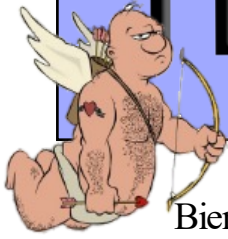


THE DREAM SCENE

NEWSLETTER

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



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

Bienvenido a todos and welcome to the February 2020 edition. Issue No.150

Welcome to our 150th issue! When The Dream Scene was first issued in **March 2007** with just four pages, I never realised it would grow to its current 40-pages and wide local distribution. This is thanks to our advertisers, subscribers, donators and band of eager volunteer helpers. **The Dream Scene is a hobby and not a business.** Printing costs are now a minimum of €600 per month and the advert revenues do not cover this cost. Although the adverts cost the same as they did 13 years ago, I have never increased the cost, although most of the advertisers pay only €5 per month. Demand is such that I would like to increase the production and distribution. Although I am happy to continue producing the newsletter at a small loss (as it is a hobby!), I may have to look at increasing the cost of the adverts to do this at some time in the future or reduce the size of the ads. I will discuss this with the advertisers over the next few months but distribution will always be free! If the economic situation in Spain deteriorates, the DS will remain as it is now.

After we got a hammering here with the Gota Fria during September, the recent arrival of **Storm Gloria** was an unwelcome surprise. Many properties, particularly holiday homes or properties left closed for weeks or months, have now been experiencing problems with mould and damp.

The Torrevieja Carnival will be the last fiesta before Lent. See <https://www.carnavaldetorrevieja.com/>

Slowdown and political uncertainty leave house prices here on the brink of **zero growth**. The province of Alicante closed 2019 with an average increase in the value of houses of 2.3%, but with a clear trend towards the slowdown with **a rise of only 0.1%** in the second half of the year.

Moody's forecast on page 3 may, I believe, be unduly optimistic. Property price rises in Madrid and Barcelona will not be matched elsewhere and the new government's proposals regarding property taxation and rentals are likely to be draconian. Although the British continue to be the largest foreign buyers on the Costas, their purchases are definitely slowing down.

Brexit day is 31st January and no particular change will be noticed in the UK; however, for the next eleven months, from the EU27 perspective, the UK will have entered what some have called "vassalage" status. **EU law** will still apply in the UK until Jan' 1, 2021, as on that day EU law will cease to bind the UK. Nothing else is certain!

New to Via Park V is the **Naïko Bar** next to Morgan's on the lower ground floor, Darren has opened a new branch of the **Rosta Estate Agency** on the ground floor with an **Open Day on Feb' 8**. New in Via Park III is the **new baker's shop** on the first floor.

Thanks to Terry & Judy and Jerry O for the donations.

Have a great month!

From Mick, Tid and the Dream Scene Team

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ALL MEDICAL

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Angela's Cartoon



'When you're finished, fancy a Valentine's Day Bonk?'

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O

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BREAKFASTS - English, Scottish & Irish

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HAPPY HOUR 2 - 7pm

EVERYDAY!

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ESTRELLA €1.50

CARLING €2.20

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MAGNERS €2.50

GUINNESS €2.70

SPITFIRE €2.70

John Smiths €2 a can!

Mahou bottles 2 for €2!

Spirits & Mixers €3.00

Smirnoff Vodka & Mixer

Soberano Brandy & Mixer

Bacardi Rum & Mixer

Original Larios Gin & Mixer

HOUSE WINE - RED, WHITE, ROSE €1.40!

BOTTLED SAN MIGUEL, & Gluten free

AMBAR, ESTRELLA 2 FOR €1.70



FUN MUSIC BINGO EVERY FRIDAY 2:30pm

MUSIC THURSDAY 8:30pm;

KABAROKÉ FRIDAY 8:30pm; MUSIC SUNDAY 8:30pm

Every other Sat - SOUL EXPLOSION

ALL SPORTS ON 6 GIANT SCREENS!

Following the general election last December, Pedro Sanchez, photo, the acting socialist (PSOE) PM, managed to get elected by a simple majority after a second vote in Congress with a majority of only two. This was only achieved with the **18 abstentions of the Catalan and Basque separatists** (Bildu - the political supporters of the terrorist ETA) the voting support from the far-left Unidos Podemos, and a couple of minor parties. Have no doubt that private deals have been done with all of these to guarantee their support as Sanchez would do a deal with the devil to become prime minister. Some of these are now coming to light.

Pablo Casado, the PP leader of the main opposition party, accused Mr Sánchez of putting his **“Frankenstein government”** in the hands of “communists” and “terrorists and coup supporters”. The now-PM Sánchez famously stated last year that he “wouldn’t be able to sleep at night” if he had accepted the demands of Unidas Podemos for a coalition deal. Now it is a coalition government and he has made the head of Podemos, Pablo Iglesias, deputy prime minister and given his party some ministries as well. Oddly Sanchez has also created four deputy prime minister positions. Three go to women in his own party and one to Iglesias.

To give you a flavour of the quality of some of these appointments, there are **now Marxists in government** for the first time since the civil war. The new Minister for Consumer Affairs – Communist party member Alberto Garzón (photo right) – has praised Cuba’s model of consumerism on Twitter in a sign that ideology trumps reality.

Iglesias’ own common law wife, also Marxist, has been made Minister of Equality. Some of you may be aware that the couple



bought a €600,000 house in Madrid over a year ago - you’ve got to love Spanish Socialism!

Next month we will take a look at the program of the new government and how it may affect you.

But now all this politics is giving me a headache and I need a drink.



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“All the clocks have stopped!”

One in four residents in the province of Alicante will be **older than 65 years** in 2033 due to the aging population.

Economists and sociologists believe that the increase in the elderly will force taxes to rise and depend on migratory flows to cope with pensions and maintain the level of well-being.

The province of Alicante has the lowest birth rate in history. In 2018 there have been 7.66 births per 1,000 inhabitants.

Spain will be a European leader in **both house-price inflation and unemployment** next year, according to a forecast by the international ratings agency Moody’s. They forecast Spanish house prices will rise by 5.5% on average next year, the highest level of annual house price inflation of all the eight European countries included in the forecast. In comparison, prices are forecast to rise 4.5% in Ireland and Holland, 4% in Germany and Portugal, 2.5% in France, 0.7% in the UK, and no change in Italy.

