

THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER



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

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the March, 2019 edition. Issue No.140

Hi Everybody. Well, spring may not have arrived yet, but we are experiencing lovely blue skies and warm temperatures during the daytime, although the evenings can still be quite cool with nighttime lows of between 5 and 8° with chilly north and east winds.

Great to see some new businesses opening locally, with a new bar, Bar Cortxo Pintxo (Bar Corks & Tapas) now open in Via Park V (see page 21) and a new hairdresser business, The Beauty Lounge, (see page 17) opening shortly on the ground floor of Via Park III.

There is little inspiring or reassuring coming from the Brexit fiasco in the UK, even after more than thirty months of fudge. The uncertainty and incompetence will continue until at least mid March. The Article 50 deadline must surely be extended. The only reassurance for the British expat's in Spain has come from the regional president of Valencia, Ximo Puig. See page 17. The Sunday Times published an interesting and challenging quiz about Brexit. You can find it here -

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/how-much-do-you-really-know-about-brexit-r5mckpksr>

The Spanish political scene could change dramatically before the arrival of summer this year. A snap general election is planned for April 28th. It is most unlikely that any one party will command a majority so it is once again likely to be a coalition type of government of either the left or the right, with various possible alliances now being debated.

Local and regional Spanish elections are also planned for this May. Here again one would expect substantial change and I would urge local expats to vote in the local elections to try and get some decent money spent on the Orihuela coastal area for the residents. More on this at a later stage.

Giving credit where it is due: Special mentions this month for Shane & Coco of SSD Tiling on page 22. After I sacked an incompetent contractor, these guys took over and did a remarkable job in quick time at a very reasonable cost. Any tiling, bathroom/shower room conversions or roofing problems, these are the best. Also thanks to David of Aquaquest Plumbing, page 35. A neighbour had problems with the natural gas boiler which the gas company failed to rectify after several visits. David whipped out the boiler, less than a year old, and installed a good boiler at a very fair price, which is now performing as it should.

Thanks to Ann & Roger, Nick & Sue, Pete & Bren, Eddie & Helen A, Mike & Diane L, for their kind donations.

Have a wonderful month from Mick, Tid and the Dream Scene Team

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Angela's Cartoon



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With two dart boards, pool table, we are now inviting new pool and dart teams. We can also accommodate a new golf society.

**Are you lonely and would appreciate some company for a chat?
Are you a carer needing a few hours respite?**



HELP Vega Baja Befriending Service may have the answer for you.....

There is no denying that many people who come to live in Spain find their lives very different to what they expected. They come perhaps with a partner and sadly the relationship ends; death, divorce and illness can change a person's life in the blink of an eye. Some also find that their life becomes very different when they take on the role of carer for a loved one. The opportunity to go out with friends often diminishes with worries about leaving their loved one alone. This can also impact upon their own health, not least because opportunities to visit their GP are often difficult to arrange and even a simple coffee with friends can be out of the question.

HELP Vega Baja considered what they could do to change this for people and came up with their new Befriending Service. Co-ordinated by Maria, the charity offers the opportunity for people to have a "Befriender", perhaps for a few hours a week to enable carers to have some time for themselves, for those who are housebound and lonely to have the chance to meet someone for a chat and where needed, to visit people in local nursing homes.

As expected, the service has been very well received and Maria is being kept busy! President, Michele Masson said "We are delighted with the response we have received so far and we can see already that this totally free service is going to expand quickly. Knowing that we are making such a difference in the lives of people is why we all signed up as volunteers so seeing a service like this grow is wonderful. The service is not "hands on" in any way. Our volunteers are there to chat with people, perhaps have a game of cards but mostly to be a friend. When someone contacts to say that they would like to join the scheme, Maria calls them to assess their requirements and then matches a volunteer with the person. We would really like to have more volunteers to help us support the service. If anyone is interested in finding out more about joining the team to become a befriender they can call 966 723 733 or email Maria direct at befriending@helpvegabaja.com

For more details of HELP Vega Baja (registered charity) visit their website at www.helpvegabaja.com or their active Facebook page. The main administrative office, charity shop and mobility equipment hire centre is in San Miguel de Salinas which is open Monday to Friday 10 am to 1.30 pm. Call 966 723 733 or 865 661 497. Email office@helpvegabaja.com

The charity's very popular CONNECTION TEAM (24-hour emotional support helpline) is available on 965 021 552 day and night, 365 days a year.

HELP Vega Baja (Registered Charity), helping people in the community for over 36 years

If a kid ever asks you how Santa Claus can live forever,
I think a good answer is that he drinks blood.
Jack Handey

What's Up?

It has been a busy couple of weeks in Spanish politics. On Friday, Feb' 15, Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez called a snap general election for April 28 after his 2019 budget failed to pass Congress. Sánchez needed the support of pro-Catalan separatist parties, but they voted against the budget because the Socialist Party (POE) government had refused to negotiate Catalonia's right to self-determination and did not offer any concessions to the jailed separatists .

On Tuesday, Feb' 12, the highly anticipated trial of 12 pro-Catalan independence leaders, who are facing charges over their involvement in the illegal referendum of the separatist drive, began at the Supreme Court in Madrid. The separatists argue their rights have been violated throughout the judicial process, while prosecutors maintain the trial is "in defence of Spanish democracy." Keeping an eye on the testimony of the accused, they do seem to be suffering from a collective amnesia, some refusing to answer question from the prosecutors.

The Catalan pro-independence leaders who have been in pre-trial custody since late 2017 were transferred on Feb' 1 from jails in the northeastern Spanish region to Madrid, where their cases will be heard in the Supreme Court.

Prosecutors are seeking a 25-year prison term for ex-deputy premier Oriol Junqueras for rebellion and misuse of public funds, and they also want the Catalan Republican Party (ERC) leader barred from holding public office for the next 25 years. Prosecutors are also seeking 17-year jail terms for Jordi Sánchez and Jordi Cuixart, and for former speaker Carme Forcadell. Other defendants in the upcoming trial face penalties ranging from economic fines to prison terms of 16 years. In an effort to maximize transparency and avoid accusations of bias, the Supreme Court will allow live coverage of the hearings, which are expected to last around three months.

The former premier of Catalonia, Carles Puigdemont, fled Spain in the wake of the unilateral declaration of independence, and has been living in Belgium ever since. If he returns to Spain, he will be arrested. A number of his former colleagues also left the country to avoid detention and trial.



During Sunday February 10 in Madrid, Spain's right-wing and centralist parties rallied thousands of people to a demonstration in Madrid to protest against Sánchez and his handling of the Catalan independence drive and demand a new general election - "For a United Spain, Elections Now!" against the "betrayal" of Pedro Sánchez in Catalonia.

The call for the demonstrations was prompted during early February by a political storm in Spain over the government's decision to accept having an observer at the planned cross-party talks on Catalonia. It was unclear what this figure – who had been described as a cross between a rapporteur, a mediator and a notary – would have been tasked with doing at the talks, but the opposition said it was a concession to the Catalan separatists, who have repeatedly asked for international mediation.

Police say 4,000 attended the demonstration, the organisers say it was more like 200,000. See photo.



Police in Alicante-Elche Airport arrested 267 passengers during 2018 for falsification of documents - forged passports. Total of people arrested by the Border Police there was 455. The most common of the forged documents are Greek and Italian as the relevant documents from these countries contain less security measures. The most frequent destinations for passengers who falsify identity documents are England, Scotland and Ireland . This is because, as judicial sources explained, that these countries have better conditions when applying for refugee status, so many people who are fleeing conflicts in their countries of origin, seek to get there from Spain. The second cause of the greater number of arrests is the European Arrest Warrant.

Proud to Serve.

Dad: 'Son, in Iraq I killed 17 people.'

Son: 'But Dad, you were a helicopter mechanic!'

Dad: 'Never said I was a good one!'

What's Up? Continued.....Maybe I should just call this the Crime Page?

A 40-year-old man was arrested in the Valencian town in La Ribera in late January. The man, who has a police and criminal background, was accused of repeatedly raping his 13-year-old niece for several months. Horrific enough, but when his family heard of his arrest, they loaded the home of the young girl with gas cylinders and gasoline and set fire to the house! The young girl escaped through the roof and was quickly saved by the Guardia and Policia Local. Police describe both families and the area as 'conflictive.' The young lady is now thankfully in police protection. There have been murders in the area and police have detected many clandestine marijuana plantations and fraudulent links to the electricity grid over the years. Death threats and drug trafficking are common there.

A security guard who was working in a department store in Santa Pola has been arrested by the Guardia Civil for stealing from his workplace. Their investigation has revealed



that he had taken objects from the store valued at a total of €20,000. The home of the 40-year-old Spanish citizen was searched and revealed a stolen stock of five plasma TVs between 24 and 55 inches, three mobile terminals, two laptops, two tablets, two DVDs, two video game

consoles, a sound bar, video game cartridges, a hard disk, a vacuum cleaner, etc - around 50 items. An undisclosed number of items had already been sold on the internet, as the thief was believed to have been pilfering since June last year. This photo shows just some of the stolen items.

