THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

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

Issue no. 118, 1st of March 2017

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the March edition.

A special welcome to our readers in Australia, Eddie & Helen A. 'G'day mates!'

We are now definitely in the grip of winter. Strong and cold north winds keep it chilly, even on a sunny day. Gale force winds were common during February: Información in Alicante reported gusts of winds of 163km/h battering the province. Driving into Torrevieja on the Orihuela-Torrevieja Road, I saw that the small unripe oranges in one of the large orchards were all blown to the ground. What a waste!

The number of British tourists who visited Spain last year was up by more than 12% to 17.8 million people. British tourists who visited Spain has increased with a surge not seen for a decade, to an all time record in 2016, despite concerns about 'Brexit' and the falling pound. Economists and experts feared tourism, which represents 11% of the Spanish economy, would suffer from the free-fall of the pound after the 'yes' vote for Brexit. The tendency will continue this year, as summer reservations are already 16% higher than in 2016, according to the travel market analyst GfK.

However, it was interesting to see that in early/mid February, Thomas Cook announced that they would be taking 100 hotels in Spain 'off their books.' Although 2016 was a historic year for Brit's in Spain, they may feel that the depreciation of the £ may have a greater effect this summer. Of similar importance, however, was the fact that the hotels in the Balearics and Canaries have raised their rates significantly angering the travel companies.

House sales nationally increased by 13.6% in 2016 to reach the 2009 level; the advance is explained by resale properties with an increase of 17.8% to 328,248 transactions, some 81.3% of the total of 403,866 sales and the largest increase since 2007, according to the National Statistics Institute. However, the sale of homes on the Costa Blanca to British clients has already fallen by more than 30% because of Brexit: uncertainty and a poor exchange rate the main culprits here. PM May is expected to trigger Article 50 during March. The White Paper did noting to allay the fears of expat's in the EU. However, if you are already living in Spain I would suggest you now apply for residencia. This may or may not put you in a better position once the horse-trading with the 27 nations begins. The issues associated with frozen state pensions, the cost of health care, and beneficial European Court of Justice-won tax allowances for inheritance & gift taxes and capital gains are just some of the concerns of British expats in Spain.

Thanks to Mike & Di L. for their most generous donation to costs.

Last year's subscriptions to The Dream Scene have now expired. It is up to you to renew your subscription. I will be sending PayPal requests to email subscribers shortly. Regards, Mick & Tid.

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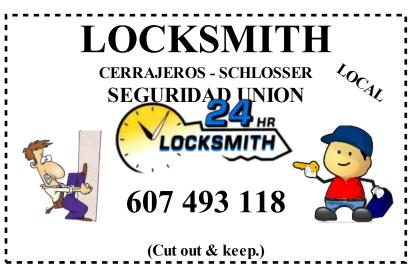
Torrevieja Is the Town with the Most House Break-ins In the Province.

Last year, Torrevieja registered 978 house break-ins. This is against 839 break-ins in the city of Alicante, which has three times the population. This means that Torrevieja has around three house robberies every day!

In all other criminal offences, the crime rate in the city was down. Thus, there were 21% less cases of motor vehicle thefts, from 62 registered in 2015 to 49 last year. The number of cases relating to damages also fell by 7.7%. Somewhat lower, only 1%, was the reduction in the number of thefts, which stood at 1,232 cases. Finally, the number of crimes and misdemeanours also fell by 2.9%, to 3,612 infractions, compared to 3,720 in 2015.

Orihuela (not sure if this is just the city) experiences less than half that number, this increased by 12.4% in 2016.

At the provincial level, it should be noted that the number of homicides and murders fell last year by half, with 15 cases compared to 30 in 2015. Of these, more than a third were registered in the Vega Baja (4 in Torrevieja and 2 in Orihuela). By contrast, criminal offences relating to drug trafficking - 704 cases, have increased by 17.1% more than in 2015. Violent robberies (4%) have also increased, albeit slightly more, house robberies (4%) and theft of motor vehicles (0.7%).





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Did you know that

...an average of 737 Americans a year were shot dead by another American (21 of them by toddlers), 737 were killed by falling out of bed, and nine were killed by Islamic jihadists—who in most cases were US citizens, not immigrants? According to the New America Foundation, jihadists killed 94 people inside the United States between 2005 and 2015. During that same time period, 301,797 people in the US were shot dead, Politifact reports.

...in late January, El Mundo revealed that a man in the Valencian administration was appointed to a job in 2006, was paid €50,000 a year for the last 10 years, but did not work one day in the job? The man, Carles Recio, was appointed as head of the archives in the Diputación de Valencia. But not to worry, they have opened a file on the matter! The Chief of Staff said, "Acts like this one denounced in the media damage the image of the corporation and all public employees, and that hurts us a lot because they are extraordinary professionals." Extraordinary professionals? One of the problems with the permanent staff in council Impossible to fire even if 'permanent.' incompetent, the 'jobs for life' tag is just that. Although there is the occasional gem to be found in these ranks, there is little motivation, supervision or room for independent initiative. So one would ask, What was his boss doing? Probably the same.....nothing! This is not the first time we have carried a story like this, and it won't be the

http://www.diarioinformacion.com/sociedad/2017/01/30/investigan-funcionario-admite-llevar-10/1854919.html

...retired basketball sensation Michael Jordan makes more money from promoting Nike each year than all the Nike factory workers in Malaysia combined?

...a ten-year-old mattress weighs double what it did when it was new due to debris that it absorbs over time? That debris includes dust mites (their droppings and decaying bodies), mould, millions of dead skin cells, dandruff, animal and human hair, secretions, excretions, lint, pollen, dust, soil, sand, and a lot of perspiration, which the average person loses at a rate of a quart a day. Have a good night!

Inflation increased to 3% in Spain during January. Increases in petrol and electricity were largely to blame.

along. The separatists in Catalonia are continuing to make a nuisance of themselves promising another quasi referendum/ballot to their supporters soon. PM Rajoy is now attempting to find some common ground with the separatists, who are headed by Carles Puigdemont. Artur Mas, a previous Catalan president is currently on trial for organising the previous illegal referendum.

Madrid will never agree to an independent Catalonia and PM Rajoy is prepared to 'play hardball' and use force to impede the referendum and will, if pressed, consider applying Article 155 to close the colleges and to take control of the Mossos (Catalan police). They could also suspend the autonomy of Catalonia.

have an autonomous tax collection system in force by July cases of lung cancer diagnosed each year, around to collect all taxes, bypassing Madrid!

constructing the high-speed rail link between London, Manchester and Leeds. One of the most experienced and influential companies in the high-speed rail and other sectors including the construction of airport terminals, they are also responsible for the proposed high-speed rail link between Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.

Mercadona lead the supermarket groups in 2016 after gaining 22.9% of the total market, followed by Group Dia However, Lidl has for the third and Carrefour. consecutive year been the chain to see the most growth in Spain, according to data from the consumer panels of Kantar World-panel and are considered to be the 'winners.'

to face prosecution in relation to charges of fraud and other hepatitis C and human papillomavirus. financial irregularities over the signing of Brazilian (Abridged from El Pais) international Neymar Santos da Silva Junior in 2011, according to judicial sources. A Barcelona provincial The Valencia Health Service will pay a woman €100,000 court has already found FC Barcelona guilty of failing to for treating her for anaemia when she had cancer. pay taxes on the signing of Neymar. The side has agreed to pay around €5 million for tax fraud in 2011 and 2013, Diario de Mallorca headlines 'the rapid advance of the when the club failed to pay more than €9 million in taxes by Xylella bacteria is killing almonds, olives, fruit trees and not declaring all the contracts involved in Neymar's plants.' The Government has confirmed the extension of transfer from Santos.