In terms of **economic growth**, Spain is forecast to lose the number one spot to Ireland on 3.2%, with Spain in second place with 2%. It will be interesting to see how Spain now does under a socialist government. The current growth is largely due to the previous conservative but corrupt PP government.

Spanish unemployment has come down from mind-boggling high of 26% in 2013 to 14.2% today after some good years of economic growth, it’s still one of the highest levels in Europe, second only to Greece (16.7%).

The local authorities in Malaga have introduced a **five-year ban** on the introduction of new dining and drinking establishments in the downtown areas. Already saturated with these establishments, the moratorium inside what are being termed Acoustically Saturated Zones (ZAS) encompasses a total of 103 streets where noise levels exceed 65 decibels during the day and 55 at night. In the worst cases, noise levels reach 90 decibels.

From January 1, male employees can now enjoy **paternity leave of 12 paid weeks** off work, up from the current eight. Although some may avail of this, many will not fearing they will lose their jobs if they take the break.

The **birth rate in Spain has fallen** year on year in the last decade, from almost 520,000 in 2008 to almost 373,000 last year – the lowest figure since 1998. The average age of first-time mothers continues to rise. In 2018, it was above 31 for the first time, compared to 25 in 1975.

Only one in five Spaniards **between the ages of 16 and 29** (18.6%) had moved out of home in the second quarter of 2019. This figure has continued to drop since the third quarter of 2008, when it was at 26.1%. In the meantime, renting a place has become increasingly difficult. At the end of 2008, people under 30 had to spend 55.7% of their salary to live alone; now they have to spend more than 94%. The percentage of Spaniards living outside the family home is at its lowest level since 2002. Of the 6.7 million young people (aged 16 to 29) in the country, 1.2 million have moved out. More than 81% remain in the family home. Of the 2.5 million Spaniards between the ages of 25 and 29, only 992,000 have moved out, or 39.5%, a drop of three percentage points upon last year. (El Pais)

A 28-year-old Swedish expat of Iraqi origin was arrested in Marbella after **renting out other people's properties**. It seems this guy was charging €6,000 per month plus a €1,200 deposit to a number of clients. He was eventually rumbled when he booked two people into a luxury property for the same months. He also rented out two high-end vehicles to people, even though he had rented the actual vehicles himself from a car rental firm. But this rang a bell with me as I heard some time ago that there was a Middle Eastern chap, who was president of an urbanisation close to Via Park III, who demanded and held the keys of the absent owners and was letting out their properties! Any link or just another chancer?

Weasels are devouring German cars. The rodents squeeze into parked vehicles and gnaw through hoses and tubes—leading to 198,000 insurance claims last year!

Venezuela's currency notes are being made into crafts. The country's inflation reached 200,000% by the end of the year, making its bolivar worth more as art.

During January after a **massive explosion** at a chemical plant in Tarragona killed three people. The blast was so powerful it sent a piece of metal flying for more than two kilometres, claiming one of the victim's lives. Plant managers have come under fire for not alerting authorities about the accident.

Still holding some pesetas? It seems the 268 billion pesetas are still being hoarded in Spain. That is the equivalent of €1.61 billion euros! They can still be exchanged at the Banco de Espana but will lose their value by 2021.

Lots of euro coins? There is a coin-counting machine in the Carrefour supermarket in Orihuela Costa. There, you can exchange the coins for a chit totalling the amount for cash or spend it on goods in the store. You cannot part-exchange for goods and cash, so I believe.

The UK has **failed to pass on the details of 75,000** convictions of foreign criminals to their home EU countries and concealed the scandal for fear of damaging Britain's reputation in Europe's capitals. The police national computer error, revealed in the minutes of a meeting at the criminal records office, went undetected for five years, during which one in three alerts on offenders – potentially including murderers and rapists – were not sent to EU member states. Authorities in EU countries were not informed of the crimes committed, the sentences given to their nationals by UK courts or the risk the convicted criminals posed to the public. Such is the scale of the scandal that the Home Office initially chose to conceal the embarrassing failure from EU partners.

A change to the Spanish 2012 labour reform, which was upheld in October 2019 by the Constitutional Court, **allows workers to be sacked for taking medical leave.**

The 2012 labour reform changed the article of the Workers'

Statute to allow employers to fire workers who miss more than 20% of their working days in two consecutive months, or at least 5% in the 12 months prior – **even if they have a medical certificate**. Spanish unions are planning to take the case to the European justice system and call for this law to be repealed. One would expect the current socialist government to do something about it.

Thieves have been stealing crucifixes, picture frames, metal containers and even ladders from the Elche cemetery. These objects are then **sold for scrap**.

More than **300,000 pets were abandoned** in Spain during 2019, that is about one every two minutes. Although the majority of these are cats and dogs, there is also a high number of exotic species abandoned. These include turtles, ferrets, parrots and raccoons, which, if abandoned in the wild, can be a threat to native flora and fauna.

Spain's Balearic Islands have just passed a bill aimed at clamping down on alcohol-fuelled holidays in the Mediterranean archipelago. Happy hours, when drinks are offered at a discount, **have now been banned**. Very difficult to enforce though!

A **British family of four** have been accused of siphoning off €4 million worth of airline fuel from an underground pipe leading to Malaga Airport. The theft of more than 150,000 litres of fuel almost left the Costa del Sol's primary transport hub without fuel. The police discovered the theft after a suspicious pipe was seen on the farm during a helicopter search. It led to the arrest of the father who was driving a van with 1,000 litres of diesel inside, which a neighbour saw doing daily trips from the farm. Most of the cash value of the fuel has been returned but the family face prison sentences of up to 30 years.

The **Mar Menor lagoon** has become **an environmental disaster** with its whole ecosystem in serious risk. Although the continuing deterioration in the quality of the water there has been highlighted for years, the politicians, those who can introduce corrective measures, have been mute. Well almost. The president of the Murcia government, Fernando Lopez, caused many eyebrows to be raised recently when he commented that 'There is not sufficient information to blame the agricultural sector for the deterioration in the water quality' adding that 'society as a whole over the last 60 years is to blame.' The public and experts were quick to point out the regional government's failure to implement already existing legislation was shameful. Drainage and flood water containing fertilizers and chemicals from the farmlands surrounding much of the lagoon needs to be reduced and runoff elsewhere, not into the lagoon as it has been for decades.

Back o' the Net!

