

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

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

Issue no. 108, 1st of April 2016.

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the April edition.

Well this month we have commenced our 10th year of the Dream Scene, thanks to all those who contribute to it; to the helpers; to the advertisers and to our generous subscribers. We will continue to produce it for another year and as always, make the decision again next year as to whether we continue.

For those who pay to have it delivered to your post box or by email, your subscription is now due. I will be sending out a PayPal request shortly, so you have one months grace. Many of you have already subscribed for the coming year, so just ignore the PayPal request if you have already paid.

There have been some movements in the retail/leisure outlets locally. Los Lobos in Via Park III has now been taken over by Dave of 'Dave's' in Punta Marina. It is now called Dave's 2. What used to be called Spud Murphy's in Via Park III, will be changed to a new pharmacy in a month or two. Lidl's have reopened their old store in Calle Mosca. It is now a massive retail outlet. Aldi's have also opened another new store. This time it is in Torrevieja, quite close to the Iceland/Overseas Supermarket.

The property outlook continues to improve according to the notaries. Sales up 27%, mortgage lending up 30%, house prices up 2%: It looks like January was a great start to the year for the Spanish property market, although new property sales are down significantly over January 2015, resales continue to grow. Many commentators were worried that the political situation might put off buyers and undermine the recovery. That doesn't appear to have happened to date, although the political uncertainty remains. Money does however continue to flow out of Spain as you will see from the report on page 20.

We have enjoyed an incredibly warm winter here, with a day of showers very recently. If you live here or are visiting soon, do check outside your property for stagnant water - the preferred breeding ground for mosquitos. The highly dangerous Tiger mosquito has already been spotted by a research project in Punta Prima and Campoamor and you can be sure that these pests are also in your area.

The Spanish Meteorological Agency warns of a warmer and drying spring than normal with 2° higher on average. And you can bet that this summer, once again, will be a scorcher - so be prepared.

Watch out for: Fake €20 notes. The numbers on the fakes end with the numbers '854.'

Please keep your dog on a lead when outside your home. A careless owner let a dog loose while relaxing on Via Park III and the dog unfortunately was then run-over by a car. This is pure carelessness and it is not the first time a dog was killed there in such circumstances.

With the weather improving and more people returning to the coast, we will also see the usual influx of chancers, crooks, con-men and women. People collecting for children's charities and others at your gates are not what they seem. Collecting for charity by calling on homes is not allowed in Spain. Don't be fooled!

Thanks to those who have already renewed their sub's and also to those who have made donations towards printing costs, namely Ellen & David, Barry & Carol, Les B, and Mike & Beth H.

Page 12 contains details of how British expats can vote on the Brexit issue.

Wishing you all a wonderful month,

Mick & Tid.

Angela's Cartoon

Pam & Chris would like you to know that the book-swap at La Casita now operates on Thursdays from 11am to 1pm.

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Do you know how many middle-aged men go out for a pint of milk and never come home? Not enough.' Jenny Eclair

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
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Did you know that

...the most expensive ham in the world comes from the Huelva province in southwest Spain. Dehesa Maladúa is the world's most expensive ham, coming in at a hefty €4,100 a leg! This prize-winning ham comes from a rare breed of pig called the Manchado de Jabugo, which takes its name from the distinctive dark patches on the animals' coats. Dehesa Maladúa's founder, Eduardo Donato, helped rescue the breed from extinction a quarter of a century ago when he moved to the tiny community of



Cortegana, in southwestern Spain's Huelva province. Donato, aged 67, produces just 80 hams a year, and says the secret of his success is "patience, passion, and pleasure." The Manchado de Jabugo breed has been kept alive over the years by a handful of dedicated farmers like Donato. A Manchado de Jabugo pig takes up to three years to reach maturity, while other varieties can be sold when they are as young as 14 months. It then takes another six years before the ham is fully cured. Manchado de Jabugo ham's unique taste comes from the fact that the pigs eat only natural ingredients. Donato allows them to forage for acorns, almonds and to root around in the rolling woodlands of Huelva, which is washed by Atlantic rains. His customers are happy to pay top dollar, knowing they are acquiring a unique product as well as helping to save a rare breed. What's more, Manchado de Jabugo ham not only tastes wonderful, but it's good for you as well, being rich in protein, vitamins B1 and B6 and healthy minerals. High in unsaturated fatty acids, a 100 gram portion (which would cost around €50) provides around 185 calories.

...if you complete a Spanish tax return, there is a box on it which, if ticked, will donate a percentage of your paid income tax to the Catholic church. This is of course discriminatory as other religions do not benefit from this largesse.



Last year, this passive system of donation raised €250 million for the Catholic church, from 34.76% of all taxpayers in Spain.

...Birmingham has nearly 600 parks, more than any other European city. But that doesn't make it any better, does it?



Once again the Easter processions are solemn, impressive, packed and costly. The above photo is of the massive Virgin of the Dove pasos in Málaga. Putting on two pasos, or processions, in Seville will set you back €25,000 (\$34,000), the member of one brotherhood told Spain's El Mundo newspaper recently. The music bands alone cost up to €7,000 while the wreaths of flowers for the floats can cost €6,000. Add to that €5,000 to candles, up to €8,000 if you need to bring in extra muscle to carry your floats, and €800 for damage insurance in case it rains. Semana Santa is not a cheap affair. Some unions have been organising 'Workers Processions' in protest!

Because no party managed enough voter support for an overall congressional majority of 176 seats, political leaders have been forced to embark on a flurry of cross-party negotiations. They are now trying to build a coalition government, or at least secure enough backing to get one nominee into the prime minister's office at the helm of a minority government. But so far all negotiations have failed, putting Spain in the unprecedented situation of facing a repeat election if no successful nominee emerges within the next two months.

El Mundo reports that the Government will try to avoid S&P, the rating's agency, from placing Cataluña as broke or bankrupt - even though it is! They have asked the rating's agency to soften their report and degrade the debt of 72 billion € in the Catalan Generalitat to the lowest level of 'junk bond.' The Catalans, as you are aware, want to separate from Spain. They feel that with a separatist/independent state, they can do much better. However, in recent years they have shown themselves to be incompetent and, when you take the current Pujol investigation into account, hugely corrupt! If you had your car ITV tested in Catalonia, chances are the Pujols got a commission from it!

El Mundo reports that Cataluña has asked the State to pay the wages bill in the Catalan Generalitat Regional Government which comes to 700 million €, but then, two of the kn*b-head separatists, Oriol Junqueras and Artur Mas, want the Madrid government to hand over €7.5 billion to avoid bankruptcy in the profligate province before the 'disconnection,' i.e. before they 'separate' from Spain. Dream on!

AENA, the Spanish Airport Authority, has approved the freezing of airport landing tariffs until 2021 having reduced this years charges by 1.9% on the instructions of the National Commission for Market Values.

There has been a lengthy strike by rubbish collectors in Málaga. More than 6,000 tons of rubbish lined the streets in the city and 171 rubbish containers have been burned to the ground! Tourists have been taking 'selfie' photos of themselves and the rubbish! What beautiful scenery!

It's not that the Irish are cynical. It's rather that they have a wonderful lack of respect for everything and everybody.'

Writer BRENDAN BEHAN (1923-1964)

The Spanish Inheritance Tax continues to illustrate its weaknesses. Several thousand beneficiaries reject their inheritance every year as it is too costly to keep and the number is growing. The experts recommend a certain harmonisation to avoid distortions. The difference can be as large as more than €160,000 paid in tax on an inheritance of €800,000. On a father from Andalucía (€64,049) and in the Canaries €134.23 and Madrid €1,586.

