and, when I bent down to retrieve it, I noticed the priest under the bed." Jenny Reader

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