That was a cross. If he meant it as a shot I'll drop my trousers in Burton's window.

Mick McCarthy, on a flukey goal by Jan-Aage Fjoetoft

Viva! Morgan's

Real **HOMEMADE** Rock n Roll food

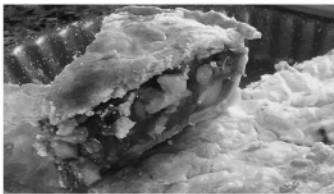


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Bring your whistles,
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Anything that makes noise
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WEDNESDAYS - WITH PAUL AT 8:30PM

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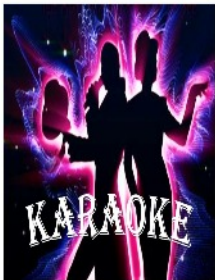
AT 2 PM COME EARLY!

FRIDAYS - CABARAOKE 8:30 - 11:30!

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WITH THE GREAT JAMES GOLDING**

**SUNDAY AFTERNOON 1 - 3PM
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**SATURDAY NIGHT IS
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2 X DELICIOUS RUMP STEAKS

WITH CHIPS, PEAS or SALAD, INCLUDING A BOTTLE OF WINE

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IF YOU ARE REALLY, REALLY HUNGRY
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FRIDAYS - NOON TO 9:30PM



FISH & CHIP SPECIAL

2 X Fish, Chips, Peas & Bottle of Wine Just €13.50



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**POOL KNOCKOUT
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EVERY THURSDAY AT 3PM.

MAXIMUM 16 PLAYERS.

**FUN DARTS EVERY WEDNESDAY
AT 3PM.**

GREAT PRIZES!!

Pies, Pasties & Sausage Rolls on Match Days.

HAPPY HOUR

Monday to Friday 2pm - 7pm

OPEN 3pm - 12am
Saturday & Sunday -
12 noon - 12 midnight.

Will the Fun Never Stop?



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LAGER

BLACKTHORN
CIDER

3 SCREENS!

My drinking
team has a
darts problem



Win
Big
Prizes

FREE
WI-FI



SOUTH
FACING
TERRACE



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104FM - TORREVIEJA-ORIHUELA COSTA

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A scruffy looking man in a kilt walks into a pub in London, orders a pint & very, very carefully puts down the plastic bag he is carrying. The barman asks, "What's in that bag?" The scruff answers, "6 pounds of Semtex." "Thank Christ for that," says the barman, "I thought it might be bagpipes."



**THATCHERS
CIDER**

LIME BAR



VIA PARK III

*A warm welcome awaits you from
Sue & Peter, Carly & Mark.*

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LAGER**

15 LARGE TV SCREENS!

2 MAIN SCREENS 75inch EACH!

EVERY PREMIER LEAGUE GAME LIVE!

**GAA, RUGBY, DARTS,
FORMULA ONE, GOLF.**



**GUINNESS
€3 A PINT!**

MUSIC BINGO - Every Monday 3pm with Gina Gee

FRIDAYS AT 9PM



**FUN QUIZ NIGHT
WITH MEAT RAFFLE,
STAND-UP BINGO &
PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT!**



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ESTRELLA BOTTLES - ALL DAY - EVERY DAY €1

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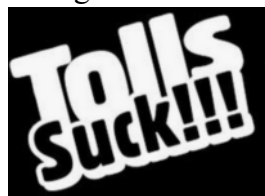
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Happy Hour Mon - Fri 2 'til 7 pm
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The City Council of Orihuela want to place a **second health centre on the Orihuela Costa**. This, they believe, will ease the congestion and queues at the existing facility. However, approval must be obtained from the Ministry of Health. The Ministry hold that a total of 40,000 registered SIP card holders in the Costa would be required to justify a second health centre, whereas the current health registered total for the coast is just over 30,000. The local council correctly emphasise that being a tourist and holiday area, a high number of people habitually reside in the area - without registering with the *salud* - together with a massive number of tourists throughout the year, swamping the existing facility during the summer. The council is now searching for a second site - not necessary close to the existing facility - and is prepared to spend several hundred thousand euros to acquire it - providing the Ministry agree to supporting the new facility. If this effort fails, the council may introduce a smaller facility of it's own, but would still require the support of the Ministry for staffing, etc.

The management of the Torrevieja Hospital is operated by the management company Ribera Salud. Their contract expires in October 2021 and the socialist Valencian Minister for Public Health wants to bring all the region's medical facilities under their direct control and **will not renew Ribera Salud's contract**. Ribera have said that they would build a second health centre on the Orihuela Costa if their contract would be extended for a further five years but the Valencian Government have rejected the offer. Having viewed the long waiting lists in the publicly run hospitals in the region (more on this on page 22), I would expect the service to deteriorate when the management changes. That is not to say that Ribera Salud is perfect as waiting lists here are getting longer also, but nowhere near the problems and delays they are now experiencing in the public hospitals.

On January 1, all the tolls on the AP-7 from Alicante to Tarragona in the north of Spain were removed. However



the remaining **two tolls locally remain!** The concession for these does not expire until 2048. The mayors of Orihuela, Torrevieja and Pilar have now called for these two tolls to be removed saying that the Vega Baja area is being discriminated against. The latest statistics from the Ministry of Development indicate that the toll-free stretches - Cartagena-Campoamor and Los Montesinos-Crevillent - have a daily traffic of 21,000 vehicles on average. But in the twelve kilometres of Campoamor-La Zenia and Los Montesinos, the best records in the last twenty years of that toll stretch have barely exceeded 7,000 daily passing vehicles.

The incidence of traffic now on the toll-free stretch of the AP-7 has already more than doubled in less than a month.

'**Narcopisos**' or '**Narcofloors**' refers to property illegally occupied by gangs who sell drugs. During mid-December, the Guardia Civil carried out a number of raids searching nine households in Torrevieja and two out-buildings and two homes in Los Garres, Murcia. They arrested 17 men and 13 women, of Belgian, Moroccan, Spanish and Brazilian nationality now being charged with crimes of belonging to criminal organization and the commission of a crime against public health "by promoting and facilitating the illegal consumption of substances that cause serious damage to health." A kilo of cocaine, 300 grams of cocaine cutting substance and 250 grams of marijuana, as well as heroin and tools for handling and weighing the drugs, have been seized.