The Spanish owner of Inditex (Zara, Bershka, Pull & Bear, Massimo Dutti, Stradivarius, Zara Home, Oysho, Uterqüe), Amancio Ortega, has risen to second place in the Forbes ranking for the wealthiest people in the world. Bill Gates remains top (75 billion dollars – 68.18 billion €)

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despite a loss of 5.3%, while Ortega now owns 60.9 billion €. It means over the last decade his fortune has grown by 52 billion €. The large investors made a profit of more than 108 million € in 2015 after investing in Aena. The profit of the airport management company, which was privatised a year ago rose to 833.5 billion € up 74.2% on the year. The company which manages a network of 46 airports and two heliports presented the figure to the National Commission for Market Values. The Public Treasury obtained, after paying dividends, more than 207.3 million €

El Mundo reports 80% of the under 30's still live with their parents. Half of them are working on temporary contracts and in low quality employment.

Evictions fell by a mere 1.1% last year to 67,359. Cataluña is the worst offender with 15,557 (23.1%) and then Andalucía with 10,694 and Valencia Community with 10,037. Far, far too high.

Spain was the world's number one wine exporter in 2015, setting a new record with sales of nearly 24 million hectolitres, which brought in revenues of €2.6 billion. Those figures easily beat the 20 million hectolitres exported by Italy and the 15 million hectolitres by France, the second- and third-biggest global exporters, respectively. That said, Spain is still far from the €8 billion in revenue earned by France last year, or the more than €5 billion by Italy. The reason for the difference? The average sale price of Spanish wine is just €1.10 a litre, 2.9% down on 2014.

The British Ministry of Defence has invested 10 million € in Gibraltar airport. The terminal belongs to the Royal Air Force, although it accepts civilian flights, and London wants to increase its strategic position. The investment guarantees the airport's operation for the next 20 years in a program to resurface the runway.

The Basque supermarket chain Eroski has sold a 'lot' of 36 hypermarkets to Carrefour for 205 million €

Mortgage signings increased in 2015 by 19.8% at 244,827. The average interest rate on homes was 3.37% compared to 3.5% in 2014.

4 What's Up? continued

Two years in jail for the former president of Caja Castilla-La Mancha. The National Court blames Juan Pedro Hernández Moltó for falsifying the accounts of the first entity which ended bankrupt in 2009. Another two years of prohibition from the financial industry. Just two years! His fine is equivalent to 0.0004% of the 7.13 billion € spent on the savings banks rescue.

More than 100 people have been detained for illegally bringing Chinese people into the EU. Agents from the Spanish National Police and security forces in Britain, France and Italy have uncovered the illegal trafficking network. The criminal trafficking network used Spanish airports to arrive in Europe and then the Chinese passengers were sent to Britain, France or Italy. According to a Spanish National Police spokesman, all the members of the criminal network were of Chinese origin. Among the arrested are the leaders of the operation at Spanish airports of Madrid, Barcelona, Málaga, Bilbao, Palma de Mallorca, Alicante and Arrecife used as staging posts to send on their compatriots into Europe. Over 150 fake passports were also seized.

El País report the PP in Valencia charged commission on hospitals. The investigators believe the illegal financing of the PP included health centres.

Whistleblowers are often a target in Spain. This is largely because they embarrass when they uncover the corruption and shame of the guilty. But the actions of one of Spain's largest trade union made me gasp. El Mundo reported that the UGT union has called for jail for the person who uncovered the ERE fraud in Andalucía. They accused him of the 'revelation of secrets' for copying 22,500 documents when he was an administrator. The ERE fraud, which I have covered in previous issues, is one of the two big frauds in socialist Andalucía....and the unions have also been up to their necks in it! The man who leaked the corruption in the UGT union in Andalucía is the whistleblower, Roberto Macías, who is also quoted as saying 'From day to day in UGT, they inflated invoices.' But a recent development in this case also surprised me. Because of the size of the case, magistrates are recommending that if the individual offence is more than 10 years old and if the amount involved is less than €430,000, then the case should be shelved! Who says crime doesn't pay?

An eight-year-old in Majorca stabbed a 12-year-old in the chest following an argument over a skateboard. The victim is in a serious condition but as the aggressor is underage, he remains criminally unimpeachable.

Three young thieves, aged 19, 16 and 15, stole a funeral hearse in Almeria in early March. The hearse had a coffin inside but no body. The youths crashed the vehicle shortly afterwards causing more than €5,000 worth of damage.

Spanish customs authorities intercepted a 15-metre sloop 90 miles off the coast of Cartagena. The yacht contained eight tons of hashish sealed in 320 packages. The crew had to travel on deck as there was no room left in the cabins.

A 'Dear John.'

The British soldier serving in Afghanistan was annoyed when his girl wrote breaking off their engagement and asking for her photograph back.

So he went out and collected from his friends all the unwanted photos of women that he could find, bundled them together and sent them back with a note saying, 'Regret cannot remember which one is you - please keep your photo and return the others.'

What the hell has been going on in Polop, Alicante?



In October 2007, the mayor of Polop, Alejandro Ponsoda (photo), was shot outside of his home and died in Alicante General Hospital eight days later.

Ponsoda was a popular mayor, being elected mayor first in May 1995, and then again in 1999, 2003 and 2007.

A brief chronology of the case:

November 2, 2007 .- John Cano was elected mayor by the municipal council.

October 24, 2008 .- The City of Polop unanimously approved a motion that the Prefectures and the court that the murder of Alejandro Ponsoda be clarified as it had been outstanding for a year.

November 3, 2009 .- The Civil Guard detained a man in Albaterra (Alicante) on suspicion of the death of Alexander Ponsoda. The detainee was being sought since February 2008 for another investigation.

November 15, 2009 .- A businessman in the footwear sector of an industrial estate in Polop was arrested for alleged involvement in the case. Two days later, he entered prison.

November 18, 2009 .- The Civil Guard detained the Uruguayan manager of a hostess club (photo). He entered prison two days later.



November 19, 2009 .- The City of Polop de la Marina (Alicante) announced a private prosecution in the case.

November 20, 2009 .- The Civil Guard detained two men of Czech nationality. Both were admitted to prison three days later, for their alleged connection with the case.

November 20, 2009 .- A new arrest occurs, this time the owner of the hostess club.

November 24, 2009 .- The mayor of Polop, Juan Cano (PP), was arrested in relation to the murder of his predecessor. He now refuses to testify.

November 24, 2009 . The first deputy mayor, Maria Dolores Zaragoza is now the acting mayor.

All were released a few months after entering prison.

The case has now been stalled for several years, but then in late February this year, the principal witness for the prosecution (a janitor, who states that he heard the assassination being planned in the hostess club) states that he has been receiving death threats and has also been offered a bribe of €30,000 to change his evidence.

El Corte Ingles state that they will claim compensation of five million € per year for loss of income if they are forced to close on Sundays in this region. The company has 88 department stores, 43 Hipercor hypermarkets and more than 200 supermarkets under brands Supercor and Opencor. In addition they own the DIY chain Bricor, the fashion shops Sfera, the Opticians 2000, their 500 Viajes El Corte Inglés outlets, the car workshops Motortown, Computer stores and the Telecor shops.

The current full time workforce is over 80,800. For the first time in its history, El Corte Ingles has allowed a foreign shareholder. This is the Sheik Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jaber al Thani, a member of the royal family and former prime minister of Qatar, who was prepared to exchange 1 billion € for 10% of the company. Earlier last month El Corte Inglés reported that it was planning to sell some 200 properties valued at one billion €.

Thinking on the Spot!

Gladys Emmanuel was very upset at her husband's funeral. 'You have him in a brown suit and I wanted him in a blue suit,' she said to the mortician. 'No problem,' he says and yells back, 'Yo, Leroy! Switch the heads on two and four!'

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Lime Bar Golf Society, Los Altos, Orihuela Costa.

The Golf society's venue for the 9th March 2016 was held at Vista Bella Golf Course.

On a cold and windy morning 33 members teed off which did not deter a number of players as the results prove. The course played well and a pleasant round of golf was endured.

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

Nearest the pin on the 4th hole was Bob Salmond.

Nearest the pin on the 8th hole was Dave Railton.

Nearest the pin in 2 on the 13th hole was Les Henderson.

Nearest the pin on the 15th hole was Eddie Allan.