I still remember Nanny pulling down my trousers and giving me a good spanking. Never did me any harm. Although it did make me late for the show this evening.

Cancer in Spain.

Cancer cases are increasing in Spain - as in most other countries - spurred largely by the fact that The minority national government is still managing to plod people are living longer. Figures released last month by Miguel Martín, president of the Spanish Society of Medical Oncology (SEOM), show that in 2015 there were nearly 248,000 newly diagnosed cases, representing a rise of almost 15% from 2012. The figure also overshoots the SEOM's own forecast for 2020 by about 1,000 cases. The data show that one out of every two men and one out of every three women will have cancer at some point in their lives, said Martín. (Men's higher consumption of alcohol and tobacco increases their risk factors.) "Yet more than half of them will be cured," added Martín to illustrate the progress made in the field of cancer treatment.

However, not all types of tumours have benefited But the separatists are forging on and state that they will equally from the medical advances. Of the 28,000 21,000 result in death. In contrast, there are around 27,000 new cases of breast cancer annually and A Spanish company, Ineco, has won the contract for 6,200 fatalities, underscoring the better therapeutic options in the latter case.

> The most common types of tumours in Spain are bowel cancer (41,000 cases a year), prostate cancer (33,000), lung cancer (28,000), breast cancer (27,000) and bladder cancer (21,000). Globally, the most common cancers are lung, breast, bowel, prostate and stomach.

The fact that people are living longer is the biggest factor in rising cancer rates, as mistakes accumulate over time in the genetic code that issues instructions to our cells. But there are other factors that can play a role. Martín underscored that "a third of [cases] can be prevented" through healthier lifestyles that include not smoking, maintaining a healthy body weight, reducing alcohol consumption, and getting Spain's High Court has confirmed that FC Barcelona is immunization against certain viruses such as

the plague with 92 cases and will try to limit the number of trees which need to be uprooted. At present, any trees within 100 metres of an infected tree has to be removed. Farmers on the Spanish mainland are now very nervous about the spread of the bacteria which would be devastating if it reached the peninsula.

The body of a 40-year-old Lithuanian was found tied to a post in a farm near Cartagena, see photo-La Verdad. The man was tortured before being murdered and both his hands were cut off. Police believe that the farm was being used as marijuana plantation and investigation has focused on mafia bands

from northern and eastern Europe, due to the origin of the victim. The property is owned by a doctor in Madrid who was denied access to the property by the tenants last summer. Neighbours commented that marijuana plants were growing higher than the property fence last year.

Coca-Cola has launched a new drink in Spain for the first time in decade. The multinational has invested 22 million € in the launch of 'Royal Bliss' – a range of mixer drinks destined for the hostelry sector. Creative Tonic Water, la Bohemian Berry Sensation, la Creative Zero Sugar Tonic Water, Elegant Soda, Exotic Yuzu Sensation Tonic Water, Expressive Orange, Ironic Lemon and Irreverent Ginger Ale.

The Interior Ministry will send SMS to the victims of domestic violence when their abusers leave prison.

Price controls come at a cost. Last month we saw that the government was controlling the increases in butane and propane. But the State must now compensate Repsol for forcing them to reduce the price of butane. The Supreme Court has ordered the Government to pay €42 million because of 'civil responsibility' and damage done to the petrochemical company, the poor dears.

The French chain Carrefour have withdrawn all sales of Panga in their stores in Spain. They are concerned about food safety controls in Vietnam and South East Asia. Spain imports more Panga than any other European country.

Pity the poor souls in the Girona village of Sant Miquel de Fluvià who suffer from frequent power cuts. problem here is not an inefficient power grid but an excess of 'amateur gardeners' who have been tapping-in to the mains electricity supplies for their marijuana plantations.

Información in Alicante headlined 'A married couple of North African origin and their 12-year-old daughter killed after more than a ton of clothes fell on them in their home in Alicante' - the family had been hoarding items for sale when the goods fell upon them as they were asleep. The neighbours were also concerned about a fire starting there. Their 18-year-old daughter found the bodies when she woke up in her house in Avenida de Alcoy. The autopsy has revealed the couple and their daughter died from suffocation under the clothes. It seems they were collecting the clothes to take to Morocco later this year.

The average suicide rate in the Guardia Civil is 16.49 per 100,000 people, while in the general population it is 11.78 and the National Police agents at 12.28

The Spanish consumer association, OCU, tested 15 tubes of toothpaste which claimed to whiten teeth and found none of them were effective. Only one type saw a very slight lightening in ten of the 30 volunteers which used the same toothpaste for a month, according to the Vitapan scale, a guide to accurately determine tooth shade. The organisation concluded – don't waste your money!

Diario de Ibiza headlines the number of German residents in Ibiza has fallen by 40% in only four years - over the same period Italian residents gained 50%, while the Argentineans are the most numerous.

Looking at Malaga:

Diario Sur in Málaga reports the Town Halls have uncovered a queue of undeclared building works -70,000 irregularities detected by the Treasury would have brought the local coffers an extra 51.5 million € from the IBI local tax

La Opinión de Málaga headlines 'Paternity testing has increased in Málaga as the test costs half the usual price' and has attracted doubting parents who can obtain the results in five days. Surprises! - data shows 20% of the children who are born in the ambit of a couple, have a different biological father.

The Price.

Glasgow couple are experiencing hard financial times, so they decide that she'll try being a hooker.

She's not quite sure what to do, so the husband says. "Stand in front of that bar and pick up a guy. Tell him you charge a hundred pounds. Any questions and I'll be parked around the corner."

She stands outside the bar for about five minutes showing her leg, when a guy pulls up and asks "How much?". She says. " £100."

He replies. "All I got is £30."

She says. "Hold on." And runs back to the husband and asks. "What can he get for £30?"

"A hand job," the husband replies.

She runs back and tells the guy all he gets for thirty quid is a hand job. He agrees and she gets in the car. He unzips his trousers, and out pops this HUGE willy. She stares at it for a few seconds, then says, "I'll be right back.......

She runs back to the husband. "What's wrong?" he asks.

"Any chance you could lend this guy £70?"

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Lime Bar Golf Society, Los Altos, Orihuela Costa.

Results of the Lime Bar Golf meeting held on the 9thth January 2017 held at Villamartin Golf Course.

On a fine but very cold and windy morning 32 players teed-off on this challenging course.

The competition was played in the Stableford format and the scores

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

Nearest the pin on the 3th hole was Pete Gillespie Nearest the pin on the 6th hole was Ian Johnstone Nearest the pin on the 9thth hole was Ken Styan Nearest the pin on the 13th hole was K. Spence

Nearest the pin on the 17th hole was Les Henderson Silver Class 3rd place was Gary Lester with a score of 25 points

Silver Class 3rd place was Gary Eester with a score of 25 points
Silver Class 2nd place was Nev. Greenwood with a score of 26 points
Silver Class 1st place was Bryan Archer with a score of 27 points
Gold Class 3rd place was John Williams with a score of 29 point

Gold Class 2nd place was Les Henderson with a score of 30 points Gold Class 1st place was Mike Heighway with a score of 30 points (on count-back)

A very enjoyable days golf in pleasant company, thanks to the committee, the Lime Bar staff and the ladies selling the football draw tickets.