The Netherlands will assign a permanent prosecutor for Spain and another for the US in the face of an increase in the involvement of its citizens in crimes committed in both countries and in the judicial processes that are still open, according to the Public Prosecution Service (OM). In the case of Spain, the focus is especially on the Costa del Sol, a tourist area that the Dutch press has dubbed the "Crime Coast" because of the detention of numerous Dutch citizens in recent times. In an investigation by the Dutch television NOS, Spanish police and judges showed their "serious concerns" about the multiplication of violent incidents related especially to drugs and involving leaders of the Dutch Mafia in the Spanish Levante area. These are several cases of assassinations, bombings and the discovery of large amounts of cocaine, they stressed.

There is no doubt about it but Southern Spain has major problems with drug smuggling gangs, dealers and violence. Let's hope that this infestation does not spread up here from the Costa del Sol.

Meanwhile, Uber and Cabify have announced they are pulling out of Barcelona after the Catalan regional government approved new rules that will force customers to request their services 15 minutes ahead of their planned journey time. Cabify are threatening to do the same in Valencia if the regional government here impose the same regulations. But these reg's must surely be against EU competition rules.

A British MP has been given a three-month jail sentence for lying to avoid a speeding ticket, automatically triggering a recall petition in her Cambridgeshire seat. Fiona Onasanya, the MP for Peterborough and a former Labour whip, was sentenced for perverting the course of justice after a retrial. She appeared at the Old Bailey in London alongside her brother Festus Onasanya, who pleaded guilty to three similar charges. Mr Justice Stuart-Smith sentenced the solicitor-turned-MP to three months in prison and her brother to 10 months. This is the first sitting MP who has been jailed in the UK in 28 years. But what struck me about this case was to compare the jail sentencing to the current practice in Spain. Now I do believe that this sentence was excessive but this story indicates how easy it is to go to jail in the UK. Whereas here in Spain no one serves a jail sentence of less than two years if it is a first offence.



If Spain was to operate a similar penal criteria to that of the UK, they would need at least three times as many prisons! If one follows the current Brugal case concerning the PP corruption in Orihuela to its conclusion, it will be interesting to see at the end of the trial how many will actually be jailed or how many will receive a sentence of less than two years and will still be driving out of their expensive houses in flash cars.

During early January at 5:20am two Local Police officers in the city of Cadiz were surprised to find a 38-year-old Spanish woman and a 39-year-old Spanish man beating an elderly man to the ground. They had demanded everything he had and when he refused they beat him up and stole his phone. The couple, who have a long history of police records, were taken to the police station, charged and then released. At 3:30am on the following morning, less than 24 hours after the first incident, police were called to another incident in the city where a couple were assaulted and the man knocked to the ground, both their phones being stolen. Police found the offending couple immediately, retrieved the phones, and yes, you guessed it, they were the same couple as in the previous assault. They were taken to the police station, charged with robbery with violence and injuriesand then released!

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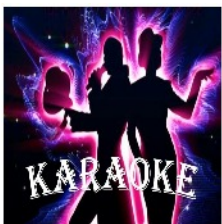
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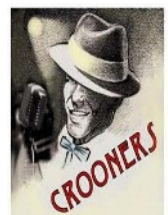
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The Big 'C' in Spain.

The following is an article by Alberola Pine based on an interview with Álvaro Rodríguez Lescure, (photo) who is head of Oncology at the Elche General Hospital and is also the vice president of the Spanish Society of Medical Oncology, which has just published the latest figures on cancer incidence in Spain. The interview appears in *Informacion* and is translated here from Spanish.

Is the incidence of cancer in our country increasing?

It has increased in the last four years by 12%, a large part of this increase corresponds to women and has to do with the incorporation of women into smoking. In fact, one of the tumours with more increase among women is lung cancer, which is resulting in more deaths. Do not forget that among young people more girls smoke than boys.

Besides tobacco, what other factors are behind this increase in cases?

The main cause of the increase in cases is the aging of the population, along with others such as alcohol or obesity. Also, the implementation of early detection systems means that tumours are detected in increasingly early stages. In the coming decades we will find an increase in most cancers, especially in Spain, where we live more and more. It must be taken into account that at 85 years the risk of suffering from cancer is 50% in the case of men.

What role does obesity play as a risk factor?

It is an important factor to suffer cancer, especially together with the reduction of physical exercise. Influences countless cancers, such as breast, endometrium, ovarian ... The metabolism of those who have a sedentary life is a metabolism that promotes the growth of tumour cells.

There are more cases, but is survival increasing?

Yes, early detection is essential. But more important are the new treatments that change the history of the disease.

What are the most promising treatments?

Especially targeted therapies, for example, in melanoma. Immunotherapy is changing the perspective of the survival of many tumours. Before there were tumours, such as metastatic melanoma, with very bad prognoses, which now with immunotherapy yield rates of 50% of patients alive at

five years. Before, that was unthinkable. Immunotherapy is applied with more or less success in several tumours. In breast cancer, monoclonal antibodies are also changing the prognosis in more severe cases. The effect of these treatments we will see in the coming years.

Are we on the way to the disease becoming chronic?

In metastatic phases it remains an incurable disease and the goal is to scratch years of survival. But immunotherapy can open the window to having patients with many years of stable disease. At the moment we gain time and quality of life.

Is Spain incorporating the latest advances in terms of treatments?

Overall, yes, but sometimes it takes too many years. From SEOM we have demanded that the process be more agile. The benefits at the end arrive, but with a certain delay and due to a bureaucratic process difficult to understand and explain. We have 17 autonomies and that generates delays and inequity. The approval and use of pharmacological news is not resolved in all communities. Not all communities are the same and even within autonomies there are differences between hospitals and this generates situations that are unfair.

And how is the situation in the Community?

In the Valencian Community we have a central body, which depends on the General Directorate of Pharmacy, and that generates more equity. That makes all hospitals alike have access to the news. What we have is in general a problem in access because there is a lot of bureaucracy.

In the case of breast cancer, is the age of the patients going down?

Below 35 years the incidence is very low, but it seems that it has increased more in that group. It seems that cases increase and is related to cultural changes and reproductive life. The progressive delay in the first pregnancy is a risk factor. Also the fall in the number of children influences. These factors cause that in this segment to increase more cases, but in absolute terms, cases below 35 years represent only 7%.

What are the most common tumors?

The most common are colon cancer, prostate cancer and breast cancer. In fourth place is the lung, followed by the bladder, which is also closely related to smoking. The figures do not differ much from those recorded in Europe.

<https://www.diarioinformacion.com/noticias-suscriptor/alicante/2019/02/04/alvaro-rodriguez-lescure-ultimos-avances/2114584.html>

My Visit to the Doc's.

I've had hearing problems so I went to see a doctor at the Cabo Roig Salud.

He asked, 'Can you describe the symptoms?'

I said, 'Homer's a fat bloke and Marge has blue hair.....'

Mick



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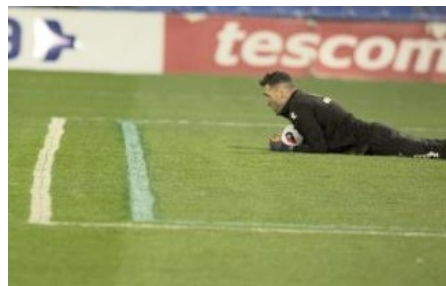
Hangovers installed.....and serviced.



The regional government have not raised any objections to the large housing estate of 1,500 homes planned for Calle Mosca, but have stated that the local flora and fauna be preserved. The two protected species are the Tudorella sulcata snail (photo) and the cat head plant. The latter is considered as an invasive species in North America and parts of Australia.



Hércules de Alicante Club de Fútbol, S.A.D. is a Spanish football team based in Alicante. They currently play in Segunda División B – Group 3 and most of their home games attract a crowd of around 30,000. At a recent home game there was consternation when the referee delayed the kick-off for 30 minutes. It seems that the markings to the penalty



areas were incorrect being one metre less in width and 0.5 metres less in length than regulations! It seems that a couple of weeks prior the Spanish

woman's team played a team from the States and the markings were.....adjusted.

The meticulous Aragonese referee insisted that the penalty areas be relined so the match could begin. Photo. The ref's attention to detail was praised by the opposition team's manager but threw what the Spanish call 'a poisoned dart' at the ref for not giving two penalties and disallowing a goal.

Hercules won the match and are now in the promotion area.

A research group in Elche University have been given a grant by the EU of €1.5 million.

A number of working groups there will investigate saffron, each group to take a different aspect of the spice covering its health properties, sustainable growth, extraction methods etc.



This is part of a much larger project on the spice also involving research groups in Murcia, Algeria, France, Germany, Italy and Portugal.

Like Father, Like

A ten year old boy wants to ask his father a question. He goes upstairs to his parents' room and throws open the door without knocking. There on the bed he sees his father and his mother having wild & vigorous afternoon sex.

The father says, "What are you looking at? Go on, get out of here!", and he throws a pillow at the door.

The next day the father goes to the room they have set up for his mother in her old age. He opens the door without knocking and sees his son on top of the grandmother going at it hot and heavy.

The father says, "What the hell are you doing?"

The son says, "So, it's not so funny when it's YOUR mother, is it?"