Silver Class 3rd place was Norman Dobson with a score of 30 points.

Silver Class 2nd place was Pat Greggan with a score of 31 points.

Silver Class 1st place was Barry Shawyer with a score of 38 points.



Gold Class 3rd place was Mike Highway with a score of 33 points.

Gold Class 2nd place was Tam Spence with a score of 34 points.

Gold Class 1st place was Stewart Black with a score of 37 points.

A very pleasant day with good company, thanks to the committee for their organisation of the event and the Lime Bar staff for providing the meal, also to the ladies for selling the football draw.

Colin Clarke.



Keep Taking the Tablets!

The woman asked the male pharmacist, "Do you have Viagra?" "Yes," He answered.

She asked, "Does it work?" "Yes," He answered.

She said, "Can you get it over the counter?" "I can, if I take two," He replied.



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A sex shop in Torrevieja has branched out into sex aids for dogs.
So far, the only thing they have is an inflatable human leg.

Orihuela City Council has tripled in less than a year, the average payment period to suppliers. It now takes the council four months to pay their bills. As they have broken government guidelines with this, the Hacienda has refused to allow the council to delay the repayment of a loan of €845,650 for the normal 10 year period from 2013. The Hacienda has demanded that, as a penalty, the council repay the loan immediately.

Unfortunately, Orihuela has also been less than efficient with the tenders for the first aid and lifeguard service on its 11 beaches. A short term contract has had to be ordered for the Easter period as critical dates in the process will not be met. The main contract will be issued for a two year period and cost €420,000 per annum.

Regrettably it is the same story in Torrevieja, with the town council also 'dragging its heels' and having to settle for intermittent contracts. Here it is a three-year contract of around €75,000 annually, renewable for a further three-years - more than three million euros in all. One has to question the general level of competence with these local councils. It seems that Torrevieja have brought a former councilor out of retirement at the cost of €80,000 p.a., (this sum would equate to his €80,000-year-year public pension!) so that the renewal of the rubbish contract and others such as the bus contract - can be dealt with appropriately. This new job was not advertised but hand-picked by the new left-wing mayor. The Spanish newspaper, Informacion, described the council's handling of the contracts as "Cluelessness." The PP opposition believe that the current council want to 'municipalise' the rubbish contract at all costs.

A flock of seagulls collided with a Norwegian Airlines flight just 10 minutes after the plane took off from Alicante-Elche Airport in early March. The plane, which was on route to Munich at around 7am, had to return to Alicante. The birds hit one wing and the nose of the plane. No one was injured but some of the 150 passengers were reported to be very distressed after what was reported to be a very 'heavy' landing. Only two days previously, Aena (the aviation authority) and the Town Halls of Alicante and Elche had detected a new zone of gathering birds, mostly seagulls attracted by a rubbish tip in Fontcalet which is close to the runways. The birds would fly over the airport at dusk and dawn while going from and returning to their nesting areas. Another aircraft was called from the UK and the passengers were ferried to their destination in the afternoon. The operators at the dump have promised to step up their vigilance.....now, doesn't that make you feel better?

Nine cats were poisoned in Pilar de la Horadada on Saturday, March 12. Last September in the nearby El Mjon area, 14 cats were also poisoned. The poison is believed to be a substance to control crop pests.

Not really a local story but illustrative of a major Spanish work problem - absenteeism. The Policia Local in Palma, Mallorca, appear to be a very delicate bunch with nearly a third of them claiming to be ill. With 257 of the 885 agents supposedly ill, it is impossible to run an efficient service. No doubt the thieves, rapists and other assorted villains are quite happy with the situation.



'The gulls seem more aggressive than last year'



Airport Bus Timetable.

This service will provide eight return trips between Alicante-Elche Airport and Torrevieja central bus depot. It will operate every day of the year and without any stops.

Torrevieja to Airport: 7:00, 9:00, 11:00, 13:00, 15:00, 17:00, 19:00, 21:00.

Airport to Torrevieja: 8:00, 10:00, 12:00, 14:00, 16:00, 18:00, 20:00, 22:00.

Price: €6.92. Children under 4 years travel for free but ID may be requested.

Pensioners can get a 30% discount but only if they are registered as permanent residents in the Valencian Community. You may need to show proof of age ID plus Residencia. A bit of a palaver really. Prior booking is not required

The three desalination plants will not supply enough water for Ibiza this summer' the general director of Hydraulic Resources has warned about the continuing drought and the increasing number of tourists which could 'complicate' the situation.

In 2004 the British community in Torrevieja had more than 12,000 residents. Most were pensioners with home ownership in the city. Today they remain the largest foreign group with 8,000 registered residents, but with a decrease in numbers of 4,000. A similar trend has occurred in the case of the German community who now have just over 2,000 registered on the census. Once they came close to 5,000 and was the second largest foreign community in the city by population. Now it ranks fifth, overtaken by residents of Russian origin that despite the economic crisis afflicting the country has consolidated its presence in Torrevieja with more than 5,000 on the census.

The high speed AVE rail link between Alicante and Valencia should be in place after 2017. The new AVE route should reduce the travelling time between the cities to one hour. It is also planned to introduce a bus shuttle service between the AVE point in Alicante and Benidorm.

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The Tax Return.

A woman walks into an accountant's office and tells him that she needs to file her taxes. The accountant says, "Before we begin, I'll need to ask you a few questions." He gets her name, address etc. And then asks, "What's your occupation?"

"I'm a prostitute," she says.

The accountant is somewhat taken aback and says, "Let's try to re-phrase that."

The woman says, "OK, I'm a high-end call girl".

"No, that still won't work. Try again."

They both think for a minute; then the woman says, "I'm an elite poultry farmer."

The accountant asks, "What does poultry farming have to do with being a prostitute?"

"Well, I raised a thousand cocks last year."

"Poultry Farmer it is."



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The Richest & The Poorest.

The leafy Madrid dormitory town of Pozuelo is Spain's richest town, while Torrevieja, a run-down resort on the coast of Alicante province, remains the poorest, according to the latest municipal wealth and inequality survey published by the National Statistics Institute (INE).

The study covers 109 Spanish municipalities throughout Spain, and shows that at €70,298, annual household income in Poseulo, around 15 kilometers to the northwest of the capital, is five times that of Torrevieja's €13,977. Pozuelo is dotted with exclusive gated communities that are home to soccer players and other celebrities. Torrevieja has a significant number of retirees living all year round, many of them from the UK and Germany, and its economy is largely dependent on the summer season.

In general, the north of Madrid is home to the capital's wealthiest inhabitants: in Majadahonda, the country's second-wealthiest town, annual household income is around €56,000. Four more of Spain's 10 richest municipalities are also to be found around the capital: Alcobendas, Las Rozas, San Sebastián de los Reyes, and the city center itself.

Unsurprisingly, the survey reveals a close link between household income and joblessness, a relationship particularly evident in Andalusia where many of the poorest municipalities in Spain are located: Sanlúcar de Barrameda (42.3% unemployment), [La Línea de la Concepción](#) (40.1%), and Jerez (39.4%). Unemployment in Pozuelo is nine percent, while its similarly wealthy neighbors have comparable levels of joblessness.

The survey also provides insight into the gap between rich and poor within Spain's major cities: data from 2012 puts average annual household income in the capital's two wealthiest neighborhoods, El Viso and La Piovera, in the northern area of Madrid, above €100,000. Barcelona's Pedralbes comes in third at €92,755. The poorest neighborhoods in Spain are to be found in the south of Seville: Polígono Sur, Los Pájaros and Amate, where average income is little over €12,000 a year.