Colin Clarke

The Bastards!

Three members of a golf club were arguing loudly while a fourth member of their group lay dead in a bunker. A club official was called to calm the row.

'What's the trouble here?' he asked.

'My partner has just had a stroke and these two bastards want to add it to my score!'

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Local News

The corruption allegations surrounding the previous tenure of Mayoress Monica Lorente (photo) continue. This time it seems that council records show a total

payment of €920,000 to Orihuela Football Club. The final cheque was for €700,000, which the president of the football club said, "We never received it!" So, where's the



football club said, "We never received it!" So, where's the money? A former PSOE Sport's councillor said that some of the money ended up in private accounts. Lorente is facing a number of charges in

relation to the massive Gürtel case. As is the former Councillor for Orihuela Costa, Jose 'Pepe' Aniorte in photo to left of Monica. Known locally as 'The Invisible Man' (because we never saw him), the prosecutor is asking for four year's imprisonment for him.

The anti corruption prosecutor in Murcia, Juan Pablo Lozano, has had his house robbed in July 2016 and on January 6 this year. Last year his computer was stolen, but nothing else was taken from his home! During the break-in

this January nothing was stolen. Lozano, photo, believes that these were "mafiastyle assaults," whose ultimate goal was not so much to obtain private information about his investigations as to give him a warning. Among the current cases he is investigating is the 'Novo Carthago case', which investigates an alleged plot of corruption during the former PP



government of Ramon Luis Valcárcel*, in which some relatives of the former president of Murcia and three of his advisers have been imputed. Then of course there is the little matter of the 'César case' in which it is alleged that almost €18 million has been embezzled from the AVE highspeed rail network to the region.

(*Valcárcel has appeared in these columns before largely to highlight his incompetence. After resigning his presidency, he was rewarded with a job in the EU!)

La Verdad in Murcia reported 'the accounts tribunal has put into doubt the management of the new airport' (Corvera) - by warning about 'uncertainties and risks' in the negotiations with Aena (the Spanish airport authority) to close San Javier. The newspaper says the closure of the San Javier airport to open Corvera in Murcia will cost €35 million, not forgetting that there is still the question of the outstanding €200 million Corvera loan! However, the Murcia Region business association, CROEM, state that it would be a mistake for Aena to run the new airport. They believe that as Aena already operate Alicante-Elche airport and have made a huge investment there, they would probably run Corvera as a second-class airport.

APPEAL.

Some of the bar staff and regulars plan to undertake a Sponsored Fundraising Cycle Ride from The Lime Bar in Los Altos to Benidorm on April 29.

The object is to raise funds for a specialised wheelchair for Pete Barton who is suffering from Huntington's Disease.

There are sponsorship forms and collection boxes in the bar. Please give generously.

The truly free man is the one who will turn down an invitation to dinner without giving an excuse.

Iules Renard.



Above is a photo of the houses on the seafront at Babilonia beach in Guardamar, illustrating the damage cause by recent storms. Looking at the closeness of these so the sea, surely they are illegal builds anyway.

Lack of money and the constant delays in implementation are two of the great scourges of the Dependency Law Unit. In Valencia, about 200 people die every month waiting for the aid from the unit. These are estimates from the Ministry of Equality, which has decided to act on its own initiative and open a liability procedure to compensate the heirs of the dependents who have died waiting for aid over the past year.

La Verdad reported that drinking water supplying Murcia goes through 567 kilometres of asbestos piping!

A 70-year-old British paedophile, who was arrested in Santa Pola last year, was returned to the UK where he has just received 13 life sentences. Formerly a teacher, he was found guilty of sexually abusing scores of children in the UK and Thailand.

The media reports reports that the regional government are to spend €500 million on the Alicante/Madrid high speed AVE rail link BUT there will be no connection or station at the Alicante-Elche Airport! Now how dumb is that?

A total of eight new ITV inspection stations are to be opened in the Murcia region this year. Fees for all ITV inspections in the region will be reduced in the autumn. The price for a standard diesel car will drop from €41 to €23. The contract to manage the region's ITV stations for the next 15 years will soon be put out to tender for €225 million!

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OTHER LOCAL NEWS.

It seems the socialists in Orihuela are 'up-in-arms' concerning four traffic fines relating to the mayor's car. They have given Mayor Bascunana two weeks to come up with the names of the drivers or else....they will get more annoyed! I think these guys have too much time on their There are many serious deficiencies in Orihuela, particularly in the coastal area, that require urgent attention.

The mayor's car is hardly an issue...unless it has been involved in violent drive-bys!

The South African 5 Rand coin is very similar in shape and size to the 2 euro coin. It has been turning up in cigarette machines and fruit machines but is only worth about 35 cents.



This shore-fishing can be a dangerous business. A Polish chap was fishing off the shore on the Playa de Levante in Benidorm when a Moroccan man approached him and an argument started. The North African went away and returned with a knife. There was a brawl and the Polish man was stabbed several times, the wounds being serious, some 15 to 20 cm's deep. Thanks to witnesses the assailant was described to police who arrested him later.

One of the terrorists involved in the Madrid bombing on

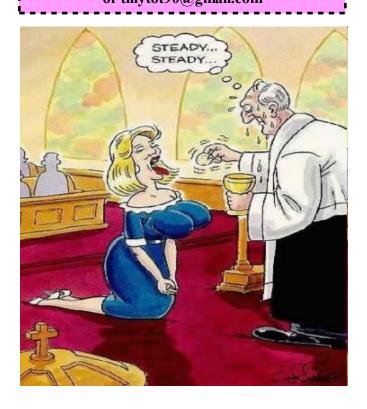


March 11, 2004, has been released from Villena Prison in Alicante after serving 12 The Moroccan activist, Youssef Belhadi (photo), who was kept in solitary confinement, will now be extradited. He was responsible for organising the rental of the flat in Madrid where the bombs were assembled.

Work has now stopped for two months on the building of the proposed new primary school near La Florida on the road which runs parallel to the N332. The scheme has been delayed for 10 years already. This is an important project to replace prefabricated classrooms with a bricks and mortar school. Although the scheme was budgeted at €6.6 million, the cheapest bidder, Civined S.L.U., won the contract with a Alicante-Elche Airport and Torrevieja central bus depot. bid of just €4.4 million. Just one month after the work started, the builder stopped work stating that they couldn't build the school for that price! Smell a rat? Another school on the coast was a similar story, taking eight years to build and three different builders. This is a similar story to the long delayed partially built Security Centre in Playa Flamenca. But it is not the local council who are at fault with all of the above, it is the regional government who need to get their act together. It is likely that the children will remain in school huts for at least another year, probably more.

ANGELA (TILLY TOT)

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"Arnold Schwarzenegger met Pope Francis at the Vatican today. When the Pope heard it was the guy that said, 'I'll be back,' he said, 'Oh, I was expecting someone else. Sorry." - Jimmy Fallon

Airport Bus Timetable.

This service will provide eight return trips between 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



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A young girl started work in the village pharmacy. She was very shy about having to sell condoms to the public. The owner was going on holiday for a couple of days and asked if she would be willing to run the shop on her own. She had to confide in him her worries about selling contraceptives.