It is fair to say that many of the various Spanish authorities have little regard for their environment. If they had, they wouldn't allow their beautiful coastline to be blighted with concrete. But as often happens, concerned citizens are always eager to volunteer and initiate helpful programs themselves. The upkeep of the sole river in our area, the Segura, should be maintained by the Confederación Hidrográfica del Segura (CHS) (Segura Hydrographic Confederation). But as usual, these bureaucrats are too busy shuffling papers and having long lunches. Now the stretch of the Segura which runs through the Vega Baja has been severely contaminated with plastic and other waste.

Tired of waiting for those responsible for the upkeep to take action, on Saturday February 16, over 300 volunteers decided that they would take immediate action by manning the stretch of river between Bigastro and Guardamar and collecting as much rubbish as they could in one day. Now as you will see from the photo below, the pollution in many areas has been quite dramatic, so it is hardly surprising that the volunteers collected three tons - around 3,000 kilos of plastic.

This included hoses, bottles, irrigation pipes, chairs, boxes, drums, animal food sacks, containers etc. Other waste collected included toilets, glass bottles, auto parts, mattresses, sheets and even a sofa and a sofa bed .



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THE PHOENIX GOLF SOCIETY –

SUNDAY 17th FEBRUARY AT LA TORRE GOLF

The weather was quite cold to start with but warmed up later. It is a hard course to play but quite rewarding and the players enjoyed the challenge.

NEAREST THE PIN.

Hole No.3 Colin Guthrie

Hole No.5 John Winkley

Hole No.15 Colin Guthrie

Hole No.11 K.Gell

Hole in two was won by Colin Guthrie.

Overall winner was Colin Guthrie.

We returned to Jessies Bar for lovely food and many thanks to Julie, Kath and Steve.

Anyone interested in playing with the Phoenix Club please get in touch with John & Brenda or telephone: 966199232.

NEXT GAME IS MARCH 17th AT EL VALLE.

Dave Wightman

British hosts often see you to the door at the end of social occasions and then stand on the steps, waving, until your car is out of sight.

It is friendly, but it also might be because they want to be sure that you have genuinely left.

Sarah Lyall, A Field Guide to the British

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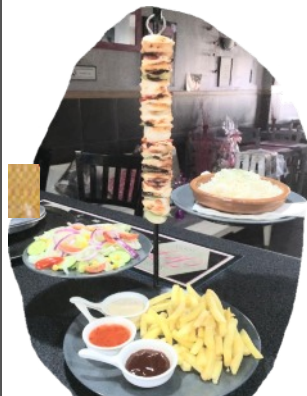
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CANCER SPECIALISTS WARN AGAINST PSEUDO THERAPIES.

The Head of Oncology at the Elche General Hospital, Álvaro Rodríguez-Lescuer, has warned against the use of pseudo therapies in the treatment of cancer. He recalled two recent cases in the province where conventional treatments were ignored. In the first case, a 30-year-old lady who had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer, decided to reject chemotherapy and surgery and entrusted the fate of her disease to a pseudotherapy alone. When she returned a year later, what twelve months earlier was an early-stage tumour with a good prognosis, "it had become an aggressive cancer with metastases and finally the patient died," explained Álvaro.

In the second case, he remembered a female patient to had the diagnosis when the disease was already well advanced. She did not want to follow any treatment, "because she embraced a movement that determines that all diseases have an emotional origin and advises a kind of quarantine to overcome them." After spending some time isolated from family and friends, recalls Lescure, "she died with many pains as he rejected any type of palliative treatment."

Now these may be extreme cases but oncologists and doctors from many other specialties warn that the so-called pseudosciences are increasingly noticeable among patients. Recently, the Ministry of Science announced a survey which revealed that 5% of cancer patients and other diseases have used pseudotherapies to replace conventional medicine and 14% as complementary treatment.

(Continued below)

(Continuing from right-hand column)

Nieves Díaz, Head of Oncology at Hospital de Sant Joan, has not encountered any case of treatment abandonment but she has to deal with many patients who alternate chemotherapy with other alternative therapies. Here she finds that these therapies interact with the chemotherapy, potentiating it and therefore increasing its toxicity or reducing its effect.

The Ministry of Health has catalogued about 140 techniques with dubious scientific evidence, but in many cases enjoy enormous popularity. For this reason, doctors are calling on Sanidad for more sanctions and new regulations in this regard, since pseudosciences are becoming "a plague that affects the very roots of the health system in our country," according to a letter sent to the Minister of Health and signed by 400 doctors and scientists from Spain.

Francisco Carratalá, neuropediatric at Hospital Sant Joan feels that children are particularly vulnerable to quack therapies, introduced by their parents. "You see that there are children who, after the diagnosis, disappear from the consultation and then return after two years, when the few options that could receive treatment have not been applied at the time." Carratalá believes that pseudotherapies have gone on more in recent years and in a way have been sophisticated driven by the internet and social networks. "Before, this was in the hands of the healers of the villages, who tried to cure you and if they saw you as very bad, would send you to the hospital." Nowadays "behind many of these pseudotherapies there are very powerful companies that invest millions in marketing".

Psychiatry is also a fertile ground for pseudotherapies, with the aggravating circumstance that patients suffering from important diseases, such as schizophrenia, are often unaware of the seriousness of their illness. "Sometimes they end up in the hands of people who tell them that everything is a because of their environment and that they do not need medication," says Elena Benítez, a psychiatrist at Elda Hospital. In his practice, it is not uncommon to find patients who, after 20 stable years, abandon their treatments for miracle products, such as the popular MMS, which is no more than diluted bleach. "When they return at the end of the year they are very uncompensated and relapses in these patients are very hard."

Even in the field of Ophthalmology, specialists such as José Belda, responsible for service of the Hospital of Torrevieja, warns of the appearance in recent years of the so-called visual therapy, a kind of gymnastics for sight that for 500 euros promises to cure cataracts. "All they can do is delay the operation and aggravate the problem," he warns.

Art? Art? All the art in the world isn't worth a good meat and potato pie.

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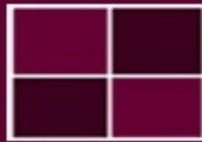
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March

The Valentine cards are in the bin
but only if you got some
for me the post was pretty thin
so maybe correos lost them?

So now we have the month of March
plenty to look forward too
new growth and new life to watch
and lots more things to do

Brexit is still a crazy game
agreements all asunder
the consequences still the same
as all politicians blunder

We have St Patrick's day looming
in a short couple of weeks
a sea of green suits blooming
with an eating and drinking streak

With marching bands and floats a
plenty
all nations their finery flaunted
from lay people to invited Gentry
with love and unity vaunted

Good food good drinks for all of you
and many a laugh will be had
but don't forget the lonely too
and those who need help bad

It's fair to have a rare time
forgotten woes and smiling faces
but remember life is not all sublime
so give peace and grace to all races

The Phantom Poet

*An ambassador is an honest man
sent abroad to lie for his country.*

Sir Henry Wotton

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Attendance Allowance is a benefit for people aged over 65 and who may need extra help to stay independent at home, due to an illness or disability.

You could get: £57.30 or £85.60 a week if you need help both in the day and at night.

Completing the lengthy form, you need to show that you need help at home or someone to keep an eye on you. This can include help such as getting out of bed, help to wash and dressed.

You don't need to have carers to help you but the money can help pay towards this.

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David, at Advocacy Costa Blanca is always happy to meet up for a chat. No charge.

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David you are an ultimate professional so once again thank
you
RW, El Galan

David Minto gives the most excellent service. I was
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some financial help for my disability. One group
just passed me on with tel. nos to contact . David
was immediately on the case , visited my home,
filled in forms with the info. No stress for me . Yes
David charges a fee , you would expect that, but he
certainly works hard and expertly for it and could
easily be paid from the award I received. Would
recommend Advocacy Costa Blanca to anyone
needing help. GR-San Luis

Contact David on - 602465565 or 966392026.



- advocacycostablanca@outlook.com

Are you thinking about a return to the UK?

Are you aware of the Habitual Residence Test and Ordinary Residence?

Should you decide to return to the UK, it may be that you could have housing, social services and benefits declined because of Habitual Residency Test and Ordinary Residence.

David, at ACB, has been a UK social worker for eighteen years, many of these at a very senior level and is very accustomed to helping people access UK services on return.

For free advice and guidance regarding a return to the UK please don't hesitate to contact David at Advocacy Costa Blanca on 0034 602465565 or 966392026

-It isn't fair what people say about him. They'd tell you he'd sell his own mother. I heard that on very good authority.

-Who from?

-The two blokes who bought his mother.

Ingrid & Norman Stanley Fletcher, *Porridge*.



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The Young Entrepreneur.

Manchester United were playing away at Liverpool. One of the Man U directors parked his big black BMW near the Anfield Stadium. As he locked his car a 12-year-old local boy approached him and said, 'Giz £10 and I'll watch your car.'

Pleased as punch the man replies, 'No, that's OK. I'm leaving my dog in the car. He's a German shepherd.'
Without blinking the young Scouser said, 'Yea, great. But can your dog put out fires.'

Valencia Region Pledges Free Healthcare for Brit's Post-brexite

The President of the Valencia region had some reassuring words for those British residents who have made their home in the region in eastern Spain.

"Healthcare is not under threat for the 71,000 Britons issued with a health card," Ximo Puig, the regional president from the Spanish socialist party (PSOE) said, insisting that universal healthcare was a right for every Valencian citizen and would continue to be so, whether a Brexit withdrawal agreement was struck or not.

