

# THE DREAM SCENE

## NEWSLETTER

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

Issue no. 106, 1st of February 2016.

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

Well, a lot has happened since the previous edition of the Dream Scene in early December.

First of all, we have experienced the warmest winter in several decades - at least so far! As I write, whereas the evenings and early mornings can be chilly, once getting as low as 4°, we have had plenty of blue skies and warm sunshine; still a heck of a lot of people walking around in shorts. Scientists and farmers are a little concerned with the warmer weather, as we appear to be experiencing spring in winter. As it has been the warmest winter in 34 years, the vegetation/biological cycle across the province appears to be accelerating with the early flowering of crops. Almond trees have been in early blossom since early January and the *nisperos* fruits are being collected early. Worldwide, 2015 was confirmed the hottest year on record. NASA and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration both independently concluded that the global surface temperature was the hottest since records began, in 1880. The previous record was set just one year ago. Might be a good idea to get that air-con sorted out!

Spain held a general election on December 20<sup>th</sup>. The two main parties, the PP and the PSOE, received a hammering. The best that can be expected now is a coalition of opposites. As there seems little agreement or cooperation to date between the different parties, there could very well be another election soon. The two largest parties do not want this as they know they are likely to lose more votes and seats in Congress. More details inside.

The British think tank, the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), believe that Spain is going to overtake Italy as the largest economy in Southern Europe, despite falling from thirteenth to seventeenth place in the world economic league. This is far from the heady days of 2007 when Spain was eighth largest economy in the world. The recovery is expected to take Spain back to fifteenth place next year but the long term outlook for 2030 sees a fallback to seventeenth.

Meanwhile, property prices locally seem to have stabilised with very slight increases evident. Resales continue to lead the market with the price of new property, together with the associated taxation, not doing as well.

The urbanisation security guards were on the ball when they found two men hiding in a garden late one evening. They called the police. When the police arrived, the 'visitors' told the police that they 'were waiting for someone.' The police couldn't arrest them but now know who they are. In another incident, a local resident spotted a young 'hoodie' climbing over a neighbour's garden fence (maybe trying to steal garden ornaments?) and shouted at him to 'go forth and procreate.' The police arrived rapidly but the would-be thief had scarppered. Well done the guards and the DH resident.

Congratulations to The Bar Next Door for raising €187 during a dart's contest and to The Lime Bar for raising €444 during a pool competition. This makes a cracking €631, which has been donated to the charity - Reach Out. Also well done to Macklin's Welcome Inn, who raised over €400 for Elche Orphanage.

Notice to photographers: When taking photos for inclusion in the newsletter, please try and make sure that you use plenty of flash or lighting. Photos taken during the night time do not come out well in black & white!

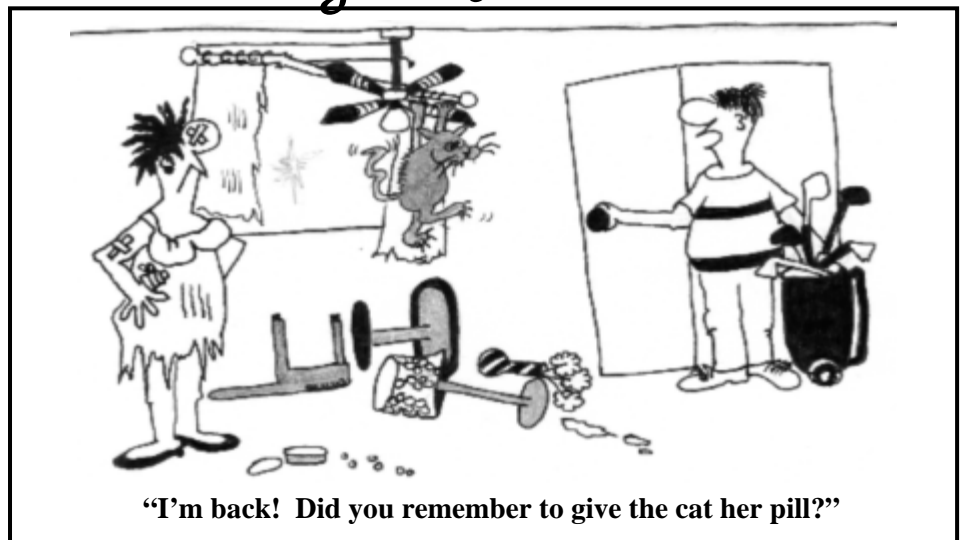
As most dwellings in the area are having their electricity metres changed to 'smart ones,' a number of people have asked me about the new charges. You can find more details on this at the following website together with some useful links -

[http://spanishnewstoday.com/new-hourly-electricity-billing-system-begins-across-spain\\_21747-a.html?Banner=56#.VaWUil-qqko](http://spanishnewstoday.com/new-hourly-electricity-billing-system-begins-across-spain_21747-a.html?Banner=56#.VaWUil-qqko)

Grateful thanks to Kath & Bill, Mike & Diane and Soren & (illegible name) for the extra donations towards printing costs.

Have a great month -  
And don't forget  
St. Valentine's Day  
On February 14<sup>th</sup>!  
Mick & Tid

## Angela's Cartoon



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 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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- POLICE REPORTS
- OFFICIAL TRANSLATIONS (STAMPED)
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- DRIVING LICENCES
- COURT
- TOWN HALLS
- SCHOOL MEETINGS

COMPUTER TRAINING

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**Did you know that .....**

...at least 27 "selfie related" deaths occurred around the world last year? Okay, if you have been in North Korea for the last 10 years, you may not know what a 'selfie' is. It is when you take a photo of yourself using your mobile phone camera.

Now, I have to put my hand up here and say that I am not a fan of modern telephone technology. How many times have you seen a family around a table - all texting their contacts elsewhere - but not talking to one another? Rather than improving or facilitating face-to-face communication, the modern mobile phone has only increased banal textual communications to a gargantuan level.

But it is the 'selfie' we are now reporting on. Of the 27 related deaths last year, more than half occurred in India. During the year, Indians taking selfies died while posing in front of an oncoming train, in a boat that tipped over at a picnic, on a cliff that gave way and crumbled into a 60-foot ravine and on the slippery edge of a scenic river canal. Also, in September, a Japanese tourist trying to take a selfie fell down steps at the Taj Mahal, suffering fatal head injuries. Mumbai police said that they have identified more than a dozen "no-selfie zones" around India's largest city after three young girls were swept out into the Arabian Sea while taking selfies in a rocky part of the Bandra area in January 2016. One of the young women is presumed to have drowned, as did a man who jumped in to save them.



*So the Scottish government is going to add Folic Acid to flour to help prevent birth defects. Wouldn't it be better to just add it directly to the chip fat?*

## What's Up?

Unfortunately, the Spanish General Election, which was held in late December, failed to elect a single party with an absolute majority and has created a political stalemate with great political uncertainty. There is a third-party-report on it on page 9, but the following is my brief *precis* on the election and the current national political landscape. The two main political parties, the right-of-centre PP and the socialist PSOE got an absolute hammering in the election. The ruling PP lost their overall majority losing 63 deputies in Congress, ending with only 123. The PSOE lost 20 deputies ending up with just 90 seats. Between them, both parties lost almost 13 million votes since the previous general election in 2011.

Most of the votes lost by the Big Two went to two new parties who had never contested in a general election previously. Number three at the post was Podemos (We Can). This is a party of the 'far left' and they secured 69 seats, mainly due to defections from, what used to be the traditional left wing party, the PSOE.

Next came Ciudadanos (Citizens) a centrist party. These secured 40 seats mainly at the expense of the PP. Prior to the election, the opinion polls had Ciudadanos gaining as many seats as Podemos, but they got it wrong.

Next came Izquierda Unida (United Left), another far left party who secured just two seats. They lost 9 seats since the previous election to Podemos.

A hotch-potch of other parties, including the separatists from Catalonia, secured another 26 deputies.

So out of 350 deputies elected, no party had an overall majority. This has caused a frenetic scrambling to try and form pacts between parties which, at the time of writing has been markedly unsuccessful. The objective is to secure a pact with 176 deputies allowing the holders to rule. But, with such a disparate group, who hate each others guts, it is proving very difficult. This Congress (parliament) has become one of the most plural and fragmented ever seen in Spain. However, the EU and the financial markets are decidedly nervous about the current position and want it resolved soon.

The first meeting of the new congress took place in early January and with the arrival of Podemos in Congress it looked as if the circus was in town. One Podemos deputy brought her baby in, but this photo of the conservative caretaker PM Rajoy gazing at one of the new dread-locked Podemos deputies amused me. Well, at least the country is now in safe hands!



The new left-wing ruling government for the Valencian Generalitat has asked the central government in Madrid to 'waive' loans amounting to 16 billion euros. Now, they have as much chance of that as I have of Scarlett Johansson telephoning me for a back-rub tonight! The president of the Generalitat, Ximo Puig, told the Minister of Finance, Vicent Soler, that the previous PP governments of Francisco Camps and Alberto Fabra, failed to meet the deficit ceiling and squandered the funding in a "frenzy of irresponsible policies, megalomaniac projects and major events and failed initiatives." The sad thing is, this is quite true.

The Spanish taxpayer pays 52% of his/her income to the taxman making them fourth highest tax payers in the OECD countries. (This figure includes personal taxation, IVA/VAT, etc.) The following figures relate to the percentage paid in other countries.

Sweden 56.86%; Denmark 56.22%; France 54.01%; Spain 52.00%; Japan 50.59%; Portugal 50.29%; Holland 50.13%; Israel 50.00%; Austria 50.00% Canada 49.53%.

The football clubs, Real Madrid and Barcelona, are the two clubs which generate the most income in the world, according to consultancy firm Deloitte. Real Madrid has now topped the list for the eleventh consecutive year thanks to the €77 million it obtained last season. Barcelona reached over €60 million.