"Look," he said. "My regular customers don't ask for condoms, they'll ask for a 310 [small] a 320 [medium] or a 330 [large]. The word 'condom' won't even be used."

The first day was fine but on the second day a black guy came in to the shop, put out his hand and said "950". The girl panicked. She phoned the owner on his mobile and told him of her predicament.

"Have a look and check if he has a yellow bucket hanging between his legs" her boss told her.

She peeped through the door and saw the yellow bucket hanging between his legs. "Yes!" she said, "He's got one hanging there!"

The boss said "That's fine, go back in and give him £9.50 - he's the window cleaner".

Derrick Green



This is Norman, together with his charming wife Sylvia, who celebrated their 57th Wedding Anniversary during early February.

A celebration was held in JJ's Cafe Bar in Via Park V, where JJ laid on a splendid buffet and Sue provided a beautiful cake. Below is a selection from those attending, who all stayed remarkably sober.......NOT!









After making love I said to my girl, 'Was it good for you, too?'
And she said, 'I don't think this was good for anybody.'

- Garry Shandling

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When you do your food shopping, can I urge you to please buy an extra tin or jar of food for the charity and drop it off at one of these bars. Donations of 'pre-cooked' food, such as Meatballs (albondigas), jars of Lentils (Lentegas) & Chickpeas (Garbanzos), Tuna (Atun), Vegetables (Verduras) etc., are preferable. Many of the recipients would be unable to afford to pay costly electricity or gas charges for long cooking periods which many foods require, so pre-cooked foods are preferable. But other than food, the charity also needs disposable razors. shaving foam, soaps, shampoo & shower gel, - even half bottles are welcome. The homeless are encouraged to keep clean and to shower in the Reach Out premises. Winter shoes, such as trainers etc are now urgently required, particularly sizes of 40 upwards.

www.reachouttorrevieja.com

https://www.facebook.com/reachouttorrevieja/?fref=ts

White Knuckle Airways.

The plane of White Knuckle Airways was taxiing down the tarmac for take-off, when it suddenly stopped, turned around and returned to the gate. After a hour and a quarter wait it finally took off. A worried passenger asked the flight attendant, 'What was the problem?' 'The pilot was bothered by a noise he heard in the engine,' explained the flight attendant, 'and it took us a while to find a new pilot.....'

FLOOR CLAUSE -FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

A free legal service is being provided by the Spanish bar associations (SOJ) to assist bank customers hit by the so-called floor clauses, which are now considered to be abusive.

This service is being provided from the SOJ offices in the courthouses in Torrevieja and Orihuela.

Mariola Hernandes, spokeswoman for the Orihuela Bar association says the service in available on Wednesdays from 10:00-14:00. These offices are don the ground floor of the courthouse in Plaza Santa Lucia and can be contacted on 96 5301222. The relevant offices in Torrevieia are on the fifth floor of the courthouse at Calle Patricio Zammit, 50, and can be contacted on 96 6709816.

Residents based in the area Pilar de la Horadada to Guardamar are also entitled to use this free service to start floor clause claims.

Take an interpreter/translator - don't lose out!





I took the wife's family out for tea and biscuits. They weren't too happy about having to give blood though. Les Dawson



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The Scottish Teacher.

A teacher was telling her third-year class that they had to pay five pounds to get a copy of the class photograph.

'You know, this will mean so much to you in 40 years time,' she said. 'You'll look at it and say, there's Joe MacDuff, he's a lawyer, there's Maggie MacDonald, she's a doctor, and there's'

A voice from the back of the class suddenly interrupted '......and there's oor teacher, Miss McFadden, She's deed!'

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Homicide Count in Spain Falls to under 300 In a Year for the First Time.

Spain's homicide count has fallen to under 300 in a year for the first time, according to figures released on Tuesday by the Spanish government. A total of 292 people were murdered in 2016, compared with 302 in 2015, representing a 3.3% drop.

The new figure confirms a downward trend observable for over a decade. In 2005, for instance, the homicide count was 518.

"Despite this drop, behind every number there is a tragedy. That is why we must never be satisfied and why we must redouble our efforts," said Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido at the presentation of the 2016 Criminality Balance Report.

"Spain ranks second in the European Union on the list of countries with the lowest homicide rates," added Zoido.

According to the data released on Tuesday, the 2016 rate was 0.63 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Spain was only outdone by Austria, with a rate of 0.47 (although Spain's 2016 figures are compared with 2014 Eurostat data for other countries).

The government's report also reflects the 44 women whose murders were classified as domestic violence, representing 15% of the total figure for 2016. A year earlier, 60 women had died at the hands of their partners or spouses.

"It is satisfying to see a reduction in this gloomy figure, but it is also sad because of what lies behind the numbers," said Zoido.

So far this year, 11 women have been killed by their current or former partners.

Reducing Electricity Costs.

There are a number of companies which offer discounts if you change your supply company to them, but here we are looking at what you can do yourself to reduce your electricity consumption. Your bill for January would have been quite high, not just for your increased consumption due to heating but because there was what the economists called a 'perfect storm' of at least six elements which raised the supply price of electricity substantially.

The following is a rapid (and imperfect) translation of an article in Diarioinformacion.

Homes represent a fifth of all energy consumed in Spain. In order to save on the electric bill, it is advisable to know which appliances use the most power. According to the Spanish Institute for the Diversification and Saving of Energy (IDAE), these are:

Emails:info@sangriaproperties.comFridge. The ranking is headed by the refrigerator. It accounts for 30.6% of electricity consumption in our homes. The most efficient refrigerators (class A ++++) consume 75% less than class D.

Tip: never introduce hot food and when we open it, take advantage by taking several foods out at once.

TV. It is one of the most time-consuming appliances, accounting for 12.2% of total consumption.

Tip: avoid using the 'stand-by' and turn it off completely.

Washing machine. This appliance takes the 11.8% of the consumption of electricity of a property.

Tip: use short programs and cold wash as much as possible.

Oven. It consumes between 800 and 1200W depending on the model. Takes 8.3% of total consumption.

Tip: keep it clean of fats, do not open it during cooking and take advantage of the residual heat.

Computer. Relevant households consume 7.4% of the electricity of a house.

Tip: lower the screen illumination, remove the screen saver and disconnect the peripherals.

Dishwasher. Uses about 246W at a time and consumes 6.1% of electricity.

Tip: Use short, low temperature programs, and fill it to the maximum.

Clothes Dryer. Consumes 3.3% of total electricity.

Tip: fill it to the maximum, select a cycle determined according to the type of clothing and activate the option of self-drying, if you have one.

The Ball.

While out one morning in the park, a jogger found a brand new tennis ball, and, seeing no one around that it might belong to, he slipped it into the pocket of his shorts.

Later, on his way home, he stopped at the pedestrian crossing, waiting for the lights to change. A blonde girl standing next to him eyed the large bulge in his sorts.

'What's that?' she asked, her eyes gleaming with wonder.

'Tennis ball,' came the breathless reply.

'Oh,' said the blonde sympathetically, 'that must be painful. I had tennis elbow once.'

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A Miracle!

A school in Liverpool had a new swimming pool for its pupils.

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At the end of the following week it was emptied of 21,000 gallons of water.



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HOLY COW!