All these properties were **illegally occupied**. To try to go unnoticed, those arrested didn't spend more than two or three weeks in the same house. They also used layered security measures using encrypted media and encrypted messaging apps to communicate with each other, changing mobile phones. Their "customers" gave them mobile phones as a means of payment for the drugs, phones that had previously been stolen. (A dozen of these have already been returned to their owners.) The gangs deployed older relatives to transport the drugs from Murcia and Valencia, in order to avoid suspicion and attention.

Five companies have submitted bids for the construction of the proposed **emergency centre** in Orihuela Costa. These are currently being assessed. Although the project is being financed by the regional government, the funds will not be released until the project is completed by the end of December this year. The new centre at La Zenia will house a number of emergency services including ambulance, fire brigade and police.

A 40-year-old Icelandic man has been arrested for allegedly **stabbing to death** his 66-year-old stepfather and then trying to kill his own mother at a property in Calle Cruz del Sur in Los Balcones. The incident occurred around 3am on Sunday, January 12. Police were called by a neighbour who noticed a person jumping over the wall of the property, who then used a butane gas bottle to smash one of the windows. It seems the 'likely lad' in this case, previously known for drug smuggling also had a previous conviction for setting fire to an occupied property.

The **Medieval Market** returns to the city of Orihuela from Jan' 31 to Feb' 2. There should be around 300 stalls divided into three areas with Christian, Moorish and Jewish themes. Always worth a visit.



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EL CAPITAN

Lago Jardin II.
DAILY SPECIALS
& TAPAS
BINGO! Thursdays 3pm
Every Friday
-Fun Darts at 8pm.
Every Sunday
Quiz Night 8:30pm.



Wi-Fi **SOUTH FACING**

A series of 26 metal sculptures entitled the Erotic Greek Suite, were erected in Alteas beachfront during last November



has caused outrage among some of the local Alteanos. Many believe that the sculptures by Antoni Miro are too sexually explicit for public places and should be

stored/exhibited in closed spaces. See photo.

In early December, three of the sculptures had been vandalized and opposition parties in the municipality continue to insist on their removal.

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only €99

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Any system
only €40

694 499 630

- Is this some kind of bust?
 - Yes, ma'am, it's very impressive, but we need to ask you a few questions.
 Woman & Det. Frank Drebin (Police Squad)

JJ's Café Bar

VIA PARK V.



SAT, FEB 29 7:30pm - 10:30pm
TRIBUTE ACT - THE DUALERS

“MARTIN KAY”

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Including Giant Yorkshire Puds, Pie & Mash,

Combo Platters to share

Spaghetti Bolognese and Much More!



Tuesday - Coffee Morning from 11am.

FUN DARTS! Wed 7:30 - 11pm



THURSDAYS

Jilly's Slimming Club - 4pm.

“Loose Women Club!” - 5pm

The Grumpy Old Men's Club - 5pm

So you men don't feel left out!



SAT NIGHT IS GRILL NIGHT

Bookings only (Steaks, Mix Grill, Ribs)

THE BEST FISH & CHIPS - DAILY!



Sunday Lunch Starts Feb 2nd - Bookings only!

LL SPORTS SHOWN INSIDE & OUTSIDE THE BAR



**FREE
WI-FI**

JJ, Rob & Bobby

693 985 122



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TWEET!**

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Peter's pies are made to his mum's Melton Mowbray recipe and you will not eat finer.

His large rectangular pie, 10 inch with 500 grams of pork costs just €10. His round tall (4 inch) pie contains 330 grams of pork and costs €6.50. The pastry in both is to die for. Ideal with a salad or just great on its own!

Peter can also add hardboiled eggs to the pies for an additional €1.

Payment is on pick-up, and you can contact Peter on 966 798 517. You will not be disappointed.

Mick

A couple from Keith Shaw.

Angela Merkel arrives at Passport Control in Paris airport.

"Nationality?" asks the immigration officer.

"German," she replies.

"Occupation?"

"No, just here for a few days."

A Common Method of Theft!

National Police agents have arrested in Valencia a man and a woman, 27 and 34, as alleged perpetrators of the crimes of fraud and theft, after allegedly cheating several old women posing as gas reviewers and seize the opportunity to steal money and jewelry from their homes. Apparently, they managed to seize jewelry and money worth 50,000 euros during the last year.

The agents began the investigations in mid-October, upon hearing of a theft committed by a man, who apparently impersonated a gas inspector and thus cheated a 83-year-old woman and stole several jewels with the assistance of an accomplice. The man met the old woman on a public road, where he approached her by telling her that he was an inspector of the gas company; that he had been at her home earlier, but there was no one there so he would come back to carry out the periodic and mandatory review later.

Once he was able to enter the victim's house, he told her to light the stove to carry out the inspection and to move the jewels she had 'to avoid radiation.' While he kept the attention of the victim, the other crook was able to seize the jewels after entering the house without the woman noticing. The police identified the first thief and recovered the pieces of jewelry, sold the same day.

Agents also found out the identity of the alleged accomplice and discovered that the perpetrators had carried out more than 30 jewelry sales operations during 2019 and another 15 more in 2018. The police officers managed to recover three lots of jewelry.

So far they have been associated with eleven robberies in Valencia and it is believed that they have been able to act in other locations in the province, probably ours, through deception and coercion of elderly women to perform false gas revisions, requesting large amounts of money and stealing their jewelry.

This type of theft is also common in our coastal areas mainly due to the high percentage of retired here, the visible appearance of precious jewelry and the innocent naivety of many.

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I look at Great Britain these days and think "This is not the Country my Granddad fought for."

.....Mind you, he was in the SS.



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The Flu.

Locally, it is amazing how many people are sniffing, sneezing and coughing. Influenza is also taking its toll, with flu levels in Murcia now reaching epidemic levels. There between 400 and 500 people are being treated daily.

With the epidemic threshold at 55 people per 100,000, the national figure is now at 106, with the worst-affected regions being Asturias and Navarra.

The coastal region of Valencia, has yet to reach epidemic proportions, but this is probably just a matter of time.

Health authorities are reminding the public that flu vaccinations are readily available at health centres and at pharmacies. **GET YOURS NOW!**

During 2019 in Spain, 57 people died from flu-related complications to already existing conditions.

THE NEW PRESCRIPTIONS

Those of you on the Spanish health system will have noticed that the prescriptions are now changed. The previous system had a number of nuances including if you had not picked up a particular med' until two weeks after its due date, you lost it.