Información in Alicante reported 'The ageing population has increased the average age of Alicante residents to 43'. The changes in social policies and the economic situation have encouraged families to delay an increase in their parenthood. 30 is now the average age that Alicante women have their first child and 86 is now the average longevity. What is serious however, is the population decline among Spaniards. Simply, more Spaniards are dying than are being replaced by Spanish births.

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Spain has taken advantage of the collapsed oil price by increasing the country's storage by 10%, forcing the refineries to keep their tanks full and the oil storage CLH which imports crude and petrochemicals.

Información in Alicante headlines 'the average household wage has fallen by €4,000 during the Rajoy mandate'. The legislature ends in the province with a slight increase in the numbers at work, but has the same number unemployed.

The Alicante Diputación Provincial Government paid €14,250 for a trip for six politicians. It was for three days in Brussels. Honestly, these hard working individuals really deserve a break. If I had my way like I would like to help pay for their passage to a warmer clime in the Caribbean for a much longer stay. There's a suitable resort in Guantanamo Bay. The provincial governments are a useless and expensive drain on taxpayers money; once again just another job creation scheme.

The Government decided to use the last days of the election campaign to announce a fall in electricity and gas prices. Electricity was scheduled to be reduced by 0.7% in January and natural gas by 3% at the same time. But in fact, the *bombona* of butane increased during January by 3% for the first time since 2013. The maximum price will be €3.10 compared to €17.50 in May 2013 - which was the most expensive ever.

The Spanish State made 96 million € in tax from the winning number in 'Gordo' lottery. This year sales of the Gordo were up by 4.52% on last Christmas reaching 2.58 billion €.

The State deficit rose by 3.42% this year to October. The difference between income and spending in all public administrations (State, communities and Social Security) has reached 36.934 billion €

AENA, the airport authority has approved a proposal to freeze Spanish airport charges between 2017 and 2021. The airport management company plans to hold the 2016 level of charges which will fall by 1.9%.

A recent survey by El Pais revealed that 80% of the Spanish under-30's live with their parents. A report has show only 6% of the under-24's have left home.

#### <sup>4</sup>What's Up? continued

The National Commission on Competition and Markets (CNMC) has imposed a fine of 25 million euros to Iberdrola Generación for manipulating the price of electricity, which is considered a very serious offence. Specifically, Iberdrola's crime relates to their actions which increased the price on energy from the hydroelectric plants Duero, Tagus and Sil, between November 30, 2013 and December 23, 2013.

A platform of lawyers and journalists has appealed to the European Court of Human Rights to urgently stop the Citizens Protection Law, better known as 'the gagging law' which became law last summer. The European Court of Human Rights will examine the complaint placed by the platform which has been presented to overturn this legislation approved by the PP Government for attacking the right to free information, as protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. In June the opposition accused the Cabinet of creating 'a Police State', by limiting the right to demonstrate, and permitting the security services to sanction such behaviour, a power wielded before by the judges, and with fines as high as €600,000.

A judge has refused to let-out on bail a former PP councillor in the Madrid Regional Government, Francisco Granados (photo), who has been in preventative custody since late October, 2014. It seems a recent search of the father-in-law's home revealed a suitcase containing €1 million in cash. I am sure that, once again, they were just being careful with the housekeeping money. Granados is accused of money laundering, bribery, influence peddling, crimes against the Public Treasury, the misuse of public funds, breach of public duty, document falsification and belonging to a criminal organisation; all while he was a councillor. One building contractor described Granados as *"the dirtiest guy in the world."*



But the 'bribe culture' also extends to the Spanish diplomatic staff. The Spanish ambassador to India has been forced to resign - in effect fired! It is alleged that the naughty boy was taking commissions for works which he approved in India. It is alleged that during 2014 alone, he collected €180,000 in backhanders....sorry, commissions! Whereas the socialists (PSOE) may be at the top of the rostrum when it comes to incompetence, the right-of-centre and just currently ruling PP, are the masters of 'feathering their own nests.'

Two lawyers are to appear in court in Alicante. They are accused of making spurious claims on legal aid and are charged with defrauding amounts totalling €138,000. It also appears that they have also been charging for their time at more than three times the going rate of their peers. If found guilty, they could be joining some of their clients for a period of four years in the 'clink.' No doubt their incarcerated clients in jail, who they failed to free and overcharged, will be waiting to 'reward' them.

Although, the Spanish establishment were very critical of the regime in Venezuela last year, it did not stop them from supplying defence materials worth more than €13 million. Arms sales to Saudi Arabia totalled €447.6 million and to Iraq, €37.4 million.

#### **Mrs Rosenberg's Son.**

Mrs Rosenberg was so proud. 'Did you hear about my son Isaac?' she asked Mrs Bernstein. 'He's going to a psychiatrist, twice a week.'

'Is that good?' queried Mrs Bernstein.

'Good?' Exclaimed Mrs Rosenberg. 'Of course it's good. Not only does he pay €200 an hour but all he talks about is me!'

The crime statistics for most of 2015 in the city of Alicante are less than reassuring. Vehicle thefts in the city were up by 30% to 468 although vehicle thefts throughout the province were similar to last year at around 1,698. Other thefts in the city rose by 13% whereas in the province it actually fell by 1.4%.

There are lots of 'red-faces' aboard the Spanish navy training ship (photo), *Juan Sebastián Elcano\**, at the moment. 127 kilos of cocaine has been discovered onboard and three crewman have been arrested. When the ship went abroad to New York, South America, etc., there were no controls checking crew members who left or boarded the vessel, and they didn't have to pass through customs at any of the ports they stopped in. This allowed the suspects to purchase the drugs in South America and later sell them in New York and other cities. Colombian drug traffickers reportedly used up to 50 crew members in their smuggling operations and drug taking was rife on board. The vessel has a crew of 23 officers, 22 NCOs and 139 seamen.



\*The Spaniard, *Juan Sebastián Elcano*, played a leading role in the first circumnavigation of the earth. This voyage is usually referred to as 'the Magellan Voyage.' But after Magellan died on the voyage, Juan took command of the only surviving vessel in the Philippines, sailing it and its crew of 18 men, back safely to Spain.

The 82-year-old Spanish Diva, Montserrat Caballé (photo), has been given a six month jail sentence for tax evasion. The soprano confessed she had avoided paying €508,562 by being domiciled in Andorra when she was living in Barcelona. In 2010, the singer made around €2 million from concerts in Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Russia and Ukraine. By posing as an Andorra resident, she avoided paying tax on that income in Spain.



Chinese-made counterfeit toys are costing Spanish manufacturers around €167 million a year – or 16.6% of sales – and are responsible for the destruction of 500 jobs. That's according to a report by the European Union's Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM), the body responsible for registering EU trademarks. The report places Spain in a group of EU nations that includes Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Hungary, all of which are the worst affected by these fake goods, which are potentially dangerous. Counterfeit goods make up around 12.3% of sales across the EU, with an estimated value of €1.4 billion.

Although China is experiencing a difficult time in adjusting to a controlled type of capitalism, last year saw a huge increase in financial scams. Dodgy investment schemes robbed Chinese investors of about \$24 billion in 2015 alone. The mixture of growing prosperity and weak regulation led people to get fleeced regularly. You can read more here-

<http://qz.com/576389/a-banner-year-financial-scams-in-china-nabbed-at-least-24-billion-in-2015/>

La Verdad in Murcia has reported that cocaine seizures in the region has multiplied twenty times in a year. The successful break up of international networks has seen a sharp rise in successes. 2,149 kilos of cocaine was seized in the Murcia region in 2014, compared to 124 kilos in 2013. Figures for 2015 not available yet.

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### **Lime Bar Golf Society Los Altos, Orihuela Costa.**

The golf society's venue for the 9th December 2015 was held at Las Colinas Golf Course.

Twenty-eight members teed off on a very cool but sunny morning. The course was in good condition and played very well, however it appears the early start seems to have resulted in the lower than average scores.

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

Nearest the pin on the 7th hole ( par 3) was Pat Heaney.

Nearest the pin on the 10th hole ( par 3) was Arthur Jones.

Nearest the pin on the 14th hole (par 3) was Peter Gillespie.

Nearest the pin on the 17th hole (par 3) was Ken Sutton.

Bronze Class in 2nd place was Ben Gadd with 25 points.

Bronze Class in 1st place was Norman Dobson with 28 points

Silver Class 2nd place was Bob Adair with a score of 25 points.

Silver Class 1st place was John Walls with a score of 28 points.

Gold Class 2nd place was Arthur Jones with a score of 31 points

Gold Class 1st place was Pat Heaney with a score of 32 points.

A very good day of golf in pleasant company, with thanks to the committee for organising the event and the bar staff for providing the meal, also to the ladies selling the football draw.



### **Choked Up!**

A man went into the bookies and left his big Alsatian outside tied to a post. Some minutes later, another man came rushing in looking very distraught. He said to the man: 'Is that your dog outside?' 'Yes,' he replied.

'Oh, bloody hell, I think my dog's killed him!' 'What!!!' roared the man. 'What kind of dog have you got?' 'A peke.'

'A peke! But how could a small dog like that kill my dog?' said the puzzled man.

'I think it got stuck in his throat' came the reply.



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In the United Kingdom, what's the difference between a London zoo and a Glasgow zoo?  
A Glasgow zoo has a description of the animal on the front of the cage.....along with a recipe.

Unfortunately, there has been a violent and tragic start to the New Year. Some weeks ago three bodies were found in an apartment in Ramon Galud in Torrevieja. It appears that a 35-year-old Polish man suffocated his 31-year-old wife and nine-month old baby and then hung himself.