The Madrid regional government ordered that a cow it believed to have TB should be put down. The animal, named Carmen - photo, had been at the Wings of Heart

animal refuge for the last two years.

The refuge centre challenged the regional government of Madrid's order to have Carmen put down, saying it



lacked authority over its installations, taking to the social networks and using online petition site Change.org to rally support. Within 24 hours, the campaign had gathered 70,866 signatures of support, prompting the authorities to come up with another solution to prevent the spread of the disease: Carmen would have to be kept in isolation.

The refuge centre has disputed the results of the veterinary tests as incomplete. The Agriculture Department of the regional government, pointed out that it could not force the organization to put the cow down: "We cannot oblige them by law, but we recommended they did so in the interest of public health."

The Phoenix Golf Society.

Played at LA FINCA on Sunday 19th February 2017. As per usual the course was in excellent condition and we all had a good time playing today.

We all wore black arm bands in remembrance of Austin Brennan, who passed away suddenly in early February, always to be remembered.

The weather was very cold and windy but we all enjoyed ourselves regardless.

1st prize went to Ian Grant.

Nearest the pin – John Walls.

Nearest the pin – Vidar.

We wished Dave Everson "A Happy 70th Birthday" Ha! Ha! Also to Brenda Foley, whose birthday it was as well.

After play it was back to the Phoenix for some lovely grub as usual – once again many thanks to the lovely cooks.

Cheers, David Wightman.

Have a Look!

A couple, both well into their 70s, go to a sex therapist's office. The therapist asks, 'What can I do for you?

The man says, 'Will you watch us have sexual intercourse?' The therapist raises both eyebrows, but he is so amazed that an elderly couple are asking for sexual advice that he agrees. When the couple finishes, the Therapist says, 'There's absolutely nothing wrong with the way you have intercourse.' He thanks them for coming, wishes them good luck, charges them £50, and says goodbye.

The next week, however, the couple return and asks the sex therapist to watch again. The sex therapist is a bit puzzled, but agrees. This happens several weeks in a row. The couple makes an appointment, have some nookey with no problems, pay the therapist then leaves. Finally, after 5 or 6 weeks of this routine, the therapist says, 'Pardon me, but I have to ask. Just what are you trying to find out?'

The old man says, 'We're not trying to find out anything. She's married and we can't go to her house. I'm married and we can't go to my house. The Travelodge charges £93; The Hilton charges £139. We do it here for £50, and I get £43 back from Bupa.'



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'Groan' Gay Joke.

The great detective Sherlock Holmes and his friend Watson were on a case.

Walking to the club to discuss the case Holmes suddenly blurts out that he is gay. "My God Holmes" says Watson, "how long"? "For as long as I can remember my dear friend, I hope this news doesn't affect our friendship," replies Holmes.

Watson is shocked and states that he never would have guessed and that Holmes had hid his gay side exceptionally well.

Further on down the road, Watson also confesses to being frightfully queer.

Holmes is shocked but suggests that as they have been firm chums for as long as they care to remember would it be ok if they, erm, got it together?

"An excellent suggestion," replies Watson and soon the two of them find themselves inside Holmes's Baker Street residence where he tells Watson to bend over.

Holmes then nips to the kitchen where he grabs a lemon, and cuts it in half. He then starts rubbing the lemon all over Watson's bum.

"My God Holmes! What are you doing"? cries Watson.

"LEMON ENTRY, my dear Watson, LEMON ENTRY".

I remember the very first time I ever held my son in my arms as a newborn. Everything else in the universe melted away. There was just a father, a son and the distant sound of my wife saying, 'If you ever come near me again, I'll drop you with a deer rifle.'

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The Grand Prix.

The French Grand Prix was in full swing, the cars hurtling round the track at death-defying speeds. The German driver pulled in, and his pit crew had his car finished and out on the track again in eight seconds. The Italian driver came in, his pit crew changed his tyres, refuelled the car, all in nine seconds. The French car came in.

They told him to bring it in on Thursday, leave the keys, and they'd get back to him with a quote.

THE LIME BAR - 10th ANNIVERSARY & SUE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY.



On a chilly but dry day on Thursday February 9, the Lime Bar in Los Altos celebrated it's 10th anniversary and Sue's birthday (her 35th I believe!).

There were several hundred in attendance, and not only were drinks free but there was also a hog roast and burger/hot-dog servery - all free! The upper floor in Via Park III was packed solid with constant musical entertainment in the main bar. Everybody had a wonderful time and it was very generous of our hosts, Peter (on the left...trying to hold his stomach in) and the lovely Sue, photo on the right.

The Lime Bar has now become a much visited venue on the Costa Blanca, popular with both tourists and residents. With its excellent quality, good service and fair prices, the Lime Bar will surely continue to be one of the prime bars on the coast. Here's to the next 10 years!

Below is a photomontage of a selection of the images I captured on the day.

















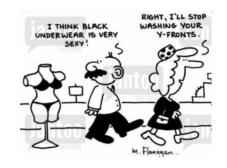


















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Butter May Be Better!

A team of medical researchers have some good news for those who cook with butter but consider it a guilty pleasure: It might actually be good for you.

While the findings, published this February in the British Medical Journal (BMJ), are not conclusive, they are compelling: researchers with the University of North Carolina's School of Medicine (UNC) analyzed a 50-year-old unpublished study out of Minnesota and found reason to believe that cooking with corn oil instead of butter may actually be worse for heart health. It's an idea that, if one day proven, would upend the conventional nutrition wisdom of the last several decades.

In the last year, a growing number of voices within the nutrition community have been making the case that low-processed fatty foods aren't as bad for you as once thought. It's an argument that has shown up in studies from around the world and also in articles challenging national policy decisions based on the idea that fat should be avoided.

In the case of butter versus vegetable oil, the UNC team analyzed unpublished nutritional data gathered between 1968 and 1973 in a controlled study that included more than 9,400

men and women in one nursing home and six state mental hospitals in Minnesota.

The subjects were broken into two groups. One was given a diet in which liquid corn oil was used in place of usual hospital cooking fats (including butter and hydrogenated oils) during meal preparation. The other group received meals cooked with common margarines and shortening. Roughly 57% of the 517 subjects that died during the course of the study underwent post-mortem examinations of their hearts, aortas, and brains. But no analysis of the data had been published until now.

Matthew Parris in the Spectator on why Brexiters are still so angry:

What's bugging them? Why do they, the winners, keep lashing out whenever one of the losers doubts or questions their plans? You can almost see the veins standing out on their necks as they rail against the people who didn't win the referendumI think most of these voters, MPs and journalists are public-spirited patriots who are secretly, usually unconsciously, terrified that they've done the wrong thing. They do of course care. They urged their country forward into a leap in the dark and now worry desperately lest it turn out badly.

(Parris has written some very good journalism on the Brexit process so far. Google it!)

After a review of available data, the UNC researchers determined that, overall, there was a 22% higher risk of death for participants on the vegetable oil diet. They argue

that because an analysis of the study was never published, nutrition experts have over-emphasized the health benefits of substituting vegetable oils for butter.

To be sure, debate within the nutrition science community over the pros and cons of cooking with and consuming fats has been robust. Many studies have found



cutting out butter and using more vegetable oil to be beneficial, but very few of those have included data from controlled trials—nutrition science can be difficult to carry out because of ethical considerations of testing diets on humans.