The INE survey is part of the European Union's Urban Adult project, which measures living conditions in cities throughout the EU. (El Pais)

(As you will see from this report in El Pais, Torrevieja is described as a 'run-down resort'! A bit unfair and uninformed I think. Tourism towns generate surprisingly low incomes, witness Torrevieja, Benidorm (€20,003) 7th from bottom), Marbella (8th from bottom with €20,401). This is largely, I believe, because of the poorly paid service industry. Large numbers of restaurant, bar and cleaning staff can have a depressive effect on the figures. But in terms of the local economy, this is more than compensated by the massive amounts of cash earned and spent by expats. Expat incomes/pensions are not included in these figures, which refer to the whole household income. When the current mayor of Torrevieja, Snr Dolon, was informed of Torry's status in the report he said, 'We may be poor but at least we are honest.' Not quite the response I expected!

An Englishman living in Los Altos had his credit card stolen last week.

However, he decided not to report it as the thief was spending less than his wife did.

Fifty Shades of Embarrassment

My wife she bought a DVD
called Fifty Shades of Grey
she's watched it four times already
what more can I say
Now bedtime is real frightening
suspenders, whips and hose
and things for muscle tightening
I'll not have none of those
She says she really loves me
and wants to add some spice
but with the blindfold I can't see
and too old to make it twice
To all you happy gentlemen
you really must beware
of films of such suggestion
or we haven't got a prayer.

The Phantom Poet

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The Reunion.

A man meets his girlfriend from 30 years ago. She was so happy to see him that she couldn't resist and asked him to come up and see her some time.

'With pleasure!' said the man. So he bought some wine and a bunch of flowers and in the evening he went to see her. When the door opens there she was stark naked! 'What's this?' - the man was shocked.

She smiles and says, 'I wore my birthday suit for you.'

'That's great,' he says, somewhat embarrassed, 'but couldn't you have ironed it first?'



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Scottish People & Others in Alicante to be Offered Diction Classes.

The Alicante regional government (i.e. those who are not yet in jail), have set aside €10 million to finance a communication's program to enable those who speak English to communicate more effectively to our Spanish hosts. Whereas many Spaniards are happy to learn and speak English to the expats, the problem of understanding the regional accents from the UK has been a major stumbling bloc to the Spanish.

Top of the list for the financial assistance are the Scottish, who, at least to the indigenous population, remain verbally unintelligible. The problem is accentuated by modern telecom's systems which try to recognise the users voice commands. This has resulted in many people being stuck in lifts. See -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0DGA2VV3cl>

Scots will be invited to classes at the local town halls where they will receive tuition in basic English diction words and phrases, so that our Spanish friends can understand them.

There is no charge which will be regional the taxpayer. 'Scottish style' porridge and innards) will be encourage attendance and make the students more comfortable.



for these courses, funded by the government, i.e. Also, various free tapas (made from various sheep's served to

Expats from the Newcastle area will also receive this special funding. There was a very sad story of a Geordie lass who recently took her husband, who was suffering from groin strain, to Torrevieja Hospital. Here, due to problems in making herself understood, the poor man ended up getting a vasectomy! (More details and his name on page 33.) This is why your GP will often insist that you bring a translator to the surgeries.

An effort is also being made to develop a program for Liverpoolian/Scouse speakers. But unfortunately as someone stole the microphones, tape recorders and the instructors car hubcaps, these classes have been delayed.

British Contribution to Spanish Health Service.

The British Government has revealed how much it repays the Spanish Health Service.

Last year the amount returned was 285 million € hardly 0.5% of the total cost of the Spanish Health Service, for the services to the retired or tourists.

David Cameron has warned in the case of Brexit the British could lose their right to live in Spain and no longer obtain a free health service. It's estimated some 750,000 Britons live in Spain, mostly to retire. Another 15 million people visit from the UK each year for their holidays.

Cameron was forced to reveal the figures after a parliamentary question was placed by Labour.

In total the British Government shared 670 million pounds (857 million €) paying European health services. France gets the second largest repayment at 150 million pounds, followed by Germany at 25.9 million pounds.

On the other side of the coin the UK Government collects repayments totalling some 50 million pounds from other European Governments and Spain, despite the increasing population in Britain only returned 3.4 million pounds.

Gunfight at the Windy Corral!

A gun battle broke out between feuding neighbours in eastern Spain after one farted within earshot of another.

The fracas erupted between gypsy (Spanish Romani) clans near Valencia, when a member of one family let rip while walking past a young man from the rival family shortly before midnight in late February.

The young man returned the insult in the same way; by farting in his direction.

The situation quickly escalated with a wife of one the men joining the fray claiming she was insulted, and then the other man's wife also getting involved, until guns were pulled and shots fired.

"In that way, what began as a bit of silliness grew more and more violent and ended up with a double shooting," reported the newspaper.

A 57-year-old was shot three times in the stomach and is being treated in the intensive care unit at Valencia Hospital where his condition is described as "serious".

His 29-year-old son received a bullet to the leg but is expected to make a full recovery.

Two other men were taken to hospital, but have since been discharged and four people have been arrested.

Around 50 police officers have been sent to patrol the neighbourhood of Xenillet in Torrent to keep the peace amid fears of revenge attacks. Other teams have been posted outside the hospital.

The neighbourhood is home to a large number of *gitano* families and the two clans involved in the scrap have been sworn enemies for decades, local media reported.

In the Spanish prison system the Spanish Romani women represent 25% of the incarcerated feminine population; 64% of the detentions of *gitano* people are drug trafficking-related. 93.2% of women inmates for drug trafficking are *gitanas*.

Two Older Ladies Were Talking in the Afterlife.

SYLVIA: Hi! Wanda.

WANDA: Hi! Sylvia. How'd you die?

SYLVIA: I froze to death.

WANDA: How horrible!

SYLVIA: It wasn't so bad. After I quit shaking from the cold, I began to get warm & sleepy, and finally died a peaceful death. What about you?

WANDA: I died of a massive heart attack. I suspected that my husband was cheating, so I came home early to catch him in the act. But instead, I found him all by himself in the den watching TV.

SYLVIA: So, what happened?

WANDA: I was so sure there was another woman there somewhere that I started running all over the house looking. I ran up into the attic and searched, and down into the basement. Then I went through every closet and checked under all the beds. I kept this up until I had looked everywhere, and finally I became so exhausted that I just keeled over with a heart attack and died.

SYLVIA: Too bad you didn't look in the freezer -- we'd both still be alive.





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3. If you last lived in England, Scotland or Wales, go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote and fill in your data. All you need is your National Insurance number, passport details and date of birth. (Even if you don't have an NI number, you can still register).
4. Choose how you want to vote – by post, proxy, or even in person if you will be in Britain on polling day. If you choose to vote by post, ballot forms will be despatched about one month ahead, giving you time to receive, complete and return your vote.
5. If you were last registered to vote in Northern Ireland, download an overseas voter application form from the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland, at www.eoni.org.uk. You can choose to vote by proxy or in person, but not by post.
6. Do register now, don't wait until the last minute and miss the deadline. Thousands of expatriates are already signing up. If you wait, you may miss your chance to have your say.

Coming of Age.

A boy rushes home and says to his father, 'Dad! Dad! You'll never guess what; I just had sex with the English teacher!' Father is delighted, 'You young scamp. You're just like your old Dad - a real ladies' man. Tell you what; now you're so grown up, I think we can let you ride my big Harley motorbike.'

The boy's face drops, 'Aww, I can't,' he whines. 'My bum still hurts.'

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The Wisdom of Old Age.

An older, white haired man walked into a jewellers one Friday evening with a stunningly beautiful, much younger woman at his side. He told the jeweller he was looking for a special ring for his girlfriend.

The jeweller looked through his stock and brought out a £5,000 ring.

The man said, 'No, I'd like to see something more special.'

At that statement, the jeweller went to his special stock and brought another ring over. 'Here's a stunning ring at only £40,000', the jeweller said.

The lady's eyes sparkled and her whole body trembled with excitement. 'Oooooohhhhhh!!!!'

The old man seeing this said, 'We'll take it.'

The jeweller asked how payment would be made and the man stated, 'By cheque. I know you need to make sure my cheque is good, so I'll write it now and you can call the bank Monday to verify the funds; I'll pick the ring up Monday afternoon.'

On Monday morning, the jeweller angrily phoned the old man and said, 'Sir...There's no money in that account!'