"No Briton will lose (Valencian) citizenship in terms of the basic right to healthcare," he said on Tuesday, February 12, following an inter-departmental meeting to analyse the effects of Brexit of those living in the Valencia region.

(He added in Twitter 'The changing position of the United Kingdom with respect to Brexit pushes us to develop different responses to each of the possible scenarios. For this reason, we will provide advice to the affected companies and we will launch an online information platform for them.')

Apart from the 71,000 Brits officially registered as resident in Valencia - the majority of whom live along the coast in Alicante province - around 100,000 British visitors to the region receive healthcare while on holiday.

Valencia remains one of the most popular destinations in Spain for British residents and visitors alike. Last year, 37 percent of the 9.2 million visitors to the region came from the UK.

Puig said that in return for treating Brits at its health centres and hospitals, the region of Valencia claims approximately €75 million a year from the UK.

He said that "the Generalitat (Regional government) has the political will to formalize a bilateral agreement" with the United Kingdom, where some 10,000 Valencians live, to continue receiving economic compensation for the aforementioned universal health care".

"Even in the worst case scenario of a hard Brexit, Brits can continue with their status as Valencians, and that means free healthcare," he emphasized. (From The Local)

See also:

<http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/brexit/howtoprepare/Paginas/citizens.aspx>



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the US of A celebrates the Third Year of the Cock.





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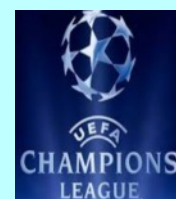
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Bob and his wife started dieting a few weeks ago. They even did pretty well thru February. Bob's wife proposed that they have a "cheat day" yesterday. She brought home McDonald's and KFC wings. Bob brought home his secretary. From his hospital bed, Bob is wondering, when will men ever begin to understand women?



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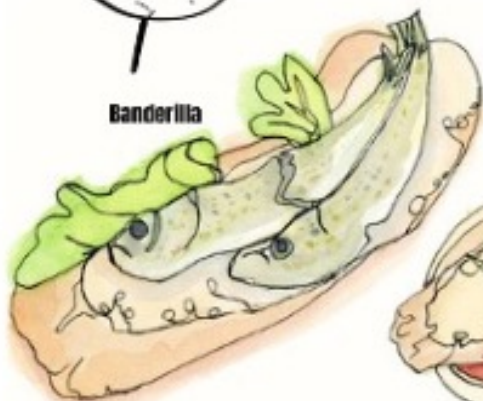
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A man answers the phone and has the following conversation: "Yes, mother, I've had a hard day. Colleen has been very difficult - I know I ought to be more firm, but it is hard. Well, you know how she is. Yes, I know you warned me. I remember you told me that she was evil and would make my life miserable and you begged me not to marry her. I should have listened to you. You want to speak with her? All right."

He looks up from the phone and calls to his wife in the next room, "Colleen, your mother wants to talk to you!"

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A Greek Tragedy?

Greece is in danger of losing its national character, according to many Greeks. They may soon be a minority in their own land. And it's all because of a law passed by the Greek government in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis in a desperate attempt to attract foreign investment – and thereby mitigate the crippling austerity imposed on them by international creditors. The law grants a residence permit to anyone spending more than €250,000 on Greek real estate, a permit which eventually bestows Greek citizenship, and, thus, citizenship of the EU. And to get that benefit, foreigners are now buying up Greece – and in so doing, they are pricing locals out of the housing market. When foreign buyers get this so-called “golden visa”, their spouse, children and even parents are also entitled to one – and they don't even have to actually live in their Greek home to qualify! That's why in the past five years, Athens has turned into a multicultural shelter for the foreign wealthy, mainly from Turkey and other non-EU countries. Many natives believe that this “vulgar sell-off” of their precious citizenship will leave Greece ravaged by the “monster of globalisation”, a country overrun by non-Europeans.

Bit like the southern Spanish coastline, I suppose.

Football Fallout.

I see that Jose Mourinho, the former Real Madrid manager, has received a one-year suspended jail sentence and has to pay a €2 million fine (60% of the defrauded amounts) for tax evasion from the Spanish Treasury.

According to the agreement with Spanish public prosecutors, the coach created the company Koper Services SA to “financially hide the profits made from his image rights.” Before September 2004, he signed a contract that ceded his image rights to the company, which was located in the Virgin Islands.

A few weeks ago, Portuguese soccer legend Cristiano Ronaldo accepted a 23-month jail sentence and €18.8-million fine for tax fraud. Last year, Argentine Barça player Lionel Messi and his father received jail sentences and fines for three tax offences. Colombian singer Shakira is currently accused of evading €14.5 million in taxes in Spain.

Still on ‘footie’, I see that a British football fan has been arrested and detained in the United Arab Emirates after he wore a Qatar national team shirt to a match. Doing so in the UAE is an offence punishable with a large fine and an extended period of imprisonment.

Then again, who'd wear a Man U shirt in Liverpool!

LIME BAR GOLF SCORES - 13th FEB. 2019

On a slightly cool and cloudy Feb. morning 26 golfers prepared to tackle Vistabella golf course.

The course, in lovely condition, has matured into a favourite among many of the players.

Played in the Stableford format the following scores were recorded.

GOLD CLASS

1st MATT DAVIS 38pts
2nd BILL DENNE 33pts
3rd JOHN WILLIAMS 32pts

SILVER CLASS

1st ARTHUR JONES 37pts
2nd GRAHAME MITCHEL 36pts
3rd BRIAN ARCHER 31pts(CB)

NEAREST THE PIN

HOLE 2 - MATT DAVIS
HOLE 5 - STEVE BURKET
HOLE 7 - DIGGER
HOLE 11 - GEORGE RUSHTON
HOLE 13 - JOE MacALEER
HOLE 15 - JONNY GRAY

We returned to the Lime Bar for presentation and refreshments.

Thanks to the bar staff and the ladies for the sweep.

NEXT VENUE - ELLE VALLE 13th MARCH.

Sorry no photos this month.

Eddie Allan



“Waggy Tails”

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Русский говорят.








The Orihuela Brugal Corruption Case has Commenced.

This trial relates to the awarding of the multi-million rubbish (basura) contract to companies of businessman Ángel Fenoll. The long awaited trial has finally begun in Elche Court, with 34 people in the dock. These include two former mayors of Orihuela, José Manuel Medina and Mónica Lorente, photos, together with 15 others who held public office at the time either as councillors or technicians in Orihuela. Several businessmen and relatives are also included.



The defendants are charged with offences of fraud, prevarication, bribery, negotiations prohibited to officials, influence peddling, privileged information disclosure, electoral crime, conspiracy, disclosure of secrets, extortion and attempted coercion. Some of the allegations date back to bribery charges as early as 2006!



The public prosecutor is asking a 37 years jail sentence for Angel Fenoll; while José Manuel Medina faces 12 years in prison and eight for Monica Lorente. According to the accusation, Medina was paying bills for years without a contract to Colsur and Proambiente - the companies of Fenoll; while Lorente is alleged to have 'managed' the public tender in exchange for Fenoll financially supporting her political career. The case is expected to last 11 months and covers allegations during the period 2006 to 2017.

Punctuation is Important!

Miss Johnson, the primary school teacher, had kept little Johnny after class to talk to him about his homework. "Johnny, " said Miss Johnson, "You are turning your assignments in on time, and you have some very good ideas in the stories you write for class, but your punctuation is terrible. You don't use commas when you should and you put them in when you don't need them. You forget to use a question mark when you write a question. There are just a lot of errors. Why don't you try showing your finished homework to your mother or father before you bring it to class?" "Oh, I couldn't do that!" exclaimed Johnny. "Why not?" asked Miss Johnson. "Well, the other night my parents were sitting at the kitchen table after dinner talking to my sister. She said something about missing a period and my father started yelling and my mother started crying. I think they take punctuation pretty seriously at our house."



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CONTACT

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ANIMAL PROTECTION

Many believe that animals get little or no protection from the law in Spain. Although the system is far from perfect, it is improving gradually. In 2018, Spain's Civil Guard's nature protection service *Seprona* investigated or arrested 590 people for animal abuse against both wild and domestic animals. According to *Seprona*, 854 criminal offences were recorded. *Seprona* investigated dog kennels and animal exploitation at farms and zoos on more than 200 occasions. The agency recorded 11,277 reports of animal abuse in 2017 – more than the figure for 2018. Last year, however, the number of people investigated rose by 1% while the number of people arrested or charged jumped by 20% on figures from 2017.

In the last three years, *Seprona* has taken action in 50,000 situations involving all types of attacks against wild and domestic animals. In 2018, 10% of the Civil Guard's activities in defence of the environment were related to animal injuries or deaths. In Galicia, *Seprona* is currently investigating the brutal killing of four wild horses, which were corralled into a de-worming corridor and beaten to death.

During last year, *Seprona* investigated 10,920 offences related to injuries against domestic animals. This does not include the 1,731 reports concerning potentially dangerous dog breeds. The agency also addressed 3,974 complaints regarding owners keeping wild animals as pets. (El Pais)

The National Police has issued a public warning to people who place sulphur outside their properties to prevent pets from urinating, pointing out that it's actually highly dangerous. The force has that the chemical does not act as a deterrent, whereas in fact it causes harm to pets and humans, as it's highly poisonous. Sulphur is an extremely dangerous substance if inhaled, ingested or put in contact with skin, can cause ulceration, asthma and breathing problems, conjunctivitis, or inflammation of the nasal mucous. The chemical is also highly flammable. The use of sulphur on public streets is illegal in many Spanish locations and could entail a heavy fine.