Then in mid January, a man was arrested in Torrevieja on the suspicion that he beat his father to death. Equally horrific was the violent death of a 40-year-old British man in a bar in the Villamartin Square, who was attacked with a broken bottle in the early hours of Saturday, January 16. Three British suspects were arrested, two men of 43 and 26, and a woman of 39. The prime suspect, a 29-year-old British man washed himself into a police station in Altea on the Sunday morning. Finally, on Monday Jan' 25, a 49-year-old Italian was stabbed to death in Campoamor.

It seems that many pet owners from the Torrevieja area, have been burying their dead pets on the surrounding ground to the Natural Park in La Mata. A reporter counted 15 recent burials in an area close to vines and pine trees. Many of the pet graves are marked with soft toys, plastic flowers, crosses etc. The City wants this to stop as they believe that the ground is unsuitable for this activity and that it could lead to public health issues. Carrying a dog to a vet for incineration will cost around €50, depending on the weight of the pet, I would imagine. However if you want to get little Fido's ashes back for sprinkling on your rose bushes, it can cost up to €200. Still, anything is better than just throwing your loved pet in the rubbish bin, which, aside from being incredibly insensitive, can cause serious health problems. Photo, Informacion.



There have been a number of attacks locally on automatic teller machines recently. One on November 8<sup>th</sup> at Los Montesinos; one on December 5<sup>th</sup> in Santa Pola, and the latest at Pilar de la Horadada. The thieves used explosives to blow up the machines and the offences occurred around 4am in the mornings.

If you are experiencing a delay in receiving official documentation from Orihuela Town Hall, you could be in for a long wait. It seems they haven't been paying their bills to the *Correos*. The reason? Well, what the town hall call 'procedural complexities' you and I would call 'excessive bureaucracy and inefficiency.' But I suppose that this shouldn't come as a surprise following the revelation that the current bunch managing Orihuela take more than 160 days to pay their bills. The legal limit is supposed to be around 30 days. But what made me laugh was that during a demonstration held by pissed-off Orihuela Costa residents demanding some or indeed any investment in our coastal area, the demonstration was joined by some of the ruling PP councillors stating that the problem was the lack of investment from the socialist-run provincial council! What nerve!

Now whereas Orihuela Costa property owners provide more than 65% of the income in this municipality, investment by the Orihuela council in the coastal area is negligible. Unfortunately, one of the reasons for this is that the coastal residents are too passive and appear willing to accept their revenues being invested in Orihuela town and the small villages. The mayor of Orihuela, Emilio Bascunana, is bidding for European funds totalling €15 million. However, none of these funds will be spent on the coastal area. It is planned to use the funds to restore the town's historic centre and to revamp the area around the Monte San Miguel, where the seminary stands. Until the coastal residents get off their complacent butts and vote, our coastal area will continue to be under funded with poor emergency services. A casual drive through the area with the bad roads, untended planted areas and dirt will highlight the general neglect, which is obvious and shameful. There are more weeds growing out of pavements and road sides than you would find in a national park! Get angry!

Six hooded men armed with shotguns raided an amusement arcade in Los Dolores, Cartagena. Around midnight, the six assailants arrived in Los Dolores in two cars, a black Renault Mégane Coupé and an Audi A6 of the same colour. With balaclava helmets they entered and told the clients to stay still, while pointing the two double barrel shotguns at them. The destroyed several fruit machines and stole the money inside and fled, without any injuries caused. According to Police sources, the villains were from Eastern Europe and the assault was identical to a raid the previous week in Los Belones. In that case, also six assailants were involved, four entered by the front door, and two from round the back. With a firearm they threatened the clients and also told them not to move. As they left they fired at two fruit machines and fled with the contents.

But I really enjoyed this robbery story concerning someone who should have made Idiot of the Month, but couldn't make it because of lack of space in that column. Picture 6:30 early morning on Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. A man wearing a balaclava, sun glasses, gloves and overalls, pointed a gun at the cashier in a petrol station on the road to Dolores. The bandit took all the cash and fled by car. However, shortly after leaving the forecourt, the would be gangster ran out of fuel! He then walks back to the pumps with a plastic bottle, ten minutes after the robbery and just before the Guardia Civil arrived. The cashier recognised the thief's voice and appearance and distracted him until the police arrived. The man, a 35-year-old Spanish man was arrested when the police arrived and a replica firearm was found in his car.



Many of you will recognise the above stretch of road. It is by the 'dartboard' roundabout leading from the CV-95 Torrevieja-Orihuela road to Lago Jardin II and Dream Hills. On December 19, this four-wheel drive managed to end up on the opposite side of the road, stuck on top of the crash-barrier. An elderly couple of Belgian origin were still stuck in the car by the time the emergency services arrived. However, it took several hours for the vehicle to be removed from the barrier. The driver couldn't explain what happened and there were no injuries.

Aer Lingus will be introducing four new weekly flights from Dublin to San Javier Airport, Murcia, from March this year. It would be great to see even a slight resurgence of flights to this local airport, particularly after the ever-running Corvera fiasco.

*What do you call a beautiful girl  
on a trombonist arm?*

*A tattoo.*

*David Bowie*

**Howler from a Leicestershire parish magazine.**

Winners in the home-made claret section were Mrs Davis (fruity, well rounded), Mrs Rayner (fine colour and full-bodied) and Miss Ogle-Smith (slightly acid, but should improve if laid down).

1,000 men were surveyed as to why they like to receive oral sex. 1% liked the warmth, 2% liked the sensation, 3% liked the eroticism, 94% just liked the peace & quiet. Moira



### Some Good News - At Last!

Most of you will already be aware of the high cost of furniture in Spain, expenditure not usually matched by the quality. So it is encouraging to see that the UK's leading furniture manufacturers and retailers - DFS - will be coming to Spain.

DFS, not to be confused with a small local outlet of the same name, has 103 stores in the UK, two in the Netherlands and now one in Spain.

Their new store, has over 560 metres of exhibition space and is situated on the N332 on the northern outskirts of San Javier.

Although DFS are best known for their sofas - which come in hundreds of models, all of which can be customised and all with a 10 year guarantee - they also manufacture beds, occasional furniture and lighting. The company enjoyed gross sales of the equivalent of €1.13 billion in 2014.



### The Quality of Social Services in Spain.

The Association of Social Services Managers and Directors in Spain have released a report which includes an index measuring the effectiveness of social services in the different regions. With a rating of one to 10, 10 being the most effective, the average score of all the autonomous regions came to a disappointing 4.53.

Top of the list came the Basque Country, described as 'excellent,' with a score of 8.05. Unfortunately our region, Valencia, came bottom of the list with a score of just 1.05, the service being described as 'irrelevant.' Other low scorers were Murcia (2.35), Canaries (2.40), Galicia (2.60), Madrid (3.60) and Baleares (3.85).

Among the other high scorers were Navarra (6.95) and Castilla y León (6.70).

Valencia's low score is appalling and is symptomatic of the poor management and funding of the community for the past couple of decades. Grand and useless schemes have absorbed massive funding. Whereas in the Basque Country €11 is spent per inhabitant annually for social services, the figure in Valencia is just €204, just a third of what the Basques enjoy. The Dependency Law (La Ley de Dependencia) was introduced to supplement social services and help those unfortunates who 'fell between the cracks.' However, it has been an absolute failure, even according to PM Rajoy.

Many months ago my wife Tid applied to have a 'disabled sticker' for her car. Now several months on, she still has not got her 'sticker' despite being approved for it and after repeated visits to social services, the health clinic and Alicante for a medical. She plans to write a report on it when she finally gets it. The system of multiple bureaucracies, repeated form filling and copying to different agencies appears not to have been introduced to assist and help people, but to create and maintain jobs.

### Dinner for Two.

A man and a woman were having a quiet, romantic dinner in a fine restaurant. They were gazing lovingly at each other and holding hands. The waitress, taking another order at a table a few steps away, suddenly noticed the woman slowly sliding down her chair, under the table and under the table cloth, while the man stared straight ahead. The waitress, thinking this behaviour a bit risqué, and worried that it might offend the other diners, went over to the table and tactfully began by saying to the man, "Pardon me sir, but I think your wife just slid under the table." The man calmly looked up at her and said: "No, she didn't... she just walked in." Moira

### An Idiot's Guide to the Spanish Elections.

One month ago on the 20th December, Spain held, arguably their most interesting elections since the post Franco elections in 1977. Then as now, four major parties hoped to have a say in an uncertain political landscape. For decades, Spain's two major parties had been the only game in town. Those who leaned to the right of the political spectrum voted PP, and those who leaned to the left voted PSOE. Anything else was that most pernicious of crimes; the wasted vote.

This year it was different; there were two new games in town. Podemos, a party unashamedly on the left, led by the endlessly energetic Pablo Iglesias. A self-defined Marxist with a knack for populism, a soft spot for Game of Thrones (he gave a copy of the violent TV series to the current regent when they first met last year: it was a tongue-in-cheek illustration of how Iglesias sees the future of all royals) and, perhaps most famously, a terrible ponytail. (The author of this piece fails to point out some of the 'lunatic left' concerns about this party, among them a number of unhealthy connections with some South American head cases and other aspirations, such as leaving NATO and the usual left-wing cant.)

And Ciudadanos a party whose supporters tend to be conservatives that approve of the policies of the PP but have grown weary of the PP's steady drip of corruption scandals. The leader Albert Rivera, occasionally resembles a politibot created for the express purpose of leading a political party. He is young, clean cut, good looking, boasts a head of extremely presidential hair and is, no doubt, an expert at kissing babies.

So what has changed? What has allowed these political parties to become, in political terms: "overnight successes". Spain is not the only country experiencing political upheaval, all across Europe new parties are challenging the status quo and getting results. To understand the phenomenon, it is instructive to have a look at recent events Greece where Syriza, another upstart party, swept to power in January 2015. Coming within two seats of an absolute majority. Syriza were the purest manifestation of a Europe wide dissatisfaction with the gradual transfer of parliamentary power to the EU.