"Altogether, this research leads us to conclude that incomplete publication of important data has contributed to the overestimation of benefits—and the underestimation of potential risks—of replacing saturated fat with vegetable oils rich in linoleic acid," said Daisy Zamora, one of the UNC researchers. (Source: Quartz Media)

It is interesting how, in recent years, a lot of previous food myths have been debunked. Eggs and dark chocolate have had the 'bad' tag removed and are now considered beneficial. Breakfast used to be 'the most important meal of the day.' But this was never proven and is now believed to be just a very good marketing campaign by the breakfast cereal companies. And now butter!

But I am not celebrating just yet. I am hoping that in the near future the BMJ will come up with a couple of research papers proving that bacon and vodka are beneficial to health and longevity. You never know, one can but hope!

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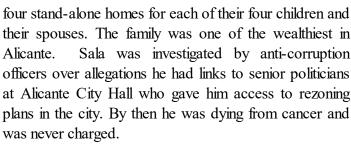
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Who Done It?

On December 9, 2016, María del Carmen Martínez, 72, the widow of Vicente Sala was shot dead while putting her vehicle through a car wash in Alicante. Her husband used to head the now defunct CAMBank. He also built a business empire on chemical products in South America,

property development and car sales. Fair to say that María was a very rich widow. Together with her husband, Vicente Sala, photo, they had built a central mansion and



Initially the police believed that the shooting was a contract killing using a pistol silencer as no one heard the two shots. There was also talk about revenge killing from people or organisations who were badly affected by the CAM debacle, the governor of the Bank of Spain describing the systematic mismanagement of the bank as

'the worst of the worst!' Not that Spain's Central Bank are the 'sharpest knives in the drawer' as news about the Bankia flotation and the Bank of Spain's miopia then, now comes to light.

But some weeks after the killing, the police arrested her son-in-law, Miguel López, photo right. He was in charge of running the family's car dealership, Novocar, where the victim was found late in the evening. She had gone there to



pick up her Porsche Cayenne after a routine check-up, and was putting it through the dealership's car wash tunnel when she was shot at close range.

The relationship between the mother, María, and her three daughters was believed to be fractious as she intended to leave the businesses to her son. Miguel has a gun license and practiced target shooting, said sources, which would make him a 'person of interest.'

Of greater interest was the news that on the day of the murder, Miguel used his smart mobile 456 times! 72 were voice calls and 384 were data searches. But during the time the murder took place, between the hours of 17.48 and 18.48, his phone was switched off.

Miguel claims he is innocent and the case continues.

After twelve years of therapy my psychiatrist said something that brought tears to my eyes. He said, "No hablo inglés." - Ronnie Shakes



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Let's Hear It from the Ladies!

I caused my husband's heart attack. In the middle of love-making I took the paper bag off my head. He dropped the Polaroid and keeled over and so did the hooker. It would have taken me half an hour to untie myself and call the paramedics, but fortunately the Great Dane could dial.

Joan Rivers

My plastic surgeon tole me my face looked like a bouquet of elbows.

Phyllis Diller

You make the beds, you do the dishes, and six months later you have to start all over again.

Joan Rivers

When Sears comes out with a riding vacuum cleaner, then I'll clean the house.

Roseanne Barr

I turned down a date once because I was looking for someone a little closer to the top of the food chain. Judy Tenuta

Women complain about premenstrual syndrome, but I think of it as the only time of the month I can be myself.

Roseanne Barr

Claiming Back Floor Clauses.

The government gave the green light to a decree last month so that those affected by ground clauses can claim the money back directly from the banks. It is a mechanism designed to prevent a collapse in the courts.

This is my rough translation of a helpful article which appeared in *Informacion* with a direct link to it at the bottom of the article.

How to complain?

Just go to the bank and pursue the complaint. Consumer agencies say it is a compulsory procedure for banks and voluntary and free for consumers. Upon receipt of the complaint the bank that has to make the calculation of money to be returned and inform their customer.

How will the refund be made?

The consumer must decide if he agrees with the return offered by the entity. If you are happy with the amount offered, the bank has to make a cash refund. Although you can also negotiate compensatory measures such as a change in the conditions of your existing mortgage.

What if there is no agreement?

In the event that the customer or the bank does not reach an agreement, or three months has passed without the entity answering your complaint, the consumer will have to go to the courts to ask for the money back.

If the mortgage is amortized can it still be claimed?

In its decree the Government allows to claim to those who had clauses ground abusive even if the mortgage has already been paid off. Some sources claim that the limitation period that applies in such cases is 15 years.

Two Gals.

Two elderly ladies had been friends for many decades. Over the years, they had shared all kinds of activities and adventures. Lately, their activities had been limited to meeting a few times a week to play cards.

one day, they were playing cards when one looked at the other and said, "Now don't get mad at me. I know we've been friends for a long time but I just can't think of your name. I've thought and thought, but I can't

remember it. Please tell me what your name is." Her friend glared at her. For at least three minutes she just stared and glared at her. Finally she said, "How soon do you need to know?"

If the overpaid interest has already been returned since 2013 can you re-claim for the previous years?

The Supreme Court only required banks to repay the extra amount collected for the floor clauses since May, but the European Union Court of Justice decreed total retroactivity. In this decree, the government says that in such cases, it is up to the entity to decide whether to return it or not. In any case, a new court procedure may have to be initiated to claim such amounts. (However, the Spanish Supreme Court have, in late Feb', agreed with the European Court of Justice.)

Should the bank advise customers of these clauses?

The decree established "Yes", but the Union of Consumers assures that this is not being put into practice. The Government requires all entities " to ensure that this system is known by all consumers with ground clauses in their contracts."

Do you have to pay taxes on the repaid amount?

The Minister of Economy, Luis de Guindos, assured that the refund will not be included in the base of the IRPF.



(See Page 13 for free legal assistance on the matter locally, Mick)

http://www.diarioinformacion.com/finanzaspersonales/2017/01/26/reclamar-clausulas-suelo-7pasos/1853395.html

Driven to Distraction.

Two old dears were out driving in a large car - both could barely see over the dashboard. As they were cruising along, they came to major crossroad. The stop light was red, but they just went on through.

The woman in the passenger seat thought to herself, "I must be losing it. I could have sworn we just went through a red light." After a few more minutes, they came to another major junction and the light was red again. Again, they went right through. The woman in the passenger seat was almost sure that the light had been red but was really concerned that she was losing it. She was getting nervous.

At the next junction, sure enough, the light was red and they went on through. So, she turned to the other woman and said, "Mildred, did you know that we just ran through three red lights in a row? You could have killed us both!"

Mildred turned to her and said, "Oh! Am I driving?

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DUMB, IDIOTIC & JUST PLAIN STUPID

George Pompidou 'once commented, 'There are three ways of ruining you life: women is the most pleasurable, alcohol is the quickest, but technology is the surest.'

This was the truth for a Frenchman in the Southern

France. The man once requested an Uber driver from his wife's phone. Despite logging off, the

Despite logging off, the application continued to send notifications to her iPhone afterwards, revealing his travel history and arousing her suspicions. The notifications about several



trips in the French Riviera, including the arrival times, made her smell a male rat. These provided her with enough evidence to conclude that her husband was cheating. They are now divorced.

But the saga continues. The man is now suing the San Francisco-based company for damages. Le Figaro reported that the man was seeking 45 million euros from Uber claiming that the bug in the phone software has caused him problems in his private life. Well, good luck with that!