Processionary caterpillar's are now coming off their tree nests locally. These are very dangerous to animals and humans. Keep your dog on a lead and keep a watch for their long trails. Their hairs are highly toxic.

Reading computer manuals without the hardware is as frustrating as reading sex manuals without the software.

Arthur C Clarke



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George Carlin

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Only a Game?

A Russian toymaker has begun selling a board game called "Our Guys in Salisbury", in which players move around the board stopping at European cities visited by the Russian agents accused of carrying out the nerve agent attack in Salisbury in March 2018. The finishing line features an image of Salisbury Cathedral and two figures wearing hazmat suits. Photo.



One of the game's developers said it was a "humorous" response to Western condemnation of the Salisbury attack. The GRU agents were themselves much mocked in Russia for their claim, in a TV interview, to be nutritional supplements salesmen who'd gone to Salisbury to view its cathedral's "famous 123-metre spire".

Other Russian firms have previously attempted to capitalise on the Salisbury attack by producing t-shirts and even a craft beer under the name "Novichok".

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Cheesy Spanish Chat-up Lines.

Okay, so St. Valentine's Day has been and gone, but now that spring is almost here, it will breathe new life into the world around us, put a spring in your step and possibly love in your eye.

So what happens if you want to chat-up a Spaniard - male or female? It is much more impressive and probably more successful if you use the native tongue. Courtesy of our roving and sometimes sober reporter, 'Dirty' Dingus O'Flaherty, he has come up with some great opening lines:

- **Hace calor aquí? O eres tu?** (Is it hot here? Or is it you?)
- **Si la belleza fuese delito, te hubiera dado cadena perpetua** (If beauty was a crime, you deserve life in prison)
- **Crees en amor a primera vista? O vuelvo a pasarte otra vez** (Do you believe in love at first sight? Or should I walk past you again?)
- **Perdona, sabes dónde está la tierra? Porque desde que te vi ando en las nubes** (Excuse me, do you know where the earth is? Because since I laid eyes on you my head is in the clouds)
- **Tu papa debe de ser pirata, porque tu eres un tesoro!** (Your dad must be a pirate, because you are a treasure!)
- Hola, te pareces mucho a mi próxima novia (Hello, you look a lot like my next girlfriend)
- **Como se siente al ser la chica mas guapa en esta habitación?** (What does it feel like to be the prettiest girl in the room?)

This will make any Spanish woman blush. If you want to exaggerate the effect, try calling her the prettiest woman in the world by saying "**Como se siente al ser la chica mas guapa del mundo?**"

Okay, some of these are so corny they might make your companion throw up, but it may be worth a shot!

We weren't having an affair. He was just lying on top of me to get the creases out of my negligee.

TRIXIE, Victoria Wood

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During the midst of a very bad winter in the Scottish Highlands, Hamish the Crofter, hadn't been seen for a couple of weeks. The rescue services helicopter flew a team up the mountain to his home. A man climbed onto the croft roof, brushed away the snow and shouted down the chimney. "Hamish, Hamish it's the Mountain Rescue"
 "Piss off, I gave a pound last year!"

Regionalism & the Inheritance Tax

Depending on where you live in Spain, inheritance tax (IHT) can be a major headache and a big drain on finances.

Largely due to the pressure from the Ciudadanos Party in Andalucia, the inheritance tax in that region introduced by the socialists has now been virtually abolished with children and spouse now entitled to receive one million euro each free of that tax.

Unfortunately in our region, Valencia, the ruling left-wing government are not nearly so generous. In fact this region is one of the more tax demanding i.e. greedy ones.

Taking a hypothetical case of a 30-year-old who inherits assets of say €309,000 (property, savings and car) from either parent, the regulations in Valencia are the most penal at the regional level given that the payment of an average rate of more than 1% must be made. Valencia is followed by Cantabria and the Balearic Islands with average inheritance tax rates between 0.45% and 0.60% and the rest of the communities have their average rate between 0.01% and 0%.

In this particular case, the IHT payable in Valencia would be €3,582, Cantabria, with €1,826.95, and Baleares €1,340, while Madrid and Catalonia are located in the ninth and tenth place with rates of 252 and 159 euros respectively.

Aragon, Asturias, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y León and Galicia are the Communities exempt from paying taxes on inheritances of €300,000.

In Valencia, the IHT tax free portion is just €100,000 and this has led to many direct family inheritors renouncing the inheritance, fearing more debt



"I'll be needing one of your legs as well!"

than equity!

In the smaller Alicante province alone, notaries registered 1,611 people who renounced their inheritance during 2018 - that's almost five cases every day! This is up from 286 cases in 2007. Would-be inheritors are concerned that the debt associated with the inheritance - mortgage etc, may be too much. And of course, it is probable that some inheritors are unemployed or lack liquidity.

There are also 'tactical' renouncements where several brothers would choose to withdraw their inheritance rights to favour another of them who has fewer resources.

The Partido Popular (PP) proposed a reduction of the inheritance and gift tax so that inheritances of up to 300,000 euros would be exempt. However the socialist regional government called the proposal "electoralist, demagogic and not very serious" and rejected it without hesitation.

Let's hope that the Ciudadanos party do well in the regional elections this May. They want to reduce or eliminate IHT everywhere, as they have virtually done in Andalucia.

Who Turned the Lights Off?

The theft of electricity is a significant problem in much of Spain. In the municipality of Badalona in Catalonia on January 5, three people died and thirty people were injured after tenants in a block of flats there 'rigged' the electricity supply so they didn't have to pay and caused a fire.



Closer to home, consumers in the area of Caliu in Elda, Alicante, have been experiencing daily black-outs during January, some for more than seven hours. When Iberdrola investigated they found that in blocks of flats only 20% of the residents had a legal supply of electricity, the

remaining residents stealing the power with dodgy wiring. But this type of fraud is not new to Caliu. In December 2014, electricity technicians, backed up by 20 riot police discovered 90 clandestine power outlets and manipulated meters in the area.



"Is the guy in the green jacket the one who complained about the baked potatoes?"

Trump's America?

A local charity had never received a donation from the town's banker, so the director made a phone call. "Our records show you make \$500,000 a year, yet you haven't given a penny to charity," the charity director began. "Wouldn't you like to help the community?"

The banker replied, "Did your research show that my mother is ill, with extremely expensive medical bills?"

"Um, no," mumbled the director.

"Or that my brother is blind and unemployed? Or that my sister's husband died, leaving her broke with four kids?"

"I ... I ... I had no idea."

"So," said the banker, "if I don't give them any money, why would I give any to you?"

Problems with your Spanish Bank?

From time to time problems can and do occur in Spanish Banks, just as they do in other countries. Quite often any grievance can be sorted out at a branch level simply by speaking with the manager and putting your case forward - maybe even by going as far as threatening to take your business elsewhere. However, occasionally you may have a more serious grievance and wish to take matters further. So what should you do ?

Customer Services

As you would probably expect, a quick telephone call to the Bank's Customer Care call centre can often resolve the issue. The veiled threat of 'taking the matter further' is usually something that the majority of Banks wish to avoid and so, if they can, they will try to resolve the issue at this early stage.

Defensor del Cliente

If and when speaking directly to the branch manager and customer services at head office, has failed to bring any closure to the issue of your problem you should then find out who the '*Defensor del cliente*' for your bank is. Think of a *Defensor del cliente* as a kind of Ombudsman protecting the interests of the client, but concentrating exclusively on the one banking organisation as opposed to the banking sector as a whole - which is why you need to be sure that you are contacting the right one. The Bank is duty bound to show their appointed *Defensor* either on their website or on the literature you were given upon opening your account.

You can find the *Defensor del Cliente* for your bank by clicking here:

<https://www.bde.es/servicio/reclama/bancos.pdf>

You should contact the *Defensor* in writing clearly stating the nature of your grievance and quoting as many times, dates, names and any other relevant information you can think of. If you have any evidence of letters, cheques, statements of passbook entries that support your complaint then you should include them.

It goes without saying that if you are submitting a complaint in writing (as opposed to email) then you should keep copies of your correspondence and send your envelope by recorded mail (*Correo certificado*).

The *Defensor* will then contact the bank and conduct a brief investigation into the matter to see if your complaint is justified.

As in the UK and other countries, Banks have a responsibility for due care and diligence to their clients and their money, but if they feel that they can shirk this responsibility and prove that they have not acted unfairly or improperly, they will.

The *defensor* should then get back to you to advise you of their findings and what course of action (if any) will be taken.

Banco de Espana

On the rare occasions that the *Defensor* has been unable to intervene and resolve the issue on your behalf (If not to your entire satisfaction and in your favour, then at least with adequate explanation), then you can take matters further by appealing directly to the Complaints Department of the Bank Of Spain.

Again, you should repeat the process as above, but also include your reasons for being unhappy with the findings of the *Defensor del Cliente*, once again providing copies of any written documentation you may have.