With parliaments ever more limited in their actions, differences between political parties have lessened and the idea that faceless bureaucrats are taking the real decisions has taken hold. Syriza swept to power on the back of a promise to kick the hated Troika out of Greece. The resulting omnishambles did Podemos no favours as the PP were able to make a lot of hay from the Spanish electorate's fears of Spain becoming the new Greece.

However, it also shone a huge spotlight on the power that government have signed away. Syriza were ultimately helpless to carry out their election promises despite a huge mandate from the people. People unhappy with this situation across Europe are increasingly turning to parties on the left and right, that would have been seen as too extreme to be electable in the very recent past.

But if Spanish politics continues on its current trajectory the next general election, be it in one month or four years, looks to be the most interesting still. With the potential to definitively prove Rajoy wrong, with his dismissal of Podemos and Ciudadanos as political flashes in the pan.

(This is an abridged version of an article in El Pais by Tom Cox. The comments in brackets are mine. Mick)

### Driving Me Mad!

Anyone who has been to Mexico City will probably tell you that the car traffic there is an absolute hell on earth. The authorities are trying to clamp down on offences and have launched a 124-page traffic rule book in an ambitious attempt to reduce the chaos.

New laws give precedence to cyclists and pedestrians and drivers who break the rules are severely penalised. Traffic fines have been increased with many at 30 times the daily minimum wage. Uncivil driving behaviour can also result in fines, with a \$40 fine for using your horn too much and around \$120 as a fine for yelling obscenities through the car window!



More than 10,000 cameras and radars have been installed in the city in an effort to catch the offenders, but, as always, restrictions are often a challenge to human creativity, as drivers find ways to cheat the system.

One Mexican firm offers to spray your licence plates a number of times with a special liquid that will cause traffic-camera pictures taken with a flash to be overexposed. And a transparent plastic cover that's installed over the plate blurs the numbers for the camera, but not to the human eye, the company says. All this cost the equivalent of \$700. Other drivers are obscuring their plates with a slatted cover, or with special stickers that go over plate's letters and numbers, rendering them unreadable for cameras; these sell for around \$25 each.

There's also a remote-controlled plate holder that lowers a black shield, completely blocking the plate numbers from the camera's view. But at nearly \$2,700, that's a luxury only a few drivers can afford.

The authorities have promised to clamp down on those who try to beat the system, but as there are 4.5 million registered cars in the city.....

*(Do you know that there are more than a dozen cameras on the short stretch of road between the Torre Vieja Hospital roundabout and the dartboard roundabout leading to Lago Jardin II and Dream Hills?)*

*But how strange was a recent court case in Italy which judged that a bribe to a policeman is not necessarily a crime!*

*The Court of Cassation acquitted the man of corruption – because the €100 he offered the official to avoid being convicted of drunk driving was too small. Bribes of €100 are not big enough to be deemed corruption, the court ruled. The fact that the man was drunk was also a mitigating factor!!!!?!!*

### Blind Man's View.

A blind man travelled by airplane to Texas. On board the plane, he felt the plush seats and remarked how big they were. The passenger next to him said: 'Everything is big in Texas.'

When he landed in Texas, he went straight to the hotel bar in Dallas and ordered a beer. The bartender served it in a mug. The blind man felt the mug and commented on its size. The bartender said: 'Everything is big in Texas.'

After three large beers, the blind man needed a toilet, so he asked the bartender for directions. But he accidentally went to the swimming pool and fell in.

As he flapped around terrified in the water, he screamed: 'Don't flush! Don't flush!'

## HOME CARE.

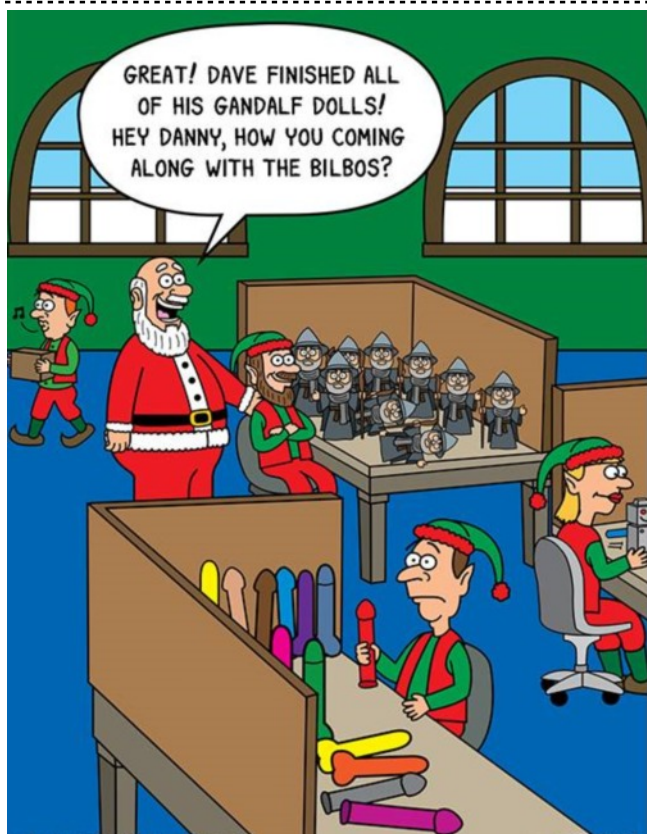
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### Work Calendar Red Days.

The 2016 work calendar shows that this year there will be eight national fiestas common to all the autonomous regions.

The eight National Fiestas are:

January 1: New Year (Friday)

January 6: Kings Day (Wednesday)

March 25: Good Friday

August 15: Assumption of the Virgin (Monday)

October 12: Spanish National Day (Wednesday)

November 1: All Saints Day (Tuesday)

December 6: Constitution Day (Tuesday)

December 8: Immaculate Conception (Thursday).

There are other 'Red Days,' but these fall on Sundays. Each of the regions also have their own 'Fiesta' days. But during most of these, many local commercial retail outlets remain open.



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*Committee: A group of the unwilling, chosen from the unfit, to do the unnecessary.*

### WINTER.

It's late fall and the Indians on a remote reservation in South Dakota asked their new chief if the coming winter was going to be cold or mild. Since he was a chief in a modern society, he had never been taught the old secrets. When he looked at the sky, he couldn't tell what the winter was going to be like. Nevertheless, to be on the safe side, he told his tribe that the winter was indeed going to be cold and that the members of the village should collect firewood to be prepared. But, being a practical leader, after several days, he got an idea. He called the National Weather Service and asked, 'Is the coming winter going to be cold?'

'It looks like this winter is going to be quite cold,' the meteorologist at the weather service responded.

So the chief went back to his people and told them to collect even more firewood in order to be prepared.

A week later, he called the National Weather Service again. 'Does it still look like it is going to be a very cold winter?' 'Yes,' the man at National Weather Service again replied, 'it's going to be a very cold winter.'

The chief again went back to his people and ordered them to collect every scrap of firewood they could find. Two weeks later, the chief called the National Weather Service again. 'Are you absolutely sure that the winter is going to be very cold?' 'Absolutely,' the man replied. 'It's looking more and more like it is going to be one of the coldest winters we've ever seen.'

'How can you be so sure?' the chief asked.

The weatherman replied, 'The Indians are collecting a shitload of firewood.'

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### Got the Time, Mister?

A smooth-talking guy at a bar kept looking at his watch. An attractive woman couldn't help noticing this and asked: 'Is your date late?'

'No,' he said. 'I've just bought this state-of-the-art watch and I was testing it. It uses alpha waves to talk to me.'

'What's it telling you?'

'That you're not wearing any knickers.'

'Well, sorry,' she said, 'but I am.'

'Damn, it must be an hour fast.'

### Another Common Spanish Fraud!

A common fraud throughout Spain is the falsifying of employment contracts. One regularly sees reports in the media of 'employees' of non-existent companies collecting grants or unemployment pay and then 'having their collar felt' by the police. These are effectively gangs specialising in fraud and it is common throughout the country. A recent case in Malaga province resulted in 101 people being arrested. Typically Spanish covered the story....

101 people have been arrested in Málaga province for defrauding public accounts more than €1.1 million. They invented fraudulent employment contracts to obtain unemployment subsidies.

Detectives from the National Police made the arrests including the alleged leader of the fraud - the owner of a legal consultancy, and two businessmen. The main suspect confected and transacted fraudulent work contracts presumably orientated to obtain grants and unemployment subsidies or by administrative regulations for foreign citizens in Spain, according to a statement from the National Police.

The scam was centered on nine fictitious companies, as legally established and was detected nine months ago, as a series of irregularities emerged in several companies across the province. After a detailed examination of the work done by the Provincial Service for Work and Social Security Inspectors, the existence of the alleged leader was found.

Given his knowledge on employment rights in collusion with the investigated businessmen they established work contracts for companies which didn't exist or where the number of employed differed from reality. These invented workers were employed for sufficient time to later collect unemployment pay, and also using false work contracts to obtain residence and work permits for foreign residents.

The investigated companies defrauded the Social Security account of more than €69,000 and from the State Employment Service another €34,613 to make a total fraud of more than €1.1 million.

(There has been several similar cases in Orihuela, Torrevieja, Alicante.....)



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### The Court Will Rise!

The scene is a law court. The prosecution counsel faces the female witness and rasps: 'Is it true you committed adultery on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June in a snowstorm while riding on the roof of an automobile travelling at ninety miles an hour through Slough with a one-legged dwarf waving a Union Jack?'

The young woman in the witness box looked straight at the prosecuting counsel and said, calmly:

'What was the date again?'

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### Odd, and a little sad!