"I know," said the old man...'but let me tell you about my weekend.'

Derrick.

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In-flight Snacks Marked up By as Much as 2,646%.

It's a rule of thumb that airline snacks are hellish expensive, but passengers flying with budget airlines may find themselves paying as much as 2,646% of the retail value for in-flight refreshments. Peanuts, chocolate and still water are all marked up to a staggering extent by low cost airlines, with Ryanair, Flybe and EasyJet among the worst offenders, according to new research by KAYAK, the travel search engine.

Flybe is responsible for the biggest mark-up, selling Cup a Soup (70g) for £2.50, when the same amount retails at just 12p in supermarkets – an increase of 2,646%. Thomas Cook Airlines sells the same product for £2.40, representing a 1,820% increase. Meanwhile, olives bought on an EasyJet flight, costing £1.80 for 65g, have been marked up by 1,259% from the average supermarket value of 22p for 100g.

It's a similar story for drinks: passengers on Ryanair can expect to pay £2.34 for a 500ml bottle of still water, a 1,324% increase on the supermarket price of 16p. The 'budget' airline also charges more for less, with passengers having to pay £1.96 for a 250ml can of cola, when the supermarket price is just 25p for a 330ml can.

"Airlines are providing a service when it comes to food and drink on board, which accounts for some of the mark-ups we see," says Loella Pehrsson, KAYAK Regional Director UK, Ireland & the Nordics.

"However, travellers are allowed to take food items through security, so it really makes sense to plan ahead and take your own snacks onto the plane. When it comes to drinks, get around the sky-high in-flight prices by purchasing drinks in the terminal."

Snore? I had to turn you away from the window so you wouldn't inhale the curtains.
Sophie, *The Golden Girls*.



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The Scouser turns round and punches the man in the face, knocking him to the floor.

'Blimey,' says the barman, 'what did he say to make you do that?'

'Dunno,' says the Scouser. 'Something about a job.'

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St. Patrick driving the snakes out of Ireland.

The Fly.

The lecherous Mr Rice got himself a new secretary. Melanie was young, sweet and polite. One day while taking dictation, she noticed his fly was open and, on leaving the room, she said. 'Oh, Mr Rice, did you know that your barrack's door is open?'

He didn't understand her remark, but later on he happened to look down and saw that his fly was open. He decided to have some fun with his new secretary. Calling her in, he asked, 'By the way, Miss Brown, when you saw my barrack's door open this morning, did you see a soldier standing at attention?'

'Why, no, Mr Rice,' she replied. 'All I saw was a disabled veteran sitting on two old duffel bags.'

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Evelle J. Younger



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Harry goes into a greengrocer's. 'How much are those melons?' asks Harry. 'They're €3 for two,' replies the grocer. 'So how much for one?' asks Harry. '€2,' says the grocer. 'Okay,' says Harry. 'I'll take the other one.'

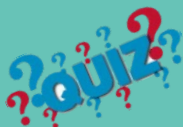


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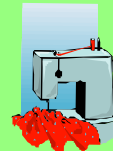
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Reach Out / Extiende La Mano.

As you will see from Page 9, Torrevieja is classed as the poorest town in Spain. The 'welfare state' in Spain is not as well developed as other European countries and the less fortunate individuals and families do suffer here. Reach Out is a volunteer organisation which plays a fundamental role in helping to provide to our homeless amigos and our needy families. If you have good quality furniture, not damaged rubbish, we can collect it.

Clean clothing, Canned goods, rice, cereals, non-perishable foods etc are also most welcome.

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

Call John on 688 238 878

The Phoenix Golf Society.

The Phoenix Golf Society played on Sunday 20th March at SAURINAS DEL A TORRE.



The weather was perfect for Golf and we had a good turnout. The course was in a very good condition and play was enjoyed by everyone.

Nearest the Pin was won by:

Mick Slater 1

Ken Sutton 2

Mick Heighway 1

The overall winner was Ann Scott.

It was very nice to see some of our old members return to play with us again.

Once again many thanks to Donna of the Phoenix Bar for supplying us with delicious food which was enjoyed by one and all.



"The way you carry on, you'd think I enjoy these business trips."



Arguing with a lawyer is a bit like mud-wrestling with a pig. After a while, you start to realise that the pig actually enjoys it.

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The Nun's Story.

Two nuns are riding down a cobbled road on bicycles. One says to the other, 'I've never come this way before.'

The other replies, 'Neither have I. It's probably the cobbles.'



How do you get a nun pregnant?

Dress her up as an altar boy.

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https://www.facebook.com/The-Fire-Station-1640599752837102/?fref=ts&ref=br_tf

Now Hear the World of the Lord!

A Sunday school teacher is discussing the Ten Commandments with her pupils.

After explaining the commandment about honouring thy father and mother, the teacher says, 'Is there a Commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?'

Little Jimmy sticks up his hand and says, 'Thou shall not kill!'

Money Flying Out of Spain.

Investors took €70.2 billion out of Spain in 2015, according to new balance of payment figures published in early March by the Bank of Spain.

The amount lies in stark contrast to the €5.6 billion investors put into the country in 2014 – in December 2015 alone, the month in which the general election was held, €19 billion was taken out.

Nevertheless, the figures are a long way from the record set in 2012 when €170 billion was withdrawn from Spain.

The balance of payments is the result of looking at what Spaniards invest in outside of the country and what foreigners send to Spain over the same time period.

A number of legal firms have confirmed that owners of large fortunes have begun taking their capital out of Spain because of increasing uncertainty in the country following the inconclusive December general election, which has so far failed to produce a new government, as well as the risk of rising taxes.

The recent governing agreement signed between the Socialists and Ciudadanos includes a new tax on major fortunes and left-wing party Podemos has also included plans to increase levies on large sums.

The €70.2 billion taken out last year is the result of the withdrawal of €21.3 billion in direct investment and €48.8 billion taken out of the country in the form of other investments, such as loans, repos and deposits.

Investors also withdrew €700 million in portfolio investments last year. In the area of financial derivatives alone there was an increase of €600 million taken out. (El Pais)

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End of the World!

Harry and Bill are in a bar.

'What would you do if you know the world was going to end in the next half hour?' asks Bill.
Bill says, 'I'd run around and have sex with anything that moved. Why, what would you do?'

Harry replies, 'I'd stand very, very still.'

I don't do drugs now I'm getting older. These days I get the same effect just by standing up too quickly.

WEDNESDAY

8

JUNE '16

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I was surprised how British Muslims reacted to the Danish cartoons of the prophet Mohammed. I thought: How can you get this worked up about a cartoon? But then I remembered how angry I was when they gave Scooby-Doo a cousin.

Paul Sinha

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PHOENIX



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Timing is Everything.

Very late one night a policeman spotted a lad and a young girl sitting in a parked car. The lad was reading and the young lady was knitting. 'Excuse me, sir, can you tell me what you're doing?' asked the copper.

'Well, I'm reading, officer,' replied the man. 'I see and what about you, miss, what are you doing?'

'I'm knitting,' said the girl. 'I see,' replied the policeman, 'and can I ask exactly how old you are, madam?'

'Well,' she said glancing at her watch, 'in 15 minutes I shall be 16.'

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Spanish Inheritance Tax.

Information on this tax has been a regular feature in these pages, particularly when non-Spanish EU inheritors were discriminated against. However, now that this anomaly has been corrected, it is a good time to take stock of this tax, which is likely to affect, at some stage, readers who are owners in Spain, whether they are resident or not.

The details of this tax are far too complicated and lengthy to appear here. However, I have come across two very informative articles by Raymundo Larraín Nesbitt who provides some badly needed clarity and advice on this confusing tax. The following are the links to these -

<http://www.spanishpropertyinsight.com/2016/02/08/spanish-inheritance-tax/>

<http://www.spanishpropertyinsight.com/2016/03/08/spanish-inheritance-tax-part-ii/>

Remember, Spanish Inheritance (and Gift) Tax is unlike the UK one. Here, the beneficiary pays, not the estate, and you have just six months to pay it, otherwise penalty interest sets in. Whereas the bureaucratic establishment in Spain moves with leaden feet, when it comes to the payment of the various taxes, you, the taxpayer are expected to be a 'sprinter' and will suffer financially if you do not make your taxation payments in time.