Contact details for the Bank of Spain

Servicio de Reclamaciones

Banco de España

c/ Alcalá, 48

28014 MADRID

Telephone: 901-545-400

(The above has been extracted from an old article in Tumbit, so some of the information may not be up to date .

What is very interesting are the more recent comments on problems with the Banks at the bottom of the article. See <http://www.tumbit.com/how-to-guides/articles/163-how-and-where-to-complain-about-my-bank-in-spain.html>



We've had to replace 'fat cat bonuses' with 'amortised emoluments with enhanced front-loaded bonuses!'

It's the thought that counts!

At the cosmetic counter in a store in Newcastle, I ran into an old friend buying his girlfriend's Valentine's Day present - some fancy moisturiser. After much thought he picked up one of the numerous varieties of moisturiser and brought it to the counter. Still unsure, he sought advice from the lady behind the counter:

Chap: 'Excuse me, but do you think this is a good moisturiser for my girlfriend?'

Lady: 'Well that depends, what type of skin does she have?'

Chap: 'I dunno.....Caucasian?!'

(Article in *The Conversation* by Lorna Harries, Associate Professor in Molecular Genetics, University of Exeter & Matt Whiteman, Professor of Experimental Therapeutics, University of Exeter.)

The ability to reverse ageing is something many people would hope to see in their lifetime. This is still a long way from reality, but in our latest experiment, we have reversed the ageing of human cells, which could provide the basis for future anti-degeneration drugs.

Ageing can be viewed as the progressive decline in bodily function and is linked with most of the common chronic diseases that humans suffer from, such as cancer, diabetes and dementia. There are many reasons why our cells and tissues stop functioning, but a new focus in the biology of ageing is the accumulation of “senescent” cells in the tissues and organs.

Senescent cells are older deteriorated cells that do not function as they should, but also compromise the function of cells around them. Removal of these old dysfunctional cells has been shown to improve many features of ageing in animals such as the delayed onset of cataracts.

We still don't fully understand why cells become senescent as we age, but damage to DNA, exposure to inflammation and damage to the protective molecules at the end of the chromosomes – the telomeres – have all been suggested.

More recently, people have suggested that one driver of senescence may be loss of our ability to turn genes on and off at the right time and in the right place.

One gene, many messages

As we age, we lose our ability to control how our genes are regulated. Each cell in the body contains all the information needed for life, but not all genes are switched on in all tissues or under all conditions. This is one of the



ways that a heart cell is different from a kidney cell, despite the fact they contain the same genes.

When a gene is activated by signals from inside or outside the cell, it makes a molecular message (called an

RNA) that contains all the information needed to make whatever that gene makes. We now know that over 95% of our genes can actually make several different types of messages, depending on the needs of the cell.

A good way to think about this is to consider each gene as a recipe. You could make either a vanilla sponge, or a chocolate cake, depending on whether you include the chocolate. Our genes can work like this. The decision as to which type of message is produced at any given time is made by a group of about 300 proteins called “splicing factors”.

As we age, the amount of splicing factors we are able to make declines.

This means that aged cells are less able to switch genes on and off to respond to changes in their environment. We and others have shown that the levels of these important



“Frankly, I don't enjoy prostate exams any more than you do!”

regulators decline

in blood samples from elderly humans, and also in isolated human senescent cells of different tissue types.

Rejuvenating old cells

We have been looking for ways to turn the splicing factors back on. In our new work, we showed that by treating old cells with a chemical that releases small amounts of hydrogen sulphide, we were able to increase levels of some splicing factors, and to rejuvenate old human cells.

Hydrogen sulphide is a molecule that is found naturally in our bodies and has been shown to improve several features of age-related disease in animals. But it can be toxic in large amounts, so we needed to find a way to deliver it directly to the part of the cell where it is needed.

By using a “molecular postcode” we have been able to deliver the molecule directly to the mitochondria, the structures that produce energy in cells, where we think it acts, allowing us to use tiny doses, which are less likely to cause side effects.

We are hopeful that in using molecular tools such as this, we will be able to eventually remove senescent cells in living people, which may allow us to target multiple age-related diseases at once. This is some way in the future yet, but it's an exciting start.

theconversation.com/ageing-in-human-cells-successfully-reversed-in-the-lab-101214?

I make no excuse for the occasional serious article in the newsletter, as I know most of you are not just 'Sun' readers.

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HAPPIEST AT 16 AND 70 YEARS OLD?

People in the UK are happiest at 16 and 70 years old, with their wellbeing taking a dive for the majority of their working lives, according to an analysis of official data carried out by a leading thinktank.

A Resolution Foundation paper published on Wednesday said people tend to be happier, more satisfied and to feel a greater sense of self-worth in their earlier years – and again as they approach older age.

The study of seven years of Office for National Statistics (ONS) data also suggested that anxiety levels tend to rise between their mid-20s and their mid-50s.

After a downturn in people's late teens, the data suggested an increase in overall wellbeing in people's early 20s. But that tends to be followed by a stark drop-off in each of the components of wellbeing from around the age of 30 until people reach their 50s. At that point, the curves shift steadily upwards until the age of about 70. The ONS' collection of subjective wellbeing data was started in 2010 by David Cameron, who felt the nation's success was being measured in financial terms alone. "It's time we admitted that there's more to life than money and it's time we focused not just on GDP but on GWB –

general wellbeing," he said at the time. "Improving our society's sense of wellbeing is, I believe, the central political challenge of our times."

On Wednesday, George Bangham, a policy analyst at the independent thinktank, said: "It is encouraging that a growing number of policy makers are interested in boosting wellbeing. But their focus on the new objective should complement, rather than replace, priorities such as income redistribution, better jobs and secure housing."

He added that the ONS data "shows that there is more to life than a country's GDP, but that the employment and income trends that lie behind our economy can make a big difference to our wellbeing too".

According to the Resolution Foundation report, the statistics show the most important determinants of wellbeing to be good health, a job and a partner. But it said the data suggested wellbeing also varied significantly depending on someone's age, income level, housing tenure, and where they live.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2019/feb/13/people-are-happiest-at-ages-of-16-and-70-in-uk-says-study>

I wouldn't say my father hated me, but at the christening, he tipped the vicar a fiver to hold me under.

Bob Monkhouse

President Trump's choice for the position of US Ambassador to the UN, Heather Nauert, has withdrawn herself from consideration for the position. Ms Nauert featured in this column last month when she referred to Germany as a great ally on D-Day. Her nomination faced complications because Nauert hired a foreign-born nanny about 10 years ago who didn't have the proper work visa and Nauert didn't pay proper taxes on time.

A civil guard in pajamas, robe and slippers stopped two robbers trying to steal in a bar in Cadiz. The owner of the



bar rang his policeman friend at 3:45 in the morning whispering, 'Come here Luismi, they are stealing in the bar and they are inside!' Luismi, photo, got out of bed, grabbed a torch and handcuffs and ran the 100 metres to the bar. There he challenged the burglars, handcuffed them and waited for reinforcements. Luiz is already famous in the Guardia having written

two books on bullying and internet harassment.

A doctor in the hamlet of Llano de Brujas, five kilometers from the city of Murcia, has been suspended from employment without pay for 11 months. A 21-year-old female patient attended the surgery and asked for some Diazepam tablets. The doctor refused to give her the tablets saying they would make her fat and she would lose her *tipazo* (figure) and diagnosed her as not being "properly fucked." The doctor also smoked during the consultation and offered the young lady a cigarette. The events occurred during 2016. Who knows, maybe he is a GP in your area now!



Vaev Tissue, a Los Angeles start-up, claims to have sold nearly a thousand tissues that have been sneezed into by someone with a cold virus – for \$79.99 each. Founder Oliver Niessen says that his used tissues are "wellness" products: they allow customers to catch a cold whenever they want, in order to decrease the risk of catching the same illness later. This, he says, gives "open-minded" people the luxury of getting sick on their "own terms". I don't believe it!

Dog-walking has been banned in Tehran, as part of a long-standing official campaign to discourage dog-ownership in the Iranian capital. "We will take measures against people walking dogs in public spaces, such as parks," said police chief Hossein Rahimi. Driving with a dog in your car is also banned. Dogs are regarded as unclean by the nation's Islamic leaders, and they also, added Rahimi, cause "fear and anxiety".

A cryptocurrency exchange in Canada has lost control of at least \$137 million of its customers' assets following the sudden death of its founder, who was the only person known to have access (passwords) to the offline wallet that stored the digital coins. QuadrigaCX has 115,000 customers with outstanding balances.

Monica Lewinsky walks into the dry cleaner's and asks the guy to get a stain out of her dress.