With the new system you should be able to get a full month's medication in one go, BUT, some pharmacists interpret the new system differently. One local chemist gave Tid her full months supply in one go, whereas another chemist wouldn't hand out the drugs until at least five days before each drug was due, meaning several visits per month to the pharmacy!

At the moment different pharmacies are still interpreting the new system differently. In time they should all be singing from the same hymn-book, but in the meantime, if you are not happy with the system at your usual chemist, try another!

**The wife suggested we
spice things up a bit and
play Doctors and
Nurses.**

**So I put her on a trolley
in the hall and ignored
her for 48 hours.**

*I am a marvellous housekeeper.
Every time I leave a man I keep his house.
Zsa Zsa Gabor*

U.K. Welfare Benefit Information

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: £58.70 or £87.65 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 dress.

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

The benefit is not means tested and does not affect your state pension or other income.

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

If you would like support with the process, you can be assured there are no up-front fees to pay.



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Attendance
Allowance



Thank you David Minto for all your help and advise.
David came to my home in Dec. and filled in all the forms
etc. my claim was turned down so David persuaded me to
appeal Last week I heard from the court and I have been
awarded the higher offer plus back dated from January.
David you are an ultimate professional so once again thank
you
RW, El Galan

David Minto gives the most excellent service. I was
given a couple of groups to contact when I needed
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.

The mirror over my bed reads: ' Objects appear larger than they are'.

Garry Shandling



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There are many pension schemes, especially QROPS, where the administration, advice costs etc are very overly charged. I have been able to reduce fees for pension plans by on average 55% and also able to provide a regular review of the pension value. This can amount to considerable savings over the years. In fact one new client that we reviewed recently now has a pension that will provide him with a further £150,000.

DON'T MISS OUT, contact me on 634305881 for details.

BREXIT AND YOUR PENSION

No one knows what will happen with BREXIT , but I do know that anyone who did not live in the EU and wanted to transfer their pension overseas was hit last year with a 25% TAX CHARGE. Ouch! This could also be the case for transferring within the EU if we leave.

Contact me on 634305881 to discuss your options.

NEED A FINANCIAL ADVISER?

Are you one of the many who have taken out an investment or pension and never see the adviser again? You need regular updates of what is happening within the industry that could save you a considerable amount.

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Come Again?

My mate Danny went into a medical clinic in Torry for a vasectomy.

When he woke up he was surrounded by several anxious looking doctors, so he asked nervously "Is there a problem?"

The head surgeon says gently, with tears in his eyes "I'm afraid so Danny...I'm sorry but your notes got mixed up and we've given you a sex change rather than a vasectomy"

Danny is devastated and shockingly replies "Do you mean to say I'll never experience another erection?"

The surgeon pauses for a moment then says "Well, you might, but it won't be yours"



Caring for our community in our community.

We are a local charity whose aim is to provide free assistance to all nationalities, of any age, who find themselves in difficulty following illness, feeling isolated or struggling to care for a loved one..

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If you have health or social problems the welfare service can visit you to talk about how this may be affecting you. Our volunteers offer short term support to all ages and nationalities in their own home.

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Email: charitycentre.helpathomecb@gmail.com

Web: www.helpathomecb.com

Free Falling!

Old plane flying over the Grand Canyon with a UN delegation on board. 'Sorry,' the pilot says, 'we're being sucked down by the downdraught and, even though we've chucked everything out we can, we still need to lose weight. I need a volunteer.' The French delegate stands up, shouts "Vive La France" and jumps out of the plane. "Better", says the pilot, "but still too heavy. We're all going down unless someone else volunteers". The German stands up, shouts "Es Lebe das Vaterland", and jumps out of the plane. Pilot says "Almost there, still going down though". The American shouts "Remember the Alamo" and throws the Mexican out.



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All locals are welcome to come along and say hello to the Rostu team, we welcome you to join us for some music, drinks and some tapas.

You will find us located in the commercial centre of Via Park 5, Dream Hills 1, Los Altos.

Anybody wanting to talk about buying or selling their property please feel free to discuss with us. That's what we are here for at the end of the day.

Hope to see you on the 8th Feb

Or to arrange a personal consultation, contact
Darren Lilley (0034) 602 563 621
darren@rostuspania.no
www.rostuspania.com

WAFFLE WILLIES!

The Chueca area of Madrid has always been a popular destination with lots of bars and restaurants, amazing architecture and sites to keep the most ardent tourist happy. It is also has a reputation for being known as the 'gay area' and is friendlier than your usual tourist haunts. At its metro square, partying usually starts at around 5pm and picks up speed about 11:30pm until 4 am. This area is not for sleeping. Earplugs, alcohol and sleeping medications don't even make a dent in the noise level. During December 2019, a new waffle shop called La Polleria - a pun on the word 'polla' which is slang for penis in Spanish, opened up and has people queuing out the door for a taste of its unique product. It's sweet, it's sticky and it's shaped like a giant penis. Photo. Called "pollofres" it's a mix of the word 'polla' (a Spanish slang word for penis) and gofres (Spanish for waffles). The waffles cost €3.80 plus 50 cents for a sauce topping which comes in Nutella, white chocolate and strawberry

flavour. 'The most popular by far is the white chocolate. People like the realism I suppose,' according to the owner, Snr.Bauerbaum. 'Ice-cream doesn't do so well in winter so I thought about waffles, and then found out that



the moulds could be made in shape we wanted, and I just thought, yeah, let's try it. It isn't just gays who want them. We have lots of women, heterosexual couples, even older people have been in,' Bauerbaum said.

'Everyone takes selfies, pictures or videos with them. We just can't cope with demand and have already ordered more machines and are hiring more staff.'

(I wonder if the new bakery shop in Via Park 3 might do these?)

Paddy meets Maureen at a disco. He says, 'Can I walk you home later on?'
Maureen replies 'Yes, but no funny business. I'm on my Menstrual Cycle.'
'That okay,' says Paddy. 'I'll follow you on my Honda.'

Pat and Mike are chatting in the pub, "Mike, do you have any nicknames for the members of your family?"
"Only one," says Mike. "Which one is dat?" asks Pat. "Me grandfather." "And what is his nickname?"
"We call him Spider Man." "And why's dat?" asks Pat, "Is he still very athletic for his age?"
"No," says Mike, "it's cos he can't get out of the bath on his own!"