The case is one more bit of evidence that social media can and will be used against you in the event you wind up in a nasty divorce proceeding. A survey by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in 2010 found a big increase in the number of cases in which the evidence, mostly from Facebook, figured in divorce disputes.

The police in Spain have, thankfully, been very active in pursuing Jihadist recruiters and volunteers in the peninsula. But they don't always get it right. El Mundo headlined 'the National Court has given a *spanking* to the Police for the false Jihadists.' Several suspects were detained over the Christmas, accused of preparing a terrorism attack in Madrid. However, the judge released them without charge because the 'indications showed that the investigation had been inadequate'. The whistle blower/informer was on holiday, which was kindly paid from the police reserve funds, and he couldn't be contacted! Well, you know what's been going on here?



Maradona, the pint-sized Argie has-been, arrived in Spain to see his old team, Napoli, play Real Madrid on Feb' 15. But as usual his behaviour let him down once

again. Police were called to his hotel room during what guests described as a 'fierce row' between him and his girlfriend, Rocio Oliva (photo). Officers questioned



the pair, who confirmed an argument had taken place but said that neither had attacked the other physically or wished to bring charges, police said, playing down the incident. But earlier the same day, Maradona was involved in a spat with a reporter where the reporter said he was struck by him. In a video Maradona can be heard saying to the journalist: "If I punched you, I'd destroy you." Yea, Yea! You little tosser! And Real won BTW!

It seems a group of chaps went 'on the piss' in the Netherlands (not a rare event in any country) and started to play some silly games. They decided to follow the Dutch tradition of drinking copious amounts of beer and swallowing a small fish from the bar fish tank. Problem was one chap swallowed a catfish which was armoured and on being swallowed it raised its spines in defence. However, this did not save the fish, but it put the 28-year-old 'would-be circus performer' in intensive care for a week!

But not as dumb as the 51-year-old Chinese man, who together with his wife, decided to visit the local zoo in Beijing' this January without paying an entrance fee. He climbed over a 10-foot wall surrounding the complex. Unfortunately once inside, he found he was in the lion's enclosure and the animals killed him. His wife survived because she couldn't climb the wall.....and the lions said, 'Thanks for lunch!'

The Wee Free.

A young Scot began to go out with a young woman who was a 'Wee Free'. 'Tell me, Jessie,' asked the boy, 'would the "We Free" Church allow me to drink coffee?'

'No way,' replied Jessie. 'Coffee beans are treated to enhance their flavour, so we do not consider coffee to be completely natural.'

'What about dancing? Could you and I go to the disco?' 'The "Wee Free" Church does not permit dancing,' replied Jessie. 'It's unnatural.'

'What about sex?' 'Sex is permissible as long as it is between two people that are married.'

'What about kinky sex?' 'What do you mean by kinky?'

'Well,' replied the boy. 'I was thinking of different positions, like standing up.'

'No way, that could lead to dancing.'



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We have been through a period of transition over these past few months, sorting out different items that have been kept on Members back burners for ages. We held an extra ordinary meeting where all of these points could see the daylight.

I am pleased that we got all of the points raised, sorted, and that we could get back to being a great social fishing club. And a big Thank you to all those that raised points and to those who attended the meeting. (Thank you Stewart @ The Welcome Inn)

Right, most of us attended The Lime Bars 10th Anniversary, a great day of beer, food and lots of fun. So a big Thank you to Pete and Sue and all the Staff @ The Lime Bar, for organising such a fantastic day. We hope that you enjoy the next 10 years as much as we have, enjoying your beers !!! Thank you also for your continued support of the club.

Due to some rather nasty weather, our monthly matches were put on hold. Also one of our points that was raised was with reference to venues, that we could fish. So a few of us including Our Gillie (Phil) went and cleared 16 swims at Bigastro, this was turned into a Pan Day. After about an hour and a half of cutting out and back the swims, Davey turns up with food fit for Kings. (Sausages in onion gravy and baps) After a good feed up most of us took advantage of our new cleared swims, and got out our gear to fish. After all that work it was great to see that our work was paying dividends as most of us caught. We that attended then had a vote on where to hold our second match of this month; we fished El Bosquet the previous Friday. So it was between there or Bigastro, the latter winning.

So we have fished January's match at El Bosquet. That was won by John. It was a very cold start to the day, and for most of us stayed that way, at least some of the fish got out of their beds to come and play with our hooks. It was said, that as the water temperature was so low that we would not get much, and so it proved. With Johns winning weight of 2:55kg.

Our February match took place at Bistro, with a winning weight of 10:93kg was Phil, our Chairman (Keith) sat most of the day either whistling or singing, (not good for our ears !!!) No wonder he was so happy with a weight of 8:62 kg.

So that has brought us to the end of another month, and with the weather warming up, we look forward to more Tight Lines, whistling and singing !!!!

Steve Binfield (steve.binfieldhotmail.com)

For John Kerr & Stewart Macklin.

Sally & Phil.

An elderly couple were at home watching TV. Phil had the remote and was switching back and forth between a fishing channel and the porn channel. Sally became more and more annoyed and finally said, "For God's sake, Phil... leave it on the porn channel... you know how to fish!"

Moira.

Stolen, Lost, Trashed: What Can Happen When Spanish Courts Seize Your Assets!

Juan Hernández Borja lent his friend Juan Carlos Romero a gold medallion valued at €7,000 to wear to a party. Then, in 2009, a provincial court accused Romero of drug trafficking, searching his home and confiscating, among other things, the piece of jewelry he had borrowed. Although Hernández Borja had nothing to do with the case – something that Spain's General Council of the Judiciary (CGPJ), the body that oversees the legal system, has subsequently accepted – he has never seen the medallion again, despite sending several letters to the judge concerned, including photographs of himself wearing it. The reason is that it was reportedly stolen from the court's safe.

Sometimes in Spain people with no relation to a criminal investigation, or those accused and later acquitted by the courts, can spend years trying to get valuable belongings – ranging from speedboats and cars (photo) to jewellery – seized by the authorities returned to them, only to learn that the items have either been stolen or destroyed. They then have to begin the equally lengthy process of pursuing compensation from the state.

Niels Henrik Vester was arrested in 2015 after a Marbella court order. The court then seized a number of valuable items belonging to him, among them a Hublot watch valued at €41,000. He was later acquitted of all charges and the items returned, minus the watch, which he was told had been stolen from the court safe. The CGPJ recognized Vester's claim for compensation, noting "an irregular functioning of the Administration of Justice has taken place."

The Justice Ministry pays out around €4 million in compensation for the courts' mistakes every year, usually well below the amount victims claim. It is important to distinguish between court irregularities such as failing to inform witnesses who have traveled long distances to hearings, trials that overrun, lost objects or unfair embargoes of assets - and miscarriages of justice, the latter being the responsibility of a higher court. Either way, the Spanish taxpayer foots the bill for compensation. Some six million lawsuits are brought each year in Spain, while the number of complaints for court irregularities amounting to just 10,000 in total since 2000, of which around 17% are actually admitted. Before making any decision on compensation, the Justice Ministry will take non-binding advice from the CGPJ and the Council of State, the government's advisory body.