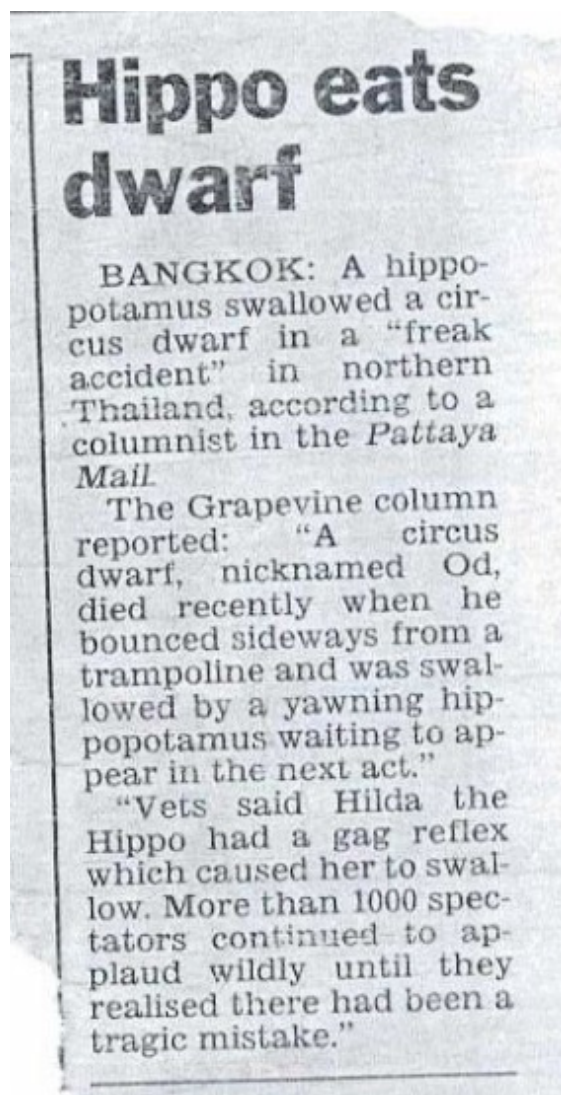
'Come again?' he asks.

'No, it's ketchup.'

An Irish man who swallowed a \$40,000 diamond ring at a jewellery store in Turkey has told prosecutors that he "fell into a trance" when he saw it. Ian Campbell, 54, was arrested after ingesting the 2.5-carat diamond ring while on holiday in Marmaris, and was given laxatives to help him "return" it (this didn't work; it had to be removed surgically). Campbell explained that his wife had died in a car accident after falling into a lake; her wedding ring had never been found. Now, he said, when-ever he sees diamond rings, he feels "a strong urge" to take them, "especially the ones with higher carat diamonds". I'm sure the Turks believed him.

A few preflight drinks can get expensive rather quickly. For David Stephen Young, a round of six alcoholic beverages he drank before his flight from Calgary to London prompted a rash of unruly behaviour, culminating in an abrupt turnaround, an arrest and a hefty fine of more than \$16,000. Young, 44 and a British national, tried to access the restroom during takeoff and became belligerent with the flight crew and a passenger. He was ordered by a judge to pay WestJet for 20,000 pounds of fuel the pilot dumped over Alberta to safely land the aircraft back in Calgary on Jan. 4.

And finally.....



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Asylum Seekers.

Spain received a record-breaking 54,000 requests for asylum in 2018, making it one of the five countries in Europe with the highest number of applications. However it accepted a far lower rate of requests than other European countries facing the same demands. In 2018, just 12,000 requests were resolved in Spain, and just one in four asylum seekers was granted protection. The acceptance rate has fallen from 35% to 24% – the lowest rate of the seven European countries that have the highest number of requests for asylum (Germany, Greece, Sweden, Italy, France and Spain). Germany tops the list, granting protection to 50% of 185,853 applications last year.

The figures from 2018 also reveal the backlog at the Asylum Office, which reports to the Interior Ministry. Asylum requests are dealt with slowly. There are 78,710 applications yet to be processed, and each can take up to two years to be resolved. The Asylum Office has been staffed by just 60 people since it was founded in 1992, when Spain received hardly any asylum applications. Of the 11,875 applications that were approved, only 575 – less than 5% – were granted refugee status, which provides the greatest level of protection and is indefinite. The rest were offered subsidiary protection, a temporary measure that is granted largely to people from Syria, Ukraine and Palestine.

More than a third of asylum applications to Spain have come from Venezuelans, who have been struggling with a

deepening humanitarian and political crisis since 2016. But while there is high demand, only 30 Venezuelans were granted recognition.

Meanwhile, the new right-wing regime in Italy has rejected a record 24,800 asylum applications in the last four months. The rejections were up 25% on the previous four months, from June to September 2018, and coincide with the bringing into law of the Salvini decree on immigration, named after the far-right interior minister, Matteo Salvini.

According to estimates, there could be more than 670,000 asylum seekers who will find themselves living irregularly in Italy, partly because the government does not have the capacity to deport them. It can take an average of 19 months for Italian authorities to respond to an asylum application. The Italian government has promised to repatriate 500,000 people. To date it has repatriated about 500 migrants per month – fewer than the average of the previous government. One research group believes that it would take almost a century to repatriate all the migrants denied asylum.

(Above abridged from El Pais & The Guardian)

Yet I had to chuckle when I saw the consternation and panic caused by a couple of hundred coming across the English Channel in recent months, necessitating the Home Secretary to cut short his holiday abroad. It was negligible compared to that arriving at the European Mediterranean coasts.



AQUAQUEST
PLUMBING

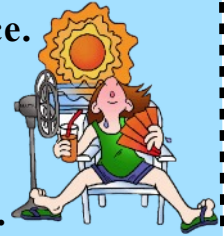


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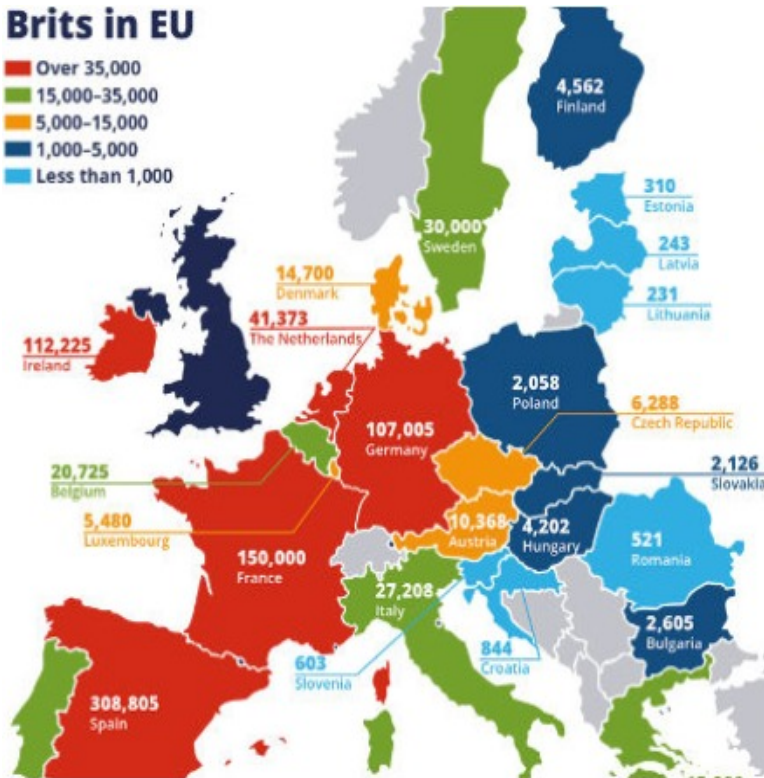
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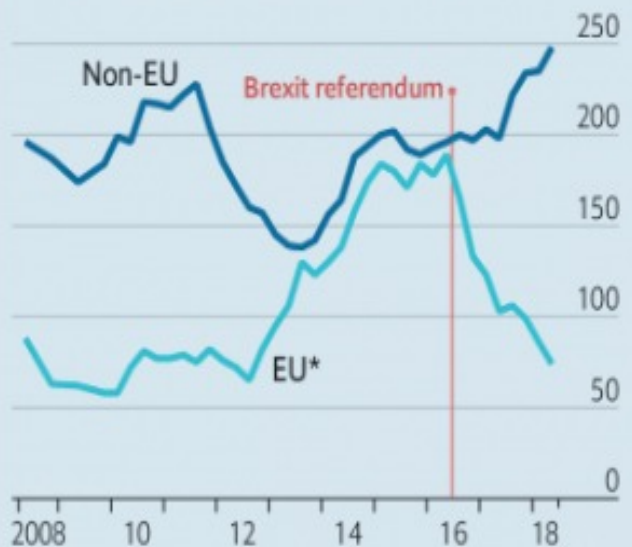
Brits in EU

- Over 35,000
- 15,000-35,000
- 5,000-15,000
- 1,000-5,000
- Less than 1,000



Switching Poles

Britain, net migration by citizenship, '000



It is often said that ‘a picture is worth a thousand words’and probably stops me from waffling-on too much . The graphic on the left indicates the British registered in the various EU countries. The key word here is ‘registered.’ In reality, I’m sure the numbers are actually much higher. The second graphic on the right shows foreign migration to the UK. Like me you will probably be surprised to see that non-EU migration to the Britain greatly exceeds EU ones. The bulk of this non-EU migration still comes from India and Pakistan. I viewed another graph from the Office of National Statistics which shows the top five foreign-born populations in Britain by numerical ranking in 2018 - largest first - is Poland, India, Pakistan, Romania and Ireland.



UK AND EUROPEAN COURIERS / REMOVAL SERVICE

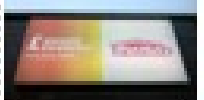
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**You can also contact Mick Church on
0034 634 321 372**

I read in the paper that the discovery of a woman's body in a suitcase is being treated as 'suspicious' by the police.