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FUN TRIVIAL QUIZ THURSDAYS FROM 19:30



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Reminds me of my safari trip in Africa. Somebody forgot the corkscrew and for several days we had nothing to live on but food and water. W.C. Fields

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Hospitals in the Valencia Community - the bad news!

In 2012, Pedro was operated on for prostate cancer, the cancer being so far advanced that his entire prostate was removed. As the operation was conducted in a private hospital, Pedro pass all the documentation to his GP. Lately he has been suffering from incontinence and discomfort so he went to his GP who applied for an appointment with a specialist in the General Hospital in Alicante. The appointment was set for October 2020! Pedro does not understand why his doctor requested the appointment with the specialist by ordinary route. "Ten months seems like a long wait, I just hope that when I have to go to the specialist, everything is fine." When the newspaper Información requested clarification the hospital stated that Pedro was not an oncological patient but an urological one and that 'work is being done to reduce the urology waiting lists.

Last November the GP of a 92-year-old woman with severe dementia requested a review appointment for every six months. The Health Dept' gave her an appointment in a year's time.

At the end of September 2019, the CCOO trade union warned that in the General Hospital of Alicante alone, there were **7,000 patients waiting for an appointment** in outpatient clinics.

In the Valencian Community, ours, the average waiting time for non-urgent surgical procedures with scheduled surgery is 115 days, according to data published by the Department of Universal Health and Public Health corresponding to December 31, 2018.

Here are some specific waiting times: 98 days on average for general surgery; 85 for gynaecology; ophthalmology; 144 for orthopaedic surgery and traumatology; 149 for vascular surgery; 158 for neurosurgery.

A full list of the delays by speciality and pathology in the Community can be found here -

<https://www.diarioinformacion.com/alicante/2019/01/18/115-dias-tiempo-medio-espera/2108763.html>

The Ministry points out that it should be taken into account that surgical waiting times in no case refer to urgent interventions that are treated preferentially.

It's been ages since my wife wanted sex but tonight she's been all, "Why don't we go upstairs?" And, "I've got something for you up there" and "I'm going to make you perspire and moan tonight." I've got a horrible suspicion she's had a self-assembly Ikea wardrobe delivered.

Detect up to Thirteen Types of Cancer With a Drop of Blood - Toshiba's New Tool

The Japanese corporation Toshiba has developed a technology to detect through a single drop of blood up to thirteen types of cancer from its initial phase with an effectiveness of 99%, according to the results of the tests carried out so far.

This detection tool analyzes the micromolecules of ribonucleic acid (or micro-RNA) of that drop of blood for an early identification of cancer patients, Toshiba said on November 25, in a statement.

The objective of this diagnostic system, developed in collaboration with the Institute of the National Cancer Research Center of Japan (NCCRI) and the Tokyo Medical University, is to conduct demonstrations throughout 2020 to achieve an "early implementation" of the same.

The apparatus can diagnose the cancers gastric, esophageal, lung, liver, of the biliary tract, pancreas, intestinal, ovarian, prostate, bladder and breast, along with sarcoma and glioma in less than two hours with a cost approximated by test about 20,000 yen (about 165 euros / 180 dollars).

"Using this newly developed micro-RNA detection technology, we can expect early detection of cancer with great effectiveness. This allows early treatment and helps improve patient survival and quality of life," said the statement of the Technology company.

(From Diario de Almeria)

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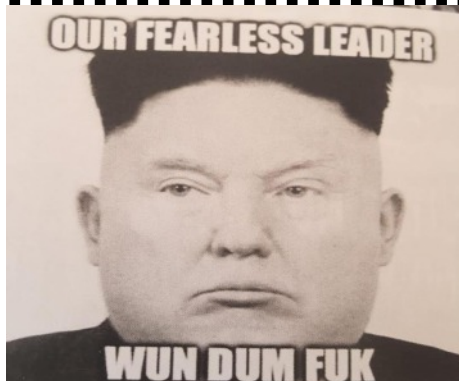


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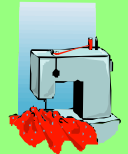
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MOUSSAKA & LASAGNE,
CHICKEN WINGS**

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¡Visítanos y disfruta los auténticos sabores de la cocina española!

'Come and enjoy the authentic taste of Spain.'

Русский говорят.



The Cure.

The Pope is handing out blessings and miracles to kids in Liverpool.

Billy walks on stage and asks him, 'Can you help me with my hearing?'

The Pope says 'Yes' and places his hands over Billy's ears for a few seconds. He then removes his hands and says, 'How is your hearing now?' Billy says, 'I don't know, it's not until next Wednesday.'



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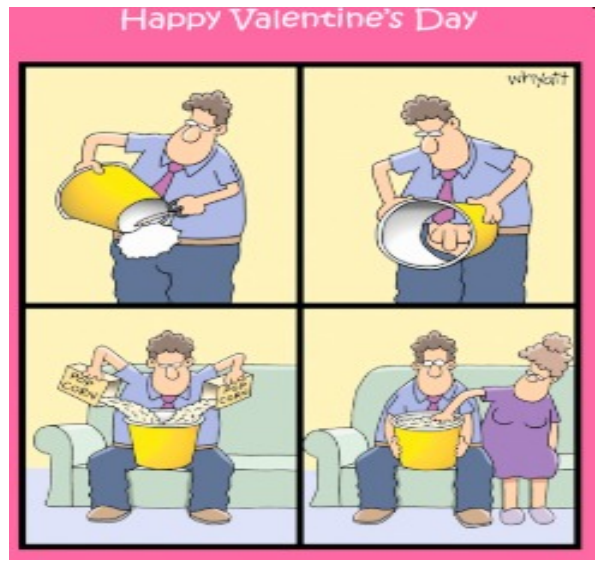
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TUESDAYS AT 8pm FUN DARTS
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Word!

After pulling a farmer over for speeding, a state trooper started to lecture him about his speed, pompously implying that the farmer didn't know any better and trying to make him feel as uncomfortable as possible. He finally started writing out the ticket, but had to keep swatting at some flies buzzing around his head.

The farmer said, "Having some problems with circle flies there, are ya?"

The trooper paused to take another swat and said, "Well, yes, if that's what they are. I've never heard of circle flies."