Andrew Anthony Mattacks is demanding compensation of €330,000 from the Spanish state for the "deterioration and damage" that two light aircraft he owned suffered



after they were removed from a hangar in Seville on a court order. The owner of the hangar was being investigated and the storage area had been sealed off. Mattacks repeatedly informed the judge overseeing the case that he had nothing to do with the owner and was simply renting space in it while he tried to sell the aircraft. The court refused to listen and eventually dismantled the planes, sending them to a nearby technical college. The aircraft were irreparably damaged in the process and when Mattacks finally recovered them they were useless. It took Alejandro Puche Sanz a decade to get three boats and some 25 outboard motors returned after they were seized by a court in Cadiz. When he finally went to recover them he learned they had been destroyed due to their deterioration while in storage. The CGPJ accepted that the authorities were responsible and that Puche Sanz should be compensated.

Similarly, the CGPJ ordered Andrés Henríquez Pérez to be compensated after his Volkswagen van was stripped of its engine and wheels during the eight years it was in a Las Palmas storage area after a court there ordered it to be seized.

Many of the complaints regarding court irregularities are related to motor vehicles that the courts have seized in connection with drugs investigations. Very often, these vehicles are then handed over to the police who use them in undercover operations during which they are driven into the ground. When the cars are finally returned to their owner, they finds themselves with little more than scrap metal.

Source: El Pais

The Pope's Puzzle.

The Pope and one of his top cardinals were taking a long train ride one day.

The Pope was doing a crossword puzzle, and the cardinal was reading the Bible.

Suddenly, the Pope asked the cardinal, 'What's a four letter word for "woman" ending in u, n t?'

The startled cardinal stammered for a bit, then said, 'Uh, er, aunt! Yes, aunt!'

'Oh, of course,' said the Pope, 'have you got an eraser?'

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Update on Funeral Insurances.

Lack of space last month didn't allow me to elaborate on the pre-paid funeral plans such as Golden Leaves, Avalon etc. Now these are plans, not insurance policies. Some of these plans will allow you to pay by instalments, even up to 10 years BUT it is worth reading the small print in these plans.

If you commit to paying instalments on these plans, you are not fully covered until all the instalments are paid. So, if you are say, half way through your payments on a pre-paid scheme and die, your funeral will not be paid for. Your will however receive a refund of the instalments you paid in LESS the interest they will charge you on the 'loan.'

So you will see that these are not true insurance schemes.

True funeral insurance schemes, such as Funerals in Spain opposite, will cover the whole funeral cost following receipt of the first payment, be it monthly or whatever.

Bearing in mind the vulnerability and confusion that follows the departure of a loved one, having at least the financial burden and funeral arrangements of a funeral allocated to someone else is a great relief for what are all-in-all, surprisingly small regular payments now.

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At the Zoo.

This little Liverpool boy came home after a visit to London Zoo. 'So, how was it, Steven?' asked his mother.

'Oh, it was smashing. And Dad loved it too, especially when one of the animals came racing home at 20 to one.'

Paying the Piper!

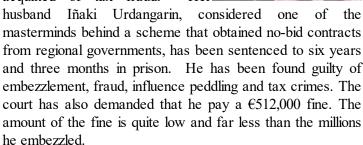
It's fair to say that there have been some welcome conclusions to some historic court cases during February.

In the first, the Nóos case, the current king's sister, Princess Cristina appeared in the dock with her husband, Iñaki Urdangarin (both in photo) and others. This was the first

time that a Spanish royal has appeared on the accused bench.

As the Nóos case has featured in many previous newsletters I'll confine myself to the sentences.

First of all the Princes, sister of Spanish King Felipe VI, has been acquitted of tax fraud. Her



His business partner Diego Torres has been sentenced to eight years and six months in prison, and a €1,723,843.10 fine for his role in creating the Nóos Institute, a non-profit foundation that served as a recipient of government contracts that were secured without public tenders, thanks to Urdangarin's influence as a member of the royal family.

Another leading defendant in the case, former Balearics premier Jaume Matas, has been sentenced to three years and eight months in prison for fraud and for deliberately making unlawful decisions while an elected official. He is barred from holding office again for the next seven years, but you would think the ban would be for life.

Although Princess Cristina de Borbón has been cleared of the criminal charges against her, she will have to pay a fine of €265,088 for her role in the scheme (called undue enrichment). The royal was never charged by either public prosecutors or tax authorities, but rather on the basis of a private prosecution from Manos Limpias, a quasi trade union. The court investigation took several years and the trial lasted six months. The judgements can be appealed.

In the second, the Valencia High Court has ordered that corrupt business network mastermind Francisco Correa and his aides Pablo Crespo and Álvaro Pérez be sent to prison.

A fortnight ago, the three were sentenced to 13 years behind bars for unlawfully securing event organization contracts from the regional government of Valencia. All three now face further trials in connection with the Gürtel network, which operated across six Spanish regions between 1999 and 2005. The graft and patronage scheme was allegedly run by Correa (whose surname loosely translates as belt, or Gürtel in German), a businessman who cultivated relationships with officials with Spain's conservative Popular Party (PP), offering them gifts in exchange for government contracts in public works and event organization. Contracts were rigged were rigged so as to favour Gürtel businesses for five years in a row, from 2005 to 2009.

Getting Rid of Damp & Mould.

Heavy rainfall during December and January often resulted in damp and mould invasion to many households locally.

Humidity levels in homes are around 30-50%, especially in rainy season or seasons. But when these levels are exceeded, the problems begin, effecting not only the home itself but also the health of its tenants.

Some of the symptoms that give us clues about the presence of excess humidity in our buildings are:

High temperatures; strong smells; mould on ceilings and walls; rust on metals and respiratory problems.

Here are a few tips to alleviate the problem:

The habit of **opening windows** and airing is one of the simplest, most comfortable and cheapest ways to regulate humidity at home. Opening the windows and the doors of the house will encourage air currents to be created and air circulation. This way, you will avoid the accumulation of humidity in the house and it will be expelled into the outside, along with renewing the atmosphere with fresher air. In addition, this will hinder the development of fungi and bacteria and eliminate unpleasant odours caused by moisture and mould.

Although not always possible, it is important that we do **not hang wet or damp laundry inside the house.** This is one of the most frequent and most counterproductive mistakes as it facilitates the growth of mould and odours inside the home. In addition, the same moisture prevents the clothes from drying properly and leaves bad smells in them that are difficult to eliminate.

When the **heating is set too high** the humidity becomes more noticeable. Hot air produces more moisture than cold. It is advisable that the temperature of the rooms never exceed 19-21 degrees if possible.

Plants can be an essential element in the decoration of homes. However, having too many inside increases the degree of humidity considerably.

There are a wide range of **dehumidifiers** available. These will help us to eliminate the humidity. In addition, they will also serve to prevent the development of mites, mould and fungi.

An **extractor unit in the bathroom** is an excellent idea to remove steam from the property.

Curtains, bookcases and anything which prevents the circulation of air will only increase the problem. Do not cover likely sources of damp and mould. Just because you can't see it doesn't mean it's not there!

Getting rid of mould and damp stains on the walls is easily achieved by using ordinary household bleach or a chlorine-based swimming pool tablet solution. You can also purchase propriety sprays which will easily eliminate the stains. Locally a product called "Muffycid" is very popular.

The above described remedies are excellent for interior white walls, which will usually not need repainting after being treated. It is a different matter however, for coloured walls.

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Charles McCabe

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