A real odd story from the Catalan city of Girona. A married US couple were arrested by the police after they searched the couple's duplex and found the body of their seven-year-old child. It seems that the child had been dead for over three months. No doctor or services were called and it seems that the family had been spending time inside the same room with the body and rarely went out at all, leading psychiatrists to believe that they may have been under a collective delusional state. Family members reportedly referred to the child as being merely "asleep."

It has now emerged that the Catalan police had been to the house five days prior to the grisly discovery, after the US consulate was contacted by somebody concerned that no one had heard from the family in a long time. The father spoke with the officers and told them that everything was fine.

Then, on January 5, the apartment owner showed up to demand that the family pay the rent they had owed since September. After getting no answer but hearing loud screaming inside the home, she called the police, who entered the premises and found the body.

There was also two other older children in the apartment who were found to be in good health but God knows what effect this bizarre incident will have on them.

Initial tests have revealed that the child may have died of possibly a respiratory condition.

The parents were released later after psychiatric tests.

Tell a man there are 300 billion stars in the universe and he'll believe you.

Tell him a bench has wet paint on it and he'll have to touch it to be sure.

Herb Cohen



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I have the heart of a young boy....in a jar on my desk.

Stephen King





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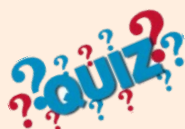


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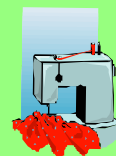
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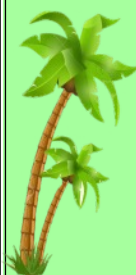
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Please contact us if you are able to help with either goods or donations.

**John 688 238 878**

<http://www.reachouttorrevieja.com/>

### Clocked!

The other night I was invited out for a night with the "lads" I told Rosy that I would be home by midnight, "I promise!" Well, the hours passed and the Sambucas went down way too easily. Around 3 a.m., a bit loaded, I headed for home. Just as I got in the door, the cuckoo clock in the hallway started up and cuckooed 3 times.

Quickly, realising that Rosy would probably wake up, I cuckooed another 9 times. I was really proud of myself for coming up with such a quick-witted solution, in order to escape a possible conflict with her. (Even when totally smashed... 3 cuckoos plus 9 cuckoos totals 12 cuckoos = MIDNIGHT !)

The next morning Rosy asked me what time I got in, I told her "MIDNIGHT"... she didn't seem pissed off in the least. Whew, I got away with that one! Then she said "We need a new cuckoo clock." When I asked her why, she said, "Well, last night our clock cuckooed three times, then said "Oh Shit!" Cuckooed 4 more times, cleared its throat, cuckooed another three times, giggled, cuckooed twice more, and then tripped over the coffee table and farted.

Brian Horsman

### Giving Evidence.

Policeman in witness box: 'This woman came up to me when I was in plain clothes and tried to pass off this five pound note, m'lud.'

Judge: 'Counterfeit?'

Policeman in witness box: 'Yes, m'lud, she had two.'

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Ground Floor,  
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Pie & Pint (Estrella Galicia) only 4€

**Messing with Messi.**

The Barcelona Provincial Court has fixed the date of Tuesday May 31 for Lionel Messi and Jorge Horacio Messi, his father, to face the three crimes against the Public Treasury. Messi and his father are accused of the supposed management of the player between 2007 and 2009 in the value of the image rights of the player between 2007 and 2009 in the value of €4.1 million. The judge in Gavà decided to open the case against the footballer, despite the Prosecution asking for him to be exempt considering the villain of the piece is his father who Messi 'trusted plainly and blindly.' The appeal was thrown out and then the State Attorney asked for a 21 month jail sentence, seven months for each of the charges against him and his father considering Messi was the 'co-author' and the fine of €4.1 million.



It is interesting that, although the prosecutor was not interested in pursuing Messi, who has already paid over several million euros to mitigate the charges, it appears that the judge may enjoy his own bit of publicity having the gifted footballer appear in his court.

This contrasts against the Urdingarín case where the judiciary are moving 'hell & high water' to ensure Princess Doña Cristina, the former king's daughter, does not appear on the accused bench, although her excuse is the same as Messi's.

**Dirty Water!**

Another recently breaking corruption story (to add to the mass of others) relates to Acuamed, a state owned company which deals with water distribution and desalination plants. In this case the general manager (whose salary is more than €10,000p.a.) and 15 other employees - which includes several directors - have been arrested for fraud. Once again it is alleged that hefty commissions (bribes) were paid to them to facilitate the awarding of contracts. The investigation may be expanded to include 35 others. One director had €100,000 in cash stashed in his home. Regrettably, the contract for the desalination plant in Torre Vieja is also under investigation. Directors at Acuamed received backhanders of money, trips and valuable gifts - including hair implants. (Should be easy to spot the guilty!) El Mundo have now reported that Acuamed are suspected of paying bribes to senior staff at the Ministry of Agriculture. They also estimate that between €20 and €25 million has been 'diverted' by Acuamed during the last 10 years.

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'Come and enjoy the authentic taste of Spain.'

Русский говорят.



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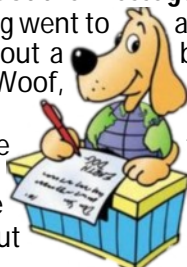
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SKY  
SPORTS

Got the Message?

A German shepherd dog went to a Western Union telegraph office, took out a blank form and wrote, 'Woof, Woof, Woof, Woof, Woof, Woof, Woof, Woof, Woof.'

The clerk studied the form and said: 'There are only nine words here. You could send another 'woof' for the same price.' The dog said, 'Yeah, but that would be silly.'



Gill welcomes you to

## JILLY'S



Lago Jardin II

Now serving Bar Snacks  
incl. Toasties, Baguettes,  
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Food Always Freshly Prepared.

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THE BEST FRESHLY GROUND COFFEE & DECAF.

FREE WIFI.

Relax and soak up the sunshine  
on our large south-facing terrace.

COME AND JOIN US FOR OUR SECOND  
ANNIVERSARY PARTY  
ON SATURDAY JANUARY 30th.

My new girlfriend's car got a flat tyre as we were on our way to see my parents, so I phoned them up and said.....  
"Sorry Mum I'm going to be late. My new Girlfriend's got a puncture".  
"Oh Son" she sighed.. "I thought you had a real one this time".

I'm not saying my wife is a terrible cook, but our garbage disposal unit has developed an ulcer. H. Youngman

### Dodgy Dentists!

More than 30 lawsuits are now making their way through Madrid's courts as a result of a campaign launched some years ago by the official dentists' association against "low-cost dentistry" that often sees patients fall into the hands of unqualified practitioners.

Private detectives have been sent into suspect centres by the association to snoop around, while other times it is patients who take action and report the matter.

Ramón Soto-Yarritu, president of the Madrid Dentistry Association, says it will keep fighting the illegal centres, but that its battle would be a lot more effective if people were more aware. "Many people are being conned, and when they finally realize that they are not in the hands of qualified professionals, things start making sense," he says. "When they have health problems as a result, that is when they decide to file a complaint."

In February of 2015, the association, acting as the private prosecution, asked for four-year prison terms for three unqualified people who were running a clinic in Plaza de Castilla, in the north of the capital, and allegedly using an unlicensed tooth-whitening product that is potentially dangerous to human health.

Note the classy (plastic) dentist's chair in this photo which was taken by a private detective.



### Do bears do what in the woods?

A bear had to go for a crap in the woods. As he squatted down behind a bush, he found a rabbit doing the same.

'Say,' said the bear, 'do you have trouble with shit sticking to your fur?'

'No,' said the rabbit.

'So the bear picked up the rabbit and wiped his ass with it.'

### Japanese Hotel Service.

A Canadian salesman checked into a futuristic hotel in Tokyo, Japan. Realizing he needed a haircut before the next day's meeting, he called down to the desk clerk to ask if there was barber on the premises.

'I'm afraid not, sir,' the clerk told him apologetically, 'but down the hall from your room is a vending machine that should serve your purposes.'

Sceptical but intrigued, the salesman located the machine, inserted 1500 Yen, and stuck his head into the opening, at which time the machine started to buzz and whirl. Fifteen seconds later the salesman pulled out his head and surveyed his reflection, which reflected the best haircut of his life.

Two feet away was another machine with a sign that read, 'Manicures, 2000 Yen'. 'Why not?' thought the salesman. He paid the money, inserted his hands into the slot, and the machine started to buzz and whirl. Fifteen seconds later he pulled out his hands and they were perfectly manicured.

The next machine had a translated sign that read, 'This Machine Provides a Service Men Need When Away from Their Wives, 100 Yen.' The salesman looked both ways, put one hundred Yen in the machine, unzipped his fly, and with some anticipation, stuck his manhood into the opening. When the machine started buzzing, the guy let out a shriek of agony and almost passed out. Fifteen seconds later it shuts off. With trembling hands, the salesman was able to withdraw his tender appendage, ..... which now had a lovely blue button sewn neatly on the end.

### ATM Withdrawal Charges for Non-Customers.

The banks have finally released their schedule of ATM charges for non customers.

**BBVA:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 1.80 €

**Bankia:** If you are not a client of this bank there are two charges; if you are a client of BBVA, Bankinter, CaixaBank, ING, Santander or Banca March you will be charged 0.98 € If you are a client of Euro 6000, Popular or Sabadell you will be charged 0.65 €

**Bankinter:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 1€ with the exception of Popular with 0.65 €

**CaixaBank:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 2€

**Euro 6000 (group):** If you are not a client of this bank but are from BBVA, Bankinter, CaixaBank, ING, Santander and Banca March you will be charged between 1 and 1.90 € If you are a client of Bankia, Popular or Sabadell you will be charged 0.65 €

**ING:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 0.50 €

**Popular:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 1.50 € with the exception of ING where there is no charge.