And secondly, if *Brexit* does happen, a then non-EU (British) inheritor would be considerably worse off, unable to benefit from the more favourable tax allowances to EU members and would end up paying significantly more inheritance tax.

Spanish Inheritance Tax is a tax that was designed to keep properties as 'family homes.' It was drawn up in a different era and does not address the demands of modern living. It would take a strong and progressive government to modernise this tax. Unfortunately, with the current political uncertainty, this will not happen for some time.

Weird!

I suppose it is true that some people create a prison for themselves.

Around nine years ago, a 48-year-old man called Alberto Jose Nunez Beato was released from prison in Salamanca after serving a three-year sentence. However, he had another court case pending for a crime against property. Alberto was frightened of returning to prison so he spend a year 'on the streets.'

He then went to the home (photo) of his maternal grandfather in Jerte, Extremadura, where he remained indoor for six years without once leaving the house. Here, his female partner, who had mobility problems, looked after him for the period by bringing in food, drink.....and snuff!



While in self-imposed lock-in, he didn't go to his father's funeral. Needing dental treatment, he also took out two of his own teeth with a pair of pliers.

Finally, in late February he was rumbled by an anonymous caller (probably his long suffering partner), so the police kept watch on the property - which was not even connected to a water supply - for a few days before calling at the house. They persuaded 48-year-old Alberto to leave the 'jail'; he was then arrested and released shortly after giving a statement.

I suppose this is a story more suited to the Idiots column, but I think it's a little bit sad..... and weird.

What's the difference between a genealogist and a gynaecologist?
One looks up the family tree, the other up the family bush.

Where's My Parcel?

Over the past three months Madrid-based package company OGC has left 5,000 Ecuadorians in Spain without their deliveries. The company closed in early March without warning its 30 employees, who were surprised that documents had been destroyed and stored goods had disappeared. The owners had "vanished," staff said. Some of the packaged goods were worth as much as €35,000. The minimum weight for each shipment was 30 kilos, with many Ecuadorians returning to their home country with their belongings.

The working class can kiss my ass, I've got the foreman's/union job at last!

The Secretary General of the massive UGT trade union, Candido Mendez, has just retired after serving in the position since 1994. One of the 'Gucci' socialists in Andalucia, Mendez had a love of dining in fine restaurants and expensive watches - Rolex Submariner 6,458 euros; Globe Chronograph Maurice Lacroix: between 4,000 and 6,000 euros & Raymond Weil (3 different models about 800 euros each). All his and more!



In recent years the UGT has attracted a lot of criticism for its role in the ERE and Training Fund scandals in Andalucia. These complicated cases of financial fraud, embezzlement and skull-duggery, have yet to be resolved. One union 'advisor' to Caja Madrid withdrew €100,000 in cash using one of the now infamous 'opaque' expenses cards. It's called self-help socialism.

I would love to know the details of the Mendez retirement package. I'm sure it was all very above board and prudent.

Invasive Species in Spain.

This is a subject we have covered in the past, at least twice. What is surprising however, are the new editions to Spain's invasive list. These include the Common Carp, the Rainbow trout and Wakame - the edible seaweed. A species is declared as invasive if it threatens any indigenous species. Sadly the Dutch football supporters, who made a spectacle of themselves in Madrid, have not made the list.....this time.

The Luckiest Man in the World?

A poor Chinese resident in Madrid won €137.3 million in the Euromillions lottery eight months ago. But last month he has also won an extra €1.9 million in the Primitiva lottery! I can just imagine his many relations now crawling out of the woodwork. 'Hi Uncle Wang.....!'

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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, Horseshoe Gammon & 24 oz T-bone.

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Beam Me Up, Scotty!

The Iranian Ambassador to the UN had just finished giving a speech, and walked out into the lobby of the convention centre where he was introduced to a United States Marine Corps General. As they talked, the Iranian said, "I have just one question about what I have seen in America." The General said, "Well, is there anything I can do to help?"

The Iranian whispered, "My son watches this show called 'Star Trek' and in it there is... Kirk who is Canadian, Chekhov who is Russian, Scotty who is Scottish, Uhura who is black, and Sulu who is Japanese, but there are NO Muslims. My son is very upset and doesn't understand why there aren't any Iranians, Iraqis, Afghans, Palestinians, Saudis or Syrians, on 'Star Trek'."

The General leaned toward the Iranian Ambassador, and whispered in his ear, "That's because it takes place in the future."

Jenny Reader

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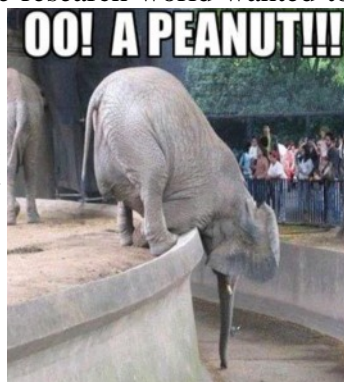
It's fairly common, and increasingly so, to hear someone say they're allergic to peanuts. The prevalence of the potentially life-threatening allergy in the US alone has risen more than 300%—from 0.4% in 1997 to 1.4% in 2010—and scientists, doctors, and parents are fumbling for ways to reverse that.

A team of British researchers struck on a promising method last year. If infants with high risk of developing peanut allergies (meaning those who already had eczema or egg allergies) were given peanuts frequently between the ages of four and 11 months, they were less likely to have allergies at age five. The study was somewhat controversial—it went against doctors' age-old wisdom that parents should not feed potentially allergy-triggering foods to their kids until they got older—and many in the research world wanted to know if the team's findings could be reproduced and expanded.

In early March, they were.

A new study published March 4 this year in the New England Journal of Medicine examined those same children at high risk for peanut allergies and found that the benefits of early exposure to peanuts persisted. The children were still at lower risk for allergies at age six, a full year after the period studied in the original research. Lead author Gideon Lack, who runs the paediatric allergy department at King's College London, told CBS News that it seems clear "early consumption of peanuts gives you long-lasting protection against peanut allergy."

Perhaps the fear of allergies has become a self-fulfilling prophecy, Lack suggests; excluding peanuts from children's diets might prevent them from developing an immune tolerance to the food. Further work needs to be done on the subject, but in any case, it's reassuring to know there might be ways to prevent a condition that used to be considered unavoidable.



Police Whatsapp Service.

Los Montesinos local police have introduced a new mobile messaging service using the Whatsapp application.

If you live in the area, by sending a message to 609208406, you can share information with the local police about any incidents you may come across.

This may include lost or stray pets, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and a whole range of other incidents, including complaints and suggestions.

The police say they will note and register all the messages'

Rabid!

My neighbour was bitten by a rabid dog. I found him lying on the ground scribbling on a piece of paper. 'There's no need for that,' I said. 'They can cure rabies these days. You don't have to write a will.'

'Will?' says my neighbour. 'What will? I'm making a list of all the people I want to bite.'

*What's black and white and sticks two fingers up at the pope?
A nun who's just won the lottery.*



AQUAQUEST PLUMBING



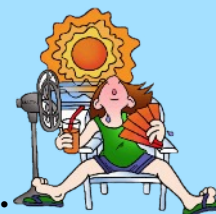
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Keep an Eye on Your Bank!

These bandits have been increasing their commissions by 25% to compensate for the very low interest rates. The Bank User's Association has produced a report which describes some of the increases in charges as 'outrageous.'

The Spanish banking sector already grabs €20 billion in income from customer commission charges. This represents 30% of their income.

One bank reports a case of where a client went overdrawn by €30 for 24 hours and was charged €50.

If you maintain a current account just to pay a handful of bills with a continual minimum balance, it is likely that you will be hammered with charges.