The farmer was pleased to enlighten the cop. "Circle flies are common on farms. They're called circle flies because you almost always find them circling the arse-end of a horse."

The trooper continues writing for a moment, then says, "Hey, are you trying to call me a horse's behind?"

"Oh no, officer." The farmer replies. "I have too much respect for law enforcement and police officers for that."

"That's a good thing," the officer says rudely, then goes back to writing the ticket.

After a long pause, the farmer added, "Hard to fool them flies, though."



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 **Rocamer Funeral Service**

The Planner.

Two men are waiting for a train. The younger man asks the older man for the time, but the older man ignores him. After a while, the younger man again asks for the time and again the older man ignores him. Frustrated, the younger man finally asks, "Why won't you answer me when I ask you for the time?" The older man sighs and explains: "Look, if I tell you the time, we'll start to talk. Then when the train comes, you might sit down next to me. Perhaps we'll get to know each other, and maybe I'll eventually invite you to my house for dinner. Maybe then you and my daughter would really get along - why, you might even get engaged! And why would I want a son-in-law who can't even afford a watch?"

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The Feel-Good Factor.

Good deed done today, at the local Consum check-out. I was behind an old lady in the queue. Her bill came to €56.83 but when she counted out all of her change and she only had just under €10. I thought she was probably someone's Nan and I'd like to think someone would have helped my Nan out when she was alive just before Christmas. She didn't want me to help her but I insisted, and in no time at all we had all her shopping right back on the shelves.

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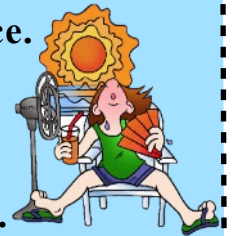
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PRICE MATCH GUARANTEE




IMMIGRATION IN SPAIN 2019.



Top 5 países de origen más frecuentes (en miles)

| | | | |
|-----------|-----|---------------------------|------------|
| Marruecos | 874 | Total población en España | 47,0 mill. |
| Rumania | 585 | Total nacidos fuera | 6,7 mill. |
| Colombia | 440 | Porcentaje nacidos fuera | 14,3 % |
| Ecuador | 408 | | |
| Venezuela | 323 | | |

I came across this very interesting article on immigration to Spain in the conservative daily newspaper, ABC. They took a look at the last 20 years in Spain individually, graphically showing the dominant foreign nationality by province. The graphic on the left shows the make up for the year 2019. (Better in colour!) You can see at a glance that the Moroccans and the Rumanians make up the dominant number. But remember that these figures relate to **registered foreign residents only** and as with Brit's in Spain, there is still a large number of unregistered individuals. So last year, out of a registered population in Spain of around 47 million, 6.7 million were resident foreigners - 14.3%! A falling birthrate among the indigenous Spanish and the rapid depopulation in rural Spain must surely raise some eyebrows.

You will see from the graphic, that the British are the dominant foreign residents in the province of Alicante. Nationally, around 250,000 Brit's are registered. In 2012 it was 400,000! Two decades ago, the French were a majority in 15 provinces.

The British now come in at number 7 in the list of registered foreigners, with the Germans down to No. 13.

The food in Yugoslavia is either very good or very bad.
 One day they served us fried chains.

Mel Brooks

The Cosy Society played 2 rounds this month - the first round was our eclectic competition at Vistabella on a beautiful day. Tony Jones carried the day with 37 points on count back from John Winkley with Eddie McGrath coming 3rd with 35 points. Nearest the pins being won by Mike Slater (2), Eddie, Ian Johnstone, Elliott Shepherd and Gary Lavender.

Our second round was at Riquelme, which proved to be a tough course. However, another great day at the office. The winner was Lin Newbery with 36 points followed closely by Tony Brain (35 points) and Gary Hesketh (32 points on count back). Nearest the pins were won by Kev Molford (2), Tony Jones, Tony Brain, Noel Collins and Eddie McGrath.

The first winner of the Wilson, Kepple & Betty award for most bunkers visited since El Alamein goes to Alan (Rommel) Jackson, proud owner of a new bucket, spade and, handily, a rake.

Both Tony and Lin win a meal for 2 at Cosy Corner. Big thanks to the staff at the bar for their hospitality and great after round food.

Our next outing is in the eclectic competition at Vistabella on 5th February with green fees being collected at the bar on the 2nd as usual. Should you want to play please add your name to the sheet in the bar (new players please contact me by Whatsapp on 711 002 856). I'll also be collecting memberships (€10) on that Sunday.

Clinton'

A la carte.

This couple run a small restaurant where they often name their specials after our employees, dishes like "Sally's Chicken" after the maitre d' who gave them the recipe, and "Rod's Ribs" after a waiter who had his personal style of barbecue.

One evening after rereading the menu, I had to talk with the owners about the special they were going to name after their chef.

Despite her skills and excellent reputation, somehow I didn't think a main course named "Salmon Ella" would go over big with their customers.

Talking to the Man!

Many times when I am troubled or confused, I find comfort in sitting in my back yard and having a vodka and cranberry along with a quiet conversation with Jesus. This happened to me again after a particularly difficult day. I said "Jesus, why do I work so hard?" And I heard the reply: "Men find many ways to demonstrate the love they have for their family. You work hard to have a peaceful, beautiful place for your friends and family to gather." I said: "I thought that money was the root of all evil."

And the reply was: "No, the LOVE of money is the root of all evil. Money is a tool; it can be used for good or bad".

I was starting to feel better, but I still had that one burning question, so I asked it. "Jesus," I said, "what is the meaning of life? Why am I here?"

He replied: "That is a question many men ask. The answer is in your heart and is different for everyone. I would love to chat with you some more, Senor, but for now, I have to finish your lawn."

Farage Cleans Up!

Some British MEPs will do well following Britain's departure from the European Parliament on Jan' 31, 2020, particularly Nigel Farage. MEPs earn a monthly salary of €8,933 plus expenses and those who served for more than a year are entitled to what is effectively a redundancy payment. In Farage's case this payment will be around €179,000. He will also be eligible for a pension worth 70% of his MEP salary, the highest permitted under EU rules. The Brexit MEPs which were elected only last year will not benefit from either the



redundancy/transition payment nor a pension as they served for less than a year.