**Sabadell:** If you are not a client of this bank and are from BBVA, Bankinter, CaixaBank, ING, Popular, Santander or Banca March you will be charged 1.80 € If you are client of Bankia or Euro 6000 you will be charged 0.65 €

**Santander:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 1.85 €

**Banca March:** If you are not a client of this bank you will be charged 1.80 € (TypicallySpanish)



"Hold these. I have to go back for my wife."

(Lynn Lomax)



# FEBRUARY AT THE PHOENIX



Via Park V

**Kitchen Open Daily from 2pm (excl. Weds')**  
**Serving Breakfasts, Full Snack Menu.**

**Daily Specials -**  
**Home-cooked Food at Its Best!!**



**Wednesdays - Fun Darts with Big Brian, Oy! Oy!**

**Thursdays - Eyes down for The Phoenix Bingo -**

Tickets on Sale from 2:30pm

Dibbers & Dabbers at the Ready for 3pm.



**Fridays - Fun Quiz with Brian - Come along and Join in!**

**Saturdays - Sports Shown on 4 Large Screens -**  
**With Beer & a Burger Only €3!**

**Sundays - Homecooked Traditional 3 Course Lunch**  
**Served 2 - 8pm**

**FEBRUARY IS THE MONTH OF LOVE!**

**CHECK OUT AT THE BAR**  
**FOR DETAILS OF OUR**



**ST. VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIAL**

**SUNDAY FEB' 14.**



WiFi

**Fair's Fair!**

Bloke goes into a chemist and asks where the tampons are. The assistant directs him towards the feminine hygiene section. Five minutes later he goes to the counter with a bag of cotton wool and a toilet roll. The assistants asks him 'I thought you wanted tampons?', to which the bloke replied; 'Yesterday I sent my Mrs out to pick me up a pack of 20 cigs, she came back with a pouch of baccy and a packet of papers. Lets see how she likes rolling her own.'

**Macklin's** LOUNGE BAR & GAMES ROOM

LIVE BETTING AVAILABLE HERE FULLY LEGAL

POOL...SNOOKER...DARTS...POKER

**LIVE SPORTS 6 SCREENS**

RUGBY BOXING MOTORSPORTS FOOTBALL

BINGO! EVERY SATURDAY AT 2pm.

JOYCE'S SUNDAY QUIZ 9pm.

QUIZ NIGHT

WiFi Free Zone

FIND US AT GROUND FLOOR, VIA PARK 3.

### Lime Bar Golf Society Los Altos, Orihuela Costa.

The golf society's venue for the 13th January 2016 was held at Mar Menor Golf Course.

Thirty-eight members teed off, about the largest we have fielded, on a very pleasant sunny morning. The course was in excellent order and the conditions allowed it to be played well.

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

We had the first lady playing for the Limebar in the last four years. Congratulations to Pat Gregan on achieving 32 points.

Nearest the pin on the 2nd hole was Ken Styan.

Nearest the pin on the 8th hole was Ken Styan.

Nearest the pin on the 14th hole was Bob McKnight.



Nearest the pin on the 17th hole was Stewart Black.

Best guest was Robert Waldore with a score of 33 points.

Silver Class in 3rd place was Tony Jones with a score of 27 points.

Silver Class in 2nd place was George Ruston with a score of 28 points.

Silver Class in 1st place was Gordon Anders with a score of 31 points.

Gold Class in 3rd place was Ken Farrow with a score of 33 points.

Gold Class in 2nd place was Arthur Jones with a score of 33 points (on count-back).

Gold Class in 1st place was Bob McKnight with a score of 37 points.

Two free games of golf were awarded from Serena Golf Course to the society and placed in a draw. The winners were Bill and Christian Denne father and son, amazing!

A very enjoyable days golf in pleasant company, thanks to the committee for organising the event and the Lime Bar staff for providing the meal, also to the ladies for selling the football draw.

### Technology News - The Latest.

Apple computer announced today that it has developed a computer chip that can store and play Hi Fi music in women's breast implants.

The iTit will cost between \$499 and \$699.00 (see \$699 model with super woffers across) depending on speaker size. This is considered to be a major breakthrough because women have always complained about men staring at their boobs and not listening to them.

Pete Dudman







# JUKES



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VIA PARK V.**

**Stockist of all your favourite British brands.**

**Fresh deli sandwiches made to order - over 20 fillings to choose from; to eat in or takeaway.**

**Full range of Pastries, Pies, Pasties, Sausage Rolls, Paninis, Jacket Spuds, Breakfasts and Snacks.**

**DAILY SPECIALS AVAILABLE - ALL €4.95!!  
SEE BOARDS FOR DETAILS.**



## TUESDAY - CHIPPY CHEWSDAY.

**Chippy-style Dinners All with Handcut Chunky Chips, Peas, Beans, Gravy, Curry and Bread 'N' Butter, Pies, Saveloy, Meat Puddings, Cod, Scampi, Fishcakes.**

**ALL €5.95!**



## WEDNESDAY - JULES AUTHENTIC INDIAN CURRIES

**Choice of Starter Onion Bhaji, Tandoori Chicken, Hot 'N' Kickin' Chicken Wings, Curries - Beef Bhuna, Chicken Tikka Massala, Lamb Madras,**

**Chicken Vindaloo & Jalfrezi, Veggie Chick Pea 'N' Lentil, All with Basmati Rice, Naan Bread; eat in or takeaway  
ALL €6.50!**



## SATURDAY IS GRILL DAY!



**All Served with Fresh Salad and Handcut Chunky Chips; Cajun Fillet Steak, Peppered Steak, Full Rack 'O' Ribs, Quarter Roast Chicken, Thick Pork Chops, Mixed Grill, Cheeseburgers, Cajun Chicken Breast, Horseshow Gammon & 24 Ox T-bone.**

**ALL OF THE ABOVE ARE AVAILABLE  
BETWEEN 12 - 4PM**

**BY ADVANCE BOOKING ONLY  
TELEPHONE ORDERS WELCOME.**

**TEL:603 355 615**

**MON - FRI 8 - 10:30pm. (SAT 6pm & SUN 4pm)**

*We have women in the military, but they don't put us in the front lines. They don't know if we can fight, if we can kill. I think we can. All the general has to do is walk over to the women and say:*

*"You see the enemy over there? They say you look fat in those uniforms."*

*Elayne Boosler*

## Dodgy Doctors.

Instruction Court number 3 in Reus, (Tarragona) is investigating 47 doctors from the public and private health services for being paid illegal commissions from the Traiber Company which bribed the accused to use their products for knee, hip and spine prostheses.

The statement from the Instruction Court was made during mid-December and it also added to the investigation list a dozen workers at Traiber and two physicians from the Santa Tecla hospital in Tarragona for hiding from patients the defective quality of the knee prostheses.

Also under investigation is the former president of the Barcelona Doctors College between 2010 and 2014, Miquel Vilardell.



The practitioners being investigated worked in around 30 public hospitals and private clinics in Cataluña, although cases of irregular practice have been reported from across Spain and abroad. Several distribution companies outside Cataluña are also being inspected and have been found that '40% of the invoice went to the doctors'. Staggering!

Inside Cataluña, Traiber made an agreement with doctors at a private hospital where 'a system of royalties was established: when there was private insurance cover and the operation cost €400 (14% would go to the doctor). If the patient had no health insurance the commissions collected were far greater; if an operation cost €5,600 - 25% would go to the doctor.

Although the company has registered the irregular payments as 'royalties' or 'collaborations,' the judge considered it proven they were covering up irregular commissions. The payment of the supposed bribes to the doctors places the latter in a criminal position and facing a very delicate procedure, declared the judge, which considers the medics used their position as intermediaries between the hospital and the company 'to profit from their medical surgeries'.

It means more than 6,000 patients who have been operated in recent months will need close observation. The case, raised by El País four months ago, highlights the largest case of corruption between doctors and medical companies not seen in Spain in recent decades.



# PUNJABI PALACE



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ONCE AGAIN!**

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**AWARD WINNING INDIAN RESTAURANT & TAKE AWAY.**

**INDIAN CUISINE AT ITS FINEST.**

**OVER 130 FRESHLY PREPARED DISHES**

**FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM.**

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!**

**TRY OUR FAMOUS LUNCH MENU**

**SERVED 12pm - 3pm**

**Includes a generous glass of wine, small beer or soft drink.**

**ONLY €8.95**

**FREE BOTTLE OF WINE WITH TAKE-AWAY ORDERS OVER €20!**

*Always a warm welcome from Preet & Atul.*

**SPACIOUS AND FULLY AIR CONDITIONED**

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*Also at La Murada 966 779 169 & Quesada 966 714 963*

## LIME BAR ANNUAL GOLF AWARDS.

The Lime Bar 2015 Golf Awards was held on Saturday 16th January 2016, at the downstairs function room of the Filton Centre, Los Balcones.

A very good and entertaining evening was enjoyed by around 120 members with their wives and guests together with great live entertainment.

Monthly Winners were: January- Pat Heaney, February- Bill Denne, March- Bryan Archer, April- Mike Heighway, May- Bryan Archer, June- Ken Farrow, July- Les Thwaites, August- John Macgregor, September- Arthur Jones, October- Ken Styan, November- Mike Heighway, December- Pat Heaney.

Bronze Division: 3rd Dave Railton, 2nd Ken Sutton, 1st Barry Shawyer

Silver Division: 3rd Bob Adaire, 2nd Les Thwaites, 1st Digger

Gold Division: 3rd John Macgregor, 2nd Arthur Jones, 1st Mike Heighway.

Other awards: Presidents Trophy was won by Mike Heighway; Captain's Day which was a team event won by Tony Jones, John Macgregor, Digger and Simon Herbert. Tour was won by Mike Heighway.