Rubbish Collection Bills in Torrevieja.

Residents in Torrevieja normally pay €1 every three months for their rubbish collection. This amount is included in their water bills. From July 1st this method will change with the residents being charged €2 every six months for the rubbish collection, with the amount being collected by SUMA.

Lover's Tiff?

June has only been married a week when she tearfully rings her friend Betsy. 'Tom and I had such a dreadful fight last night,' sobs June. 'Don't worry too much,' says Betsy. 'All newlyweds have silly little arguments.' 'I know,' sniffs June, 'but what am I going to do with the body?'

Idiot of the Month.

A civil servant in southern Spain failed to turn up at the office for six years but no-one noticed and he still collected his salary each month, it has emerged.

The long-term absenteeism of Joaquín García, an engineer employed by the municipal water company in Cádiz, was only discovered when he was considered for an award for performing 20 years of loyal service.

The case emerged in late February after a court ordered him to pay a fine of €27,000 for his prolonged absence, a figure that amounted to less than one year of his annual €37,000 salary, the maximum that could be reclaimed. He had been sent by the city council to oversee the building of a waste-water treatment plant in the southwestern city, but records show that García had not turned up for work since 2004.

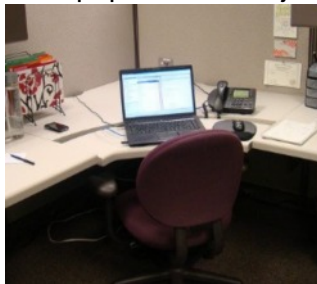
This was only discovered six years later when he was due to be presented with a commemorative plaque after an apparent 20 years of loyal service to the council. "We thought that he had been supervised by the water company but that was not the case," local deputy mayor Jorge Blas Fernández, who originally given him the job, told El Mundo.

"I wondered whether he was still working there, had he retired, had he died? But the payroll showed he was still receiving a salary," Blas explained. According to Blas: "I called him up and asked him 'What did you do yesterday? The month before, the month before that?' He didn't know what to say."

Garcia, now 69 and retired, claims he was the victim of workplace bullying and had turned up each day only to find he had no work to do. He claimed he did not report the situation because he was worried it could lead to an end to his employment and he had a family to support. Instead, he read extensively and became an "expert on the philosopher Spinoza" and also I might add, 'How to screw the system.'

Here the idiot is not Garcia. He did very well out of it. What is at fault here is the system. Annual job evaluations or appraisals here in Spain are practically non-existent. Form collection and paper trails are more important than efficiency. The more paper the more job justification and hence less efficiency. Just look at the town halls! Bosses here are generally aloof and more interested in lunches. I remember a former Councillor for the Coast, who I nicknamed 'The Invisible Man' in previous issues (because we never saw him!), shouting at one of his employees, 'Don't bring me any problems!!!'

On the right is a photo of Garcia at work.



Next we have the all-woman flight crew, who flew a Boeing 787 Dreamliner from Brunei to Jeddah. But, after they arrived at the Saudi airport, they couldn't drive from the airport to their hotel as women are not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia. No doubt who the idiots are here!



Domingo Infante, 34, arrived at his tapas bar on Monday to find the door forced open and the cash till with its contents gone along with a TV and the cured meat that had been hanging above the bar. While he dealt with police and waited for a locksmith to come and fix the damage, wife Cristina, 36, and mother-in-law Maria, 68, spotted a trail of fat on the road outside and followed it along the pavement to a house behind their family-run business in Sanlúcar de Barrameda near Cadiz, in southwestern Spain.

The astonished Spaniards then made a second call to cops to say they had caught the suspected culprit. Officers rushed to get a search warrant after being refused entry to the rented property and found two of the legs of ham inside along with the empty cash till and TV.

The cured meat has now been taken to the police station along with the other valuables while detectives search for the missing five legs, thought to be in the hands of the alleged criminal's accomplices. The break-in happened overnight in the early hours of the morning.

Infante, whose bar is called Los Caracoles (The Snails) said: "We didn't know whether to laugh or cry yesterday. It's like something out of a silly film. I've never imagined my wife and mother-in-law would turn out to be the detectives who solved this. And even then they thought the fat trail from the ham would lead to a car park and a vehicle that had long gone, not a house in the street behind us. There were traces of fat everywhere, on the pavement outside the property, the stairs and even the front door.

The doozy suspect lived there with his parents who wouldn't let police in at first but they got a search warrant within 20 minutes and found the cured meat when they went inside along with the cash till and TV. "Each leg was worth around €120 and the till which had about €500 in it (Honest!) was empty. But every cloud has its silver lining and it looks like we'll be getting some of what was taken back thanks to my wife and mother-in-law." Cristina added: "They smashed the door open and caused a lot of damage. We decided to follow the trail of the ham because they had dragged the legs along the ground. My mum had the idea. We got right to the house. Later we saw how the police brought almost everything that had been stolen out of the same house, except that is the other five legs of ham which we'd still like to get back."

Next a story held over from February, when a 36-year-old Lithuanian man was admitted to A&E at Denia Hospital on the Costa Blanca. His problem was, that while indulging in a spot of 'horizontal jogging' he decided to wear not one but four rings on his todger. Then, his 'instrument' became so swollen he couldn't get the rings off. The fire brigade was called and it took them an hour to cut the steel rings off.....when they stopped laughing! (For those of you ever in a similar situation, I believe a Dremel will do the trick.)

But I understand that this type of incident is not uncommon, particularly in Osnabrück, Germany, where firefighters were called to two similar incidents within a 24-hour period last December, one involving a steel ring and the other a solid gold one!

Then on March 8 this year, a 52-year-old man in Munich had been suffering with 13 rings on for four days before looking for help! Sorry, no photos, but what is it with the Germans?

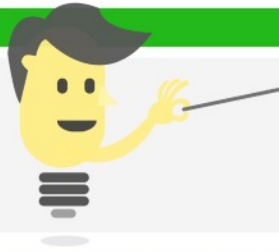


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Little Johnny.....again.

Little Johnny goes into his parent's bedroom and finds them having sex. 'So what's going on?' he asks. Father is taken aback. 'I'm.....er.....I'm just filling your mother's tank, he says. 'She must get pretty low mileage,' says Johnny. 'The milkman filled her up this morning.'

Idiot of the Month, Part 2.

I couldn't let this month go by without talking about the Turkish head of state - President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Okay, he has appeared briefly in these columns before, but as March 8 was International Woman's Day he has, once again, forced himself onto these pages with his 'wisdom.' While addressing a meeting which was focusing on justice and women, he declared women unequal to men and said that being a mother is a woman's primary role in society. "You cannot bring women and men into equal positions; that is against nature because their nature is different," he stated.

(Photo on right is of Erdogan telling you, Gladys, to get back in the kitchen!)



In 2012, Erdogan, who was also prime minister at the time, called abortion murder and came out against birth by Caesarean section. He's also called for women to have at least three children and pushed for laws that encourage people to marry young. Surprised he didn't go the whole hog and insist women have bigger breasts!

Amongst Erdogan's other gems are the statement that Muslim sailors discovered America 314 years before Columbus; he states that Columbus saw a mosque on top of a hill there! He also states that Lawrence of Arabia was a bigger enemy than ISIS.

But neither is Mrs. Erdogan the sharpest knife in the drawer. The wife of Turkey's president has described the harem of the Ottoman era as an "educational establishment that prepared women for life." Aside from wives, family members and servants, the harem was also home (or prison) to around 400 concubines. As one commentator pointed out, "If the Ottoman harem was a scholarly institution then why were the men who worked there castrated?" Both the Erdogans' daughters studied at Indiana University in the US. No harem for them then!

But according to Turkish media, a man filed a legal complaint against his wife on the grounds that she repeatedly insulted Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the confines of their home. According to news reports, the man, identified by the Yeni Safak newspaper as Ali D., had warned his wife of three years, G.D., not to curse Erdogan -- the popular albeit polarizing political figure -- when he appeared on television. She supposedly defied him, and dared him to lodge a legal case against her. He duly obliged. "I kept on warning her, saying why are you doing this? Our president is a good person and did good things for Turkey," the husband is quoted as saying. "Even if it is my father who swears against or insults the president, I would not forgive and I would complain," he said. The wife has now filed for divorce.