Nice to see the spirit of Sherlock Homes lives on.

Sydney Wilkins

Lime Bar Fishing SUNBATHING Club

At the monthly meeting (even after the horrendous result at the January match) we decided to give Bigastro another try. Sweeney would not be able to attend the match as his "boss" said he had to take her shopping, IN GLASGOW! Little did he know that storm Erik was lashing the Clyde. That is a friendly name for a storm! Here in Spain, on the day of the match we arrived on the bank with a temperature of 3°C. We didn't mind though as there was no wind, full sunshine and the forecast was for 20° later on. The river was at a good height and colour with a steady flow and no crap drifting downstream. The conditions looked perfect. Fagash and I had fished here the week before catching a 10.25 lb carp and a 4.8 lb barbel respectively, so we were over the moon when we both drew the pegs where we had caught the biggies. It was cool to start with but it soon warmed up and we were down to t-shirts. 3 rods had to go one better! He had packed his shorts and went topless! We tried all sorts of bait (corn, bread, pellets, meat, fruit, maggots etc), different rigs, rods/poles, feeding little and often or balling in the ground bait. None of it worked. Nobody had caught a thing in the first couple of hours, and several of us did not have a bite all day. Again! Even new boy Brian couldn't catch this time out.



By lunchtime "Beat Me" Phil had had enough of trying to coax the fish out of the reeds with his pole and launched a swim feeder with maggots straight down the middle. He wasn't the only one to try this tactic but it worked for him.

He caught the only 4 fish for 5.5 kilos and then had the audacity to lose another 2. The B*∞*∞*d! 11 "anglers" were on the bank but only 1 caught!

Sweeney, whilst riding out the storm in the Clyde was working on his voodoo hex. He was over the moon when he realised that it had worked and that most of us had blanked. He is still in with a chance of getting to the winter final at the end of March.

There are now 5 "anglers" fighting for the last 4 spots. "Beat Me" & 3 Rods are way out in front with 75 points each. At least it was a good day sunbathing! See Just John admiring the scenery.



Sweeney and I like to find new places to fish rather than the same old pegs that get overused. You never know we might drop a line onto a monster! This winter has been the hardest fishing that I have had for 5 years, so imagine our excitement when we spotted a shoal of 1 kilo carp resting in a shallow bay. The logic says we have found a holding area so the fish must feed nearby. Our next trip out we cut 2 new pegs and targeted the area either side of the "holding area". For this time of year, we did well, both catching 3 good sized fish but losing several others. The word got around, and the next time we fished, 3 Rods got there before us. As has become the norm, same spot, different day and the fishing was crap! Hardly any bites and

only 3 fish caught (not by me). 3 Rods kept us amused though, he was trying to christen his brand-new expensive pole with a hard-fighting carp. He christened it alright but not with a carp. While he wasn't paying attention a raft of crap snarled his line and took his pole off its rest, into the river and sailed off downstream. He couldn't catch it with his net so in he went AGAIN! He got it back but was heard muttering away, "She will kill me if I lose this one."

While we are struggling to find fish here, Roger the dodger is enjoying big game fishing in Florida. No doubt we will here how good it was when he returns.

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

Fishy Fingers!
The Ghost

The Confession.

A new young priest takes his first confession, when in walks a young lass and says, 'Father, I have sinned. I gave someone a blowjob.'

The priest is shocked and was unsure of how to respond. He thought that saying ten Hail Mary's and drinkink a pint of holy water might be insufficient penance. So he ran out and asked the first person he saw, a choirboy, what his predecessor, Father Murphy, would have given for a BJ.

The young choirboy replied 'A Mars bar and two packets of crisps'.

HELP VEGA BAJA
(REGISTERED CHARITY)



BEFRIENDING SERVICE

Volunteers needed to become "Befrienders"

We are looking for people to join our team visiting people in their homes or perhaps in a nursing home, keeping them company, listening and chatting – perhaps even a game of cards! Volunteers should have a caring nature, be non-judgmental, with good listening skills and be able to maintain confidentiality at all times

IMPORTANT: This role does not require any hands-on personal care or practical duties. It aims to enhance the quality of life of both the person you are befriending and that of their carer

Comment from existing HELP Vega Baja member (names have been changed)

Brian and Jackie have been married for 50 years and for 15 of those years, Jackie has been caring for her husband who has dementia. Jackie told us "You often find yourself isolated as a carer and Brian's day-to-day needs take-over any plans that I make. Brian loves to talk and always keeps Wendy, the HELP Vega Baja Welfare Officer, chatting when she comes to visit! Wendy has told us about the new free Befriending Service that the charity is starting, and this is exactly what both Brian and I need and have been hoping for. I will be able to take a break knowing that Brian has someone to keep him company and that will put my mind at ease. The service will allow me to pop out every now and again even if it is only to go to my own doctors, have a haircut or simply go and meet a friend for a coffee...."

To find out more about how you can become a volunteer with this worthwhile service, contact HELP Vega Baja San Miguel Centre on 966 723 733 or email befriending@helpvegabaja.com

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Neil, Ade & Mark

My terrier's got mange. He said he got it from a lamp post.
Dorothy Parker

Amazon.es

If you buy much of your stuff online while in Spain, it is worth looking up amazon.es.

Although it is a Spanish website, I have noticed that if you enter your search in English, it will often come up with what you are looking for. So if you enter 'pie maker' or similar, you will usually find what you want.

Mind you, this particular search also brought up a Popcorn Maker!

If you search the following:

https://www.amazon.es/b/ref=sr_aj?node=599367031&ajr=0

You will find over 90,000 entries for English books, including cookbooks by well-known and not so well-known chefs including Mary Berry, Tom Kerridge, James Martin, the Hairy Bikers and Alfie Packet* - 'The Poisoner from Preston.

Amazon Prime in Spain, at under €40 a year, is less than half the price it is in the UK, not only gaining access to Amazon Prime TV but offering free carriage on Prime purchases in Spain.

(*Alfie Packet doesn't exist, just a product of my fevered imagination.)

The following is a good information site for tourist info' in the Torrevieja area. It is available in English and a number of other languages.

<http://turismodetorrevieja.com/movil3/indexEN.htm>

Old Sam.

An old Pilot sat down in Starbucks, still wearing his old flight jacket and ordered a cup of coffee. As he sat sipping his coffee, a young woman sat down next to him. She turned to the pilot and asked, 'Are you a real pilot?' He replied, 'Well, I've spent my whole life flying planes, Bristol 138s, Aircobras, the Albamarle bomber and the Argosy Transport . I've taught more than 200 people to fly and taken part in Air Shows all over the place, so I guess I am a pilot, and you, my dear, what are you?'

She said, 'I'm a lesbian. I spend my whole day thinking about naked women. As soon as I get up in the morning, I think about naked women. When I shower, I think about naked women. When I watch TV, I think about naked women. It seems everything makes me think of naked women.'

The two sat sipping in silence. A little while later, a young man sat down on the other side of the old pilot and asked: 'Are you a real pilot?'

He replied, 'I always thought I was, but I just found out I'm a lesbian.'



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 - 10:00* - 11:00 - 12:00* - 13:00 - 15:00 - 16:00* - 17:00 - 18:00* - 19:00 - 21:00

Airport toTorrevieja: 8:00 - 10:00 - 11:00* - 12:00 - 13:00* - 14:00 - 16:00 - 17:00* - 18:00 - 19:00* - 20:00 - 22:00 (I hear that the summer timings are now year round.)

(*) - From 1st April to 31th October

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, NIE or DNI. A bit of a palaver really.

Prior booking is not required. Sometimes the bus fills up quickly with people and you have to wait more than 2 hours for the next bus.

Applying Online for A Padron Appointment In Orihuela.

Many of us who have been over here for some years will only be too aware of the many, many hours of seemingly endless queues while waiting to register for Padron, Residencia, SUMA - in fact most things. The bureaucracy in Spain teaches us all patience.

Fortunately the local council have come up with a very welcome efficiency, where one can now register online for an appointment.

On this website you can choose day, date and time for your appointment, subject of course to availability.

The web address is located below and is, helpfully, also available in the English language.

When you first try to access the site, you may get a warning saying that this particular website does not have a security certificate. I just ignored it.

Aside from the appointments facility, the website also contains information relating to participation, transparency etc. <https://orihuela.governalia.es/en/>

Lee's Event's List

This helpful and informative internet link was submitted by the late Lee Bell.

<https://www.eurotourguide.com/en/events-calendar/2245/>

Red Days Valencian Community - 2019

These are the holidays: January 1 (New Year); March 19 (San José);April 19 (Good Friday); April 22 (Easter Monday);May 1 (Labour Fiesta) June 24 (San Juan); August 15 (Assumption of the Virgin); October 9 (Day of the Valencian Community); October 12 (National Holiday); November 1 (All Saints' Day); December 6 (Constitution Day); December 25 (Christmas).

And don't forget your local municipality will also have at least an extra two days of holidays, dependent on the local patron saint days, although most stores will ignore these.

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*I thought I had PMS so I
went to the doctor.
The doctor said: 'I got good
news and bad news.
The good news is that you
don't have PMS. The bad
news is you're just a bitch.'*
Rhonda Bates



"I couldn't be bothered hunting, so I just grabbed some 'McDonalds'..."

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