Members of the committee and all those who had assisted throughout 2015 were thanked for their contribution.



## Being Irish.

Eight-year-old Muhammad entered his classroom on the first day of school.

"What's your name?", asked the teacher.

"Muhammad," he replied.

"You're in Ireland now," replied the teacher. "So from now on you will be known as Mick."

Muhammad returned home after school.....

"How was your day, Muhammad?", his mother asked.

"My name is not Muhammad..... I'm in Ireland, so now my name is Mick."

"Are you ashamed of your name? Are you trying to dishonour your parents, your heritage, your religion? Shame on you!" And his mother beat him.

Then she called his father, who beat him again.

The next day Muhammad returned to school. The teacher saw all of his bruises.

"What happened to you, Mick?", she asked.

"Well, shortly after becoming an Irishman, I was attacked by two feckin' Muslims."

Moira

*Late last night a large hole was made in the walls surrounding Sunnyview Nudist Camp at Bighampton.*

*Police are looking into it.*



# AQUAQUEST PLUMBING



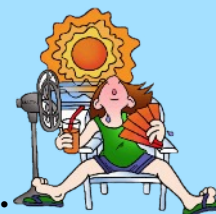
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## Movie Scams Continue.

The former head of the Spanish Cinema Academy is alleged to have defrauded €731,900 of taxpayers money.

Instruction Court 18 in Madrid attributes the producer, distributor, exhibitor and former president of the Cinema Academy, Enrique González Macho, and the producer Edmundo Gil for falsifying takings for the number of spectators for the film *Rosa y Negro* an Hispanic French production, with the aim of obtaining grants from the Culture Ministry to an amount of €731,900 according to judicial sources.

The prosecutor is considering asking six months jail for the producer González Macho with a fine which could be over a million euro.

In addition, it is alleged that in relation to the same film, the Spanish production company, Flamenco Films, controlled by Edmundo Gil, purchased entry tickets for their own film to reach the minimum level for financial support of 30,000 spectators. When this figure is reached for a domestically produced movie, funding becomes automatic.

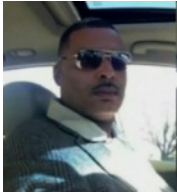
Nearly 98% of those who allegedly saw the film across the seven cinemas it was shown in, six of those cinemas belong to González Macho.

We have reported on this type of scam in a previous issue. Many Spanish movie-makers have been carrying out this scam for years. Unfortunately, the audit/checking system to monitor these abuses is practically nonexistent.

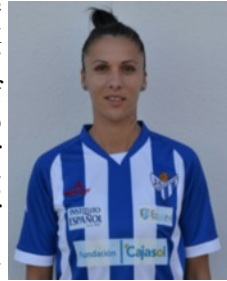
## Idiot of the Month.

As it is two months since the last issue, I find that we are now replete with idiots, worldwide!

First is 45-year-old 'Chip' Pugh from Ohio. Chip failed to appear in court following a DUI charge, so the local Ohio police circulated a mug-shot of him, photo right. But Chip was none to happy with the photo which the local fuzz were circulating so he kindly took a *selfie* (see photo left) of himself in dapper clothing and plush vehicle surroundings and sent it in to the police. Now the police have really appreciated this and would like Chip to contact them a.s.a.p. in connection with the DUI charge, but also in relation to some other charges ranging from arson to vandalism.

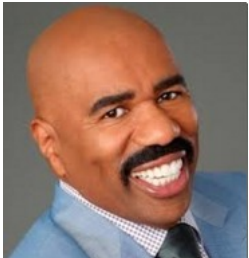


Next we have that often maligned and never forgiven - the football referee. Sometimes, not the sharpest knife in the drawer, as is the case with Santiago Quijada Alcón. Santiago was refereeing a First Division Ladies football match in Badajoz in Western Spain. It seems that Santiago tried to proposition one of the players, Elena Iuliana Pavel (photo) during the game! He spoke to Elena and said, "Hey brown-hair - let's get coffee this afternoon." Surprised and a little shocked, Elena replies, "Better stick to blowing your whistle!" Unfortunately that was not the end of it as, after being refused, Santiago was blatantly in favour of the other team with his decisions, causing Elena's team to lose by a goal. For what is a football-mad nation, women's soccer is very poorly supported in Spain. That may be because there are too many 'girlies' already in the men's teams.



Next was the lunatic who went into a bingo hall in Tarragona and told the players that he was wearing a suicide belt with explosives. Cue lots of shouting and the emptying of weak bladders. The anti-terrorist protocol was activated but it was then found that the guy was not carrying any explosives. He was arrested and taken to jail where, hopefully, he will be subject to an inordinate number of cavity searches. This reminds me of an older story in which a suicide bomb trainer in Baghdad who was showing his class of 21 would-be bombers the art of bomb making using real explosives, when the whole lot exploded, sending them all to meet their maker. We need more of this.

But in late December, it was Steve Harvey, photo, the compere for the Miss Universe Contest in Las Vegas, who proved himself to be a 24-k idiot. Steve awarded the winner's crown to Miss Columbia. Several minutes later & after she was crowned, Steve became aware that he awarded the prize to the wrong candidate. Cue apologies and gallons of tears as the crown was taken off Miss Columbia and given to Miss Philippines. After the show, Harvey tweeted an apology to both contestants in which he misspelled both Philippines (Philippians) and Colombia (Columbia). He also met with Miss Columbia outside the venue to personally apologize to her, where he probably drove over her foot!



*Estate agents are people who didn't make it as second-hand car dealers.*

*Bob Newhart*

But sometimes, the idiots do it in style. Well, I suppose that the subject here is not really an idiot: he is Ivan Zvonimir Cićak, the head of Croatia's leading human rights group, so some respect. Ivan was being honoured by Croatia's attractive president, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, and being presented with an award, when.....well, let the pictures tell the story.....



The conservative press in Spain have been lamenting that the Three Kings Parades are becoming irreligious; with women playing the Three Kings in the parades in Madrid and attempts to dechristianize the religious tradition in the newly socialist controlled Town Halls. The hostility to the Christian tradition is best illustrated by the comments of Rafael Bazán (photo below), a councillor in the town of Podem Guanyar Museros near Valencia. Bazán, who is a member of the 'looney' left party, Podemos, is also the official responsible for Citizen Participation, Transparency and Information Technology and Communication of the City Council. Bazán tweeted 'F\*ck the Magi, Santa Claus and the whore mother who bore them.' He then went on to describe the Christmas traditions as "Catholic Franco customs imposed on us 80 years ago. Kings do not exist, Santa Claus either, the saints did not do miracles, but paedophile priests exists, church sexism does exist, stop these idiocies and tell your children the truth or eventually they will become idiots." What rubbish! We all know that Santa Claus does exist BUT councillor Bazán, no longer does. He has now resigned.



And finally, the only public centre for training the unemployed (in Granada) has been opened for a year with no courses and no students. The civil servants go daily to their post in the fully equipped and empty classrooms. The idiots here are the people who are paying for and putting up with this nonsense.

### Taking Mum's Advice!

A teacher noticed that a little boy at the back of class was scratching his crotch, and not paying attention. She went back to find out what was going on. He was quite embarrassed and whispered that he had just recently been circumcised and he was quite itchy.

The teacher told him to go down to the principal's office. He was told to telephone his mother and ask her what he should do about it. He did and returned to his class. Suddenly, there was a commotion at the back of the room. She went back to investigate only to find him sitting at his desk with his 'todger' hanging out.

'I thought I told you to call your mum!' she said. 'I did,' he said, 'And she told me that if I could stick it out until lunchtime, she'd come and pick me up from school.'

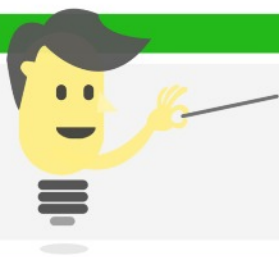
Sue Robinson

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In the 1970's I wanted to train to be a doctor, so I took the entrance exam to go to Medical School. One of the questions we were asked was to rearrange the letters PNEIS into the name of an important human body part which is most useful when erect. Those who answered 'spine' are doctors today. The rest of us are sending jokes to Facebook.

### Thought Provoking!

90-year-old Zygmunt Bauman, is a Polish sociologist who is also Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Leeds. His work has been awarded numerous international prizes, among them Spain's prestigious Prince of Asturias Award, in 2010.



A former communist with an interesting and eventful past, whose views have sometimes been considered somewhat radical, recently arrived in Spain and gave an interview to the left-leaning and prestigious newspaper, El Pais.

In this interview, which you can read in full on this link - [http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/01/19/inenglish/1453208692\\_424660.html](http://elpais.com/elpais/2016/01/19/inenglish/1453208692_424660.html), he gives his interesting opinions on a number of issues ranging from the current crisis in the democratic system to the Catalan independence program. His opinions therein make interesting reading, but I particularly liked his 'take' on the question of social media, which I repeat below -

Q. You are sceptical of the way people protest through social media, of so-called "armchair activism," and say that the internet is dumbing us down with cheap entertainment. So would you say that the social networks are the new opium of the people?

A. The question of identity has changed from being something you are born with to a task: you have to create your own community. But communities aren't created, and you either have one or you don't. What the social networks can create is a substitute. The difference between a community and a network is that you belong to a community, but a network belongs to you. You feel in control. You can add friends if you wish, you can delete them if you wish. You are in control of the important people to whom you relate. People feel a little better as a result, because loneliness, abandonment, is the great fear in our individualist age.

But it's so easy to add or remove friends on the internet that people fail to learn the real social skills, which you need when you go to the street, when you go to your workplace, where you find lots of people who you need to enter into sensible interaction with.