The bizarre nature of this case belies the darker context of the moment. Erdogan is criticized by his opponents for presiding over an increasingly authoritarian state, emphasized most garishly in a spate of complaints lodged against civilians for supposedly insulting the country's powerful leader. This included even one incident where a doctor faced charges after uploading an image to Facebook that likened Erdogan to the creature Gollum, from the fantasy "Lord of the Rings" series.

Erdogan has rapidly closed down any newspapers in Turkey which were critical of his rule. One editor was sentenced to 21 months in jail for "insulting the president". That hasn't stopped the EU from giving him €6 billion to stop the migration from Turkey to Greece, something he seems incapable of doing.

(Source: Washington Post, BBC & others)

SCAMS!

A 68-year-old Spanish widow spent 56 hours on the telephone in the belief that the company she was calling could offer her son a job. The woman, from Murcia, called the helpline number after seeing it advertised on television, not realizing it was actually a premium rate telephone number scam. One night the desperate woman saw a telephone number advertised on the TV with the message "call us and we'll help you" - so she did.

The woman was desperate to find a job for her 36-year-old unemployed son. He was depressed and they could barely pay their bills on her meagre widow's pension. She has now received a telephone bill for €1,400!

The scam, in which unsuspecting members of the public are made to call high cost telephone numbers, is one of the most common in Spain according to consumer watchdog, Thader.

Three people, two women and a man, have been arrested in Spain in February after duping an Australian woman out of €100,000 by posing as her online boyfriend and telling her he needed money for medical bills. The Australian woman, who has not been named, met "Robin" on an internet dating site in February 2014 and the pair struck up an online relationship.

In November 2014, the woman was contacted by a "friend" of Robin, who informed her that Robin had been in an accident in Spain and needed €5,000 for medical bills because of his lack of insurance. The woman transferred the money, but Robin's friend continued asking her for more, "for specialists, visits to hospitals with better medical teams and eventually, to be repatriated to Australia so the couple could be together", reported regional newspaper, Navarra.com.

Eventually, the woman handed over a total of around €100,000 to cover, what she thought, were her boyfriend's medical needs. But the plan came unstuck when the woman decided to visit Spain after receiving news that her boyfriend had died. On arrival in Spain she travelled straight to Navarra's Clínica Universidad hospital in Pamplona, the place where she had been told that Robin had died.

But staff at the hospital told her there was no record of anyone with that name having stayed at the hospital, much less died there.

Wheels.

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and inquired of his father as to when they could discuss his use of the car.

His father said he'd make a deal with his son, "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible a little, and get your bloody hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."

The boy thought about that for a moment, decided, he'd settle for the offer, and they agreed on it.

After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm pissed off that you haven't had your hair cut."

The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

But Dad, as sharp as a barber's razor, replied "Yea, but did you also notice that they all walked everywhere they went?!!"

Hello all.

The cold winds this month didn't do a lot for the fishing but we had 3 matches to fit in.

The March match is the last one of the winter series and was held on a bitter cold day at Bigastro. We still had 14 idiots sat on the bank freezing our nuts off, desperate not to blank. I didn't get up early enough to see it, but apparently there was frost on the bank! The river was a good colour and was flowing at a steady pace. I drew peg 1 which is "usually" one of the better swims so was looking forward to a busy day. Anyway it was hard going, only 6 anglers caught and some of them only had the 1 fish. I didn't even get a line bite. The winner on the day was "Just John" with 3 kilos closely followed by the "Scribe" & "Sweeney" with 2.8 & 2.7 kilos respectively.

After this match, the winter series points were totalled up giving us the 6 finalists. They were "Just John", "Fagin", "Ghost", "Grumpy Bob", "Sweeney" & "The Scribe". This is the 1st final that I can remember that "3 Rods" has not had a peg.... "Punchy Bob" came 3rd in the points system but as he could not fish the final, this allowed the "Scribe" to take the 6th slot. "Scribe" had only fished 3 matches over the winter but he had 2 second places, which really bumped up his points. Well done. A couple of days before the final, Grumpy had 1 too many sherberts. On his way home he fell over & dislocated his shoulder. That put him out of the final and 8th spot "Feathers" willingly took his place.

On the day of the final, "Fagin" remembered his keep net and put it in the water before the match started, explaining this was a sign of his confidence of catching..... unfortunately, he didn't need it today, he blanked. The fishing was hard again with 2 blanks, 3 anglers caught 1 fish and "Just John" caught 2. This was enough for him to win the final with 3.77 kilos, my fish came 2nd at 2.33 kilos and "Grumpy's" casualty replacement "Feathers" was 3rd with 1.98. Just John has volunteered to buy the trophies for presentation night to make sure that he gets a big one. Bloody trophy hunter!

Over the last few months, the match committee had been asked to arrange extra friendly matches just to get us out. This month saw the first pairs match which we fished at El Bosquet. We drew pegs on the bank at 08.00, but only 5 anglers turned up. The "Scribe" said "Fagin" & "Grumpy" are right behind me on the motorway, they'll be here any minute. Unfortunately, they lost the "Scribe's" car in a cloud of tyre smoke as he tried to get to El Bosquet before "Just John". The dynamic duo had taken a scenic route via the centre of Elche, so they could see the school children & if the traffic lights were working. They ended up doing a circuit at Alicante airport before finding their way back to El Bosquet, eventually arriving at about 09.20. "Fagin" puts it down to being distracted by the incessant talking of his temporary sat nav (Grumpy). Rabbit, rabbit, rabbit!!

"Fagin" just wasn't having a good day. After being called a "muppet" last month for forgetting his keep net, he forgot it again! He is now demoted from a muppet to a minion.

As 7 anglers fished the pairs match, the angler with the lowest weight would be dropped. This was "Grumpy" who had 1 small mullet.

The winners of the pairs were "Ghost & Daffy" with 10 kilos, 2nd were "Scribe & Just John" with 9.2 kilos, 3rd were "3 Rods & Fagin" with 3.8 kilos. After the match, "Fagin" managed to find his way back to the Lime Bar where he dipped into the kitty & bought everyone a beer.

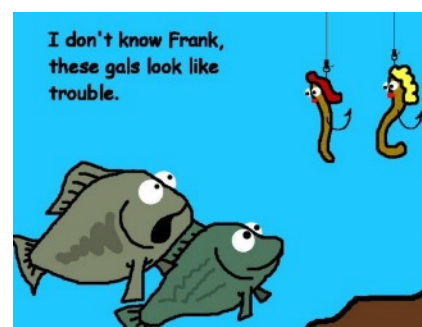
Next ~~meeting~~ bun fight is at The Lime Bar @ **17.00** Mon 4th April.

Men, here are two secrets to keep your marriage peaceful.

1. Whenever you're wrong, admit it,
2. Whenever you're right, shut up.

Patrick Murray

Fishy fingers!
The Ghost.



Aussie Humour.

•An Aussie is on holidays in London. He walks into a bank to grab some more beer money, when suddenly four balaclava clad armed robbers burst into the bank, demand everyone to lay on the floor and not move. One robber jumps the counter and a brave teller jumps up and rips off the crook's balaclava, and without hesitation, the robber shoots the teller straight between the eyes.

"Anyone else see my face?" growls the robber menacingly.

There's stone cold silence for a few seconds, then the Aussie pipes up... "Well mate, I reckon that Muslim bloke over there had a good stare at ya."

•Nearly shagged a Ladyboy last night. Picked him up in a night club. He looked like a woman. Smelled like a woman. Danced like a woman. Even kissed like a woman.

But as we arrived back at his apartment, he reversed his car into a tight parking slot in one fluid movement. That's when I thought. "Hang about!!!!!"

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(Moir)

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