Pope Francis, who is a great man, gave his first interview after being elected to Eugenio Scalfari, an Italian journalist who is also a self-proclaimed atheist. It was a sign: real dialogue isn't about talking to people who believe the same things as you. Social media don't teach us to dialogue because it is so easy to avoid controversy. But most people use social media not to unite, not to open their horizons wider, but on the contrary, to cut themselves a comfort zone where the only sounds they hear are the echoes of their own voice, where the only things they see are the reflections of their own face. Social media are very useful, they provide pleasure, but they are a trap.

### The Phoenix Golf Society.

We played our first game of the new year at Mar Menor Golf Course on the 17th January.

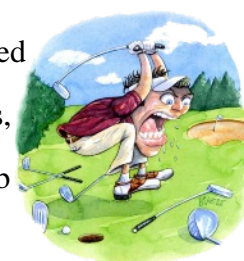
The course was immaculate and there was a good turnout, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The overall winner was Mike Heighway. The Nearest the Pin was won jointly by Reg Groves, Ron Smith and Tim Ryan.

After a very good day put we returned to the Phoenix Bar at Via Park 5 for lovely grub supplied by Donna. So many thanks as usual Donna.

Our next meeting will be on the 21st February. List will be up in the Bar.

(There is no photo this month as everyone was far too ugly! Editor)



### The Bad Debt List.

No, not the urbanisation debtors list, but the taxpayers who owe more than a million euros to the Spanish Tax Agency.

In late December 2015, the Spanish Tax Agency on Wednesday released its first public list of debtors, which comprises 4,855 organizations and individuals owing a collective €15.6 billion to the state. The document shows that builders and realtors make up the lion's share of Spain's tax debtor list, which also includes sports clubs and many bankrupt companies. There are also 345 individuals, who together have failed to pay more than €700 million in taxes.

In the world of sports, the list of debtors who owe over €1 million to the Spanish Tax Agency includes MotoGP rider Dani Pedrosa, soccer player Gabriel Milito and bankrupt soccer clubs like Racing de Santander, Recreativo de Huelva, Jerez, Murcia, Albacete or Alicante.

There are also basketball teams such as Estudiantes, Joventut de Badalona and Girona.

The tax agency sent out warning letters in October to taxpayers who owed over €1 million on July 31, 2015, informing them that their name would soon appear in the first "black list" to be released by the government.

The document shows that real estate agencies top the chart. Sitting in number one position is Reyal Urbis, which owes €378 million all by itself. Once one of Spain's biggest realtors, it began talks with creditors in 2003 after the property bubble burst.

The number two spot goes to construction company Nozar, with a debt of €203.2 million. Lying third is Grupo PraSA (€101 million), a Córdoba-based property development firm.



Martinsa-Fadesa, infamous for becoming Spain's largest bankruptcy case in 2008, still owes the state €37.7 million.

Besides the builders and sellers, there are many other companies on the list that provide ancillary services to the real estate sector.

Out of the grand total in owed taxes, over €6.5 billion (42 percent) represents debt held by taxpayers in bankruptcy proceedings, meaning that the likelihood of collecting this money is lower for as long as the proceedings remain open.

A familiar name on the list is the former Real Madrid president Lorenzo Sanz, who owes €1.3 million in back taxes. But there is also one airport on the list (Ciudad Real), a health center (Hospital General de Cataluña), an airline (Spanair), a multinational fishing company (Pescanova) and a fashion firm (Vitorio & Lucchino).

(From El Pais)

## Lime Bar Fishing Sunbathing Club

Welcome back & we all hope that you had a merry Christmas & looking forward to catching that biggy.

Going back to the end of November, we held our presentation night up at the Lime Bar. Thank you Pete & Sue for putting up with us for another year & organising the food on the night. Nothing special happened, as I didn't win anything but congratulations to all of last year winners. See photo.



To keep the ladies amused while the men were getting their trophies, I ran a "simple" written quiz. I have joined the Sweeney in being banned from running any more quizzes.. it was too easy :-))

Our Chairman (Sweeney) was away for the December bun fight so in his absence, "the Quill" presented Sharon (the Bagman's widow) with €500 which are going to "Cancer Research UK". Sharon thanked everybody for their support and left us to get on with the bickering.

After 18 months of trying we eventually fished the 2<sup>nd</sup> "Old Farts" charity match. It was held at the Eden canal on the 11<sup>th</sup> December, when the weather was changeable with cold showers in the morning and warm sunshine in the afternoon. The sun didn't bring the fish out though, of the 11 that turned up, 4 blanked & 3 had to resort to bleak snatching. The youngsters (Fine Fit Fishermen) won the match with 4.75 kilos against the "Old Farts" 0.07 kilos. After the match we retired to the Lime Bar where we dug deep into Fagin's pockets and enjoyed a couple of festive tipples. The Quill (the oldest fart) presented the Charity Cup to Daffy (the youngster). See photo. The cup was then filled with "muddy river water" and passed around to show that we had no bad feelings – till next year. The score is one each.

December's monthly match was also held on the Eden, and again it did not fish well. We had 14 anglers on the bank fishing from peg 1 to 18. 4 of the lower numbered pegs blanked and most that did catch only had 1 carp or a few bleak. The snake charmer was dripping like a tap when he drew peg 15 but he went on to win with over 4 kilos of carp. Feathers was 2<sup>nd</sup> with 2.7 & grumpy Bob was 3<sup>rd</sup> with 1.8 kilos.



As the Eden had been fishing so poorly recently, we decided to hold the January match at Bigastro which is a venue where we have had large weights & big fish. Over Christmas a working party cleared 17 pegs that should be enough for our match. The following week the committee went to "test" fish the new pegs to prove that they all held fish, only to find that the environment agency had cut the reeds on the opposite bank so half the pegs were unfishable again. \*/\*@##\*. Anyway, we fished where we could and had a good day's fishing. The following week another working party cleared the river **again** ready for the match.

After all the hard work and a good weather forecast I was looking forward to some good results. The river was in excellent condition but the fish weren't having it again.....

14 anglers were on the bank, 6 blanked & most of the 8 that did catch only had 1 fish! Well done to "Just John" who won with 2 fish for 4.5 kilos. The biggest was nearly 3 kilos which is good for over here.

"3 Rods" was disappointed as he hooked 5 but lost all of them, including the obligatory monster that got away.... Still help is on hand for you "3 Rods".

Following the disastrous 1st match of the New Year on the 8th January 2016 at which 6 of our members blanked, Mr Bob Cummins AKA (Grumpy/Lucky and now The Master) was heard to say " *In view of the poor results today I think I should start giving lessons*" and to this end Bob is to set up a refresher course for all those members who appear to have lost their touch and would be interested in honing their skills.

Please contact Bob if you are interested.

Next ~~meeting~~ bun fight is at The Lime Bar @ 17.30 Mon 1<sup>st</sup> February.

(I never drink water because of the disgusting things that fish do in it. W. C. Fields)

Fishy fingers!

The Ghost.

### How Was Your Christmas?

Teacher Ms. Jones was curious about how each of her students celebrated Christmas. She called on young Patrick Murphy, "Tell us, Patrick, what you do at Christmas time."

He replied, "Well, Ms. Jones, me and my twelve brothers and sisters go to midnight Mass and we sing hymns, then come home very late and we put mince pies by the back door and hang up our stockings. Then all excited, we go to bed and wait for Santa to come with all our toys." "Very nice, Patrick" she said.

Noting there was a Jewish boy in the class and not wanting to leave him out of the discussion, she asked, "Izzie Cohen, what do you do at Christmas time?"

Izzie said, "Well, it's the same every year. Dad comes home from the office, we all pile into the Rolls Royce and drive to his toy factory.

Once inside, we look at all the empty shelves and begin singing, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus'... Then we leave for the Bahamas."



Moira

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The editor, Mick, can be contacted at mick.dreamscene@gmail.com or at 586 Dream Hills. (Or in some Bar!)

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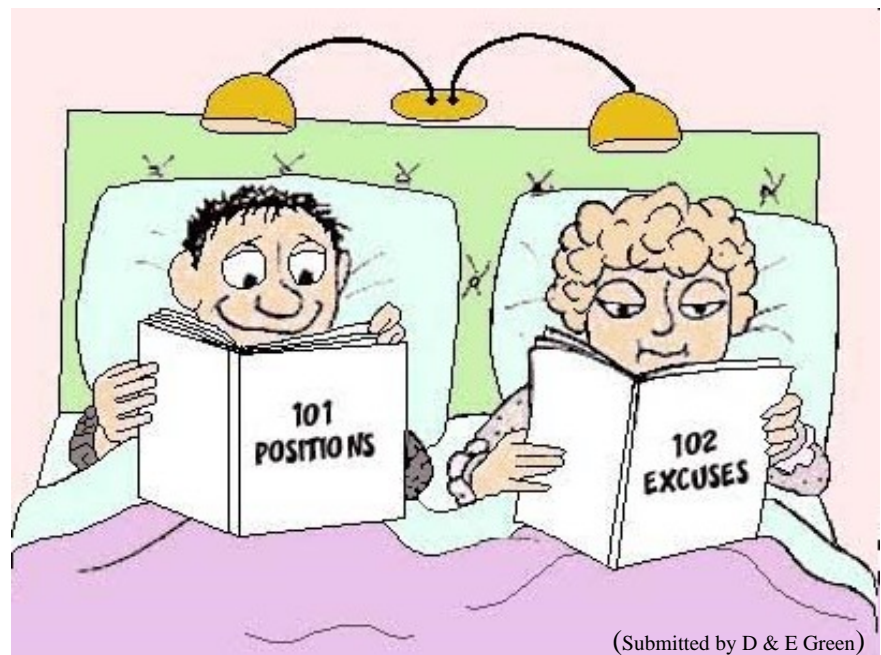
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(Submitted by D & E Green)

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