What is interesting is that those who worked against the interests of their employer should be rewarded and not dismissed. I also wonder how the former EU Brexit MEPs now really feel about the loss of this hefty monthly salary. Probably the same as the Brexit would-be MPs who were withdrawn from the last general election in the UK to facilitate the Tories. Meanwhile Farage gets a 'golden goodbye' payment, pension, makes £27,000 a month through his media company and appears regularly on the US television channel We Love Trump Fox News and has a radio show on LBC.

No doubt they are really pleased for him!





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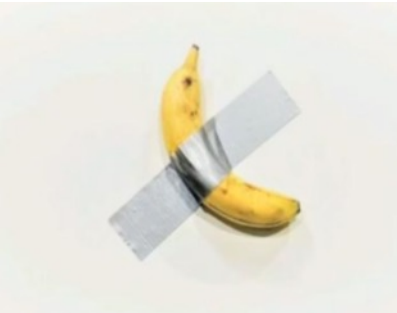
Johnny Carson

An abandoned puppy born with a **tail growing from its forehead** has become a social media phenomenon. Staff at a rescue centre in Missouri dubbed the dog “Narwhal the Little Magical Furry Unicorn” (photo), and he has gained a huge Facebook following. In a recent update, the centre answered one of the most commonly asked questions: does the tail wag? “The extra tail is not connected to anything and has no real use other than making him the COOLEST PUPPY EVER.”



A woman in the United Arab Emirates is seeking a divorce because her husband **loves her too much**. “I was choked by his love and affection,” the woman complained to a Sharia court, adding that she longed to have arguments, “but this seems impossible with my romantic husband, who always forgave me and showered me with gifts.” Nor did the unreasonable behaviour stop there. “He even helped me clean the house,” she said. See! Never happy!

This art exhibit, entitled ‘**Comedian**’ was sold at Art Basil in Miami during early December for \$120,000. The work is by Maurizio Cattelan, who also made the 18-carat gold toilet, which was valued at six million bucks and was stolen from Blenheim Palace in Oxford. But then, at around 1:45pm on Saturday Dec’2, Georgian-born artist David Datuna plucked Maurizio Cattelan’s art installation from the wall and ate it! The banana was soon replaced. But what happens when the fruit gets rotten?



One of the **Sickos of the Year Awards** has got to go to the 27-year-old police David Rojas, a police officer of the Los Angeles Police Department. Rojas and a police colleague responded to a report of a possible dead body inside a home and found a deceased woman. When one left the room, the other officer deactivated his body camera. Unbeknownst to him, though, the camera continued recording. The footage it captured allegedly showed the officer, since identified as Rojas, fondling the dead woman’s breasts when he thought no one was watching. Rojas was arrested on Dec’ 12 and if convicted of one felony count of having sexual contact with human remains without authority, faces three years in prison. But this begs the question, who can give authority to have sexual contact with human remains?

It now seems that “Ethical veganism” is now entitled to religious protections. A British court ruled it’s a philosophical belief that should be protected in the workplace. So it is not just foreigners who are loopy! But, it got me thinking.....now, **Smirnoff Vodka** (or fun water as I like to call it) has played a large part in my life,



comforting me in times of stress, helping me celebrate in the good times, easily accessible and always there for me. I firmly believe it is now time to give some devotion and recognition to the Great God Smirnoff. As you would expect, this will require significant financial resources to set up this new religion but I am personally willing to spend the time, effort and research. If you would like to contribute and be part of this new religious movement, write your name and telephone number on the back of a €50 note and place it in my postbox. And remember ladies that vodka is cheaper than botox and it paralyzes more muscles. But beware of false prophets who will soon be trying to bring the false religions of gin, rum & whisky to your attention. Sacrilege!

Not sure if this is true but.....this is from the book, “Masquerade: The Amazing Camouflage Deceptions of World War II,” by Seymour Reit; Signet, 1980. Another enemy decoy, built in occupied Holland, led to a tale that has been told and retold ever since by veteran Allied pilots. The German “airfield,” constructed with meticulous care, was made **almost entirely of wood**. There were wooden hangars, oil tanks, gun emplacements, trucks, and aircraft. The Germans took so long in building their wooden decoy that Allied photo experts had more than enough time to observe and report it. The day finally came when the decoy was finished, down to the last wooden plank. Early the following morning, a lone RAF plane crossed the Channel, came in low, circled the field once and dropped..... a large wooden bomb.

Last spring, the Pentagon spent more than \$165,000 on a set of 450 sophisticated ‘**US made**’ radio antennas for a contingent of elite Navy SEALs. They now find that they were ‘knock-offs’ made in China!

Facebook accidentally translated president of the People’s Republic of China Jinping’s name as “**Mr. Shithole**.” The company blamed a technical error for the faulty Burmese-to-English translation. I quite understand this. Anytime I try and translate Man Utd into Spanish, I just get the Spanish word ‘*cajones*.’

STORM GLORIA

This Storm hit the eastern coast of Spain on the 11th and 12th of January, peaking on the early morning of Monday the 13th. The province of Alicante appears to have taken the brunt with very high winds, heavy rainfall and thunderstorms. There were 400 lightning strikes in the province on the Monday morning alone. Although Alicante Airport was closed for a considerable time due to a fire on the airport roof, it was then closed for an additional day due to the storm. Hundreds of flights were cancelled or redirected to Corvera Airport.

Most schools were closed with 123,000 students in 90 municipalities given the day off. Although the schools in Pilar de la Horadada and Torreveja were closed, Orihuela was criticized for being irresponsible and not closing the schools in its



municipality.

The collapse of two power supply towers as a result of the effects of the storm left more than 10,000 customers without power in Orihuela and has affected some 20,000 throughout the Valencian Community.

In the city of Orihuela a falling palm tree injured two, while in Calp a tourist suffered a broken leg while taking photos of the large waves...far too closely. Very sadly, an indigent 54-year-old Romanian woman who was spending the night in a park in Gandia died. Another homeless victim died of hypothermia in Carcaigent. The same day, a 70-year-old man was found knocked to the floor in Moixent, near Ontinyent, and suffering from hypothermia. The emergency services failed to revive him. A 63-year-old in Avila, in Castilla y Leon, who was struck in the head by a roof tile also died. (Death toll now 13.)

After getting a hammering during the *Gota Fria* in September,

many beaches in this province have once again been destroyed by the storm, some having the sand taken away while others have been covered with masses of seaweed,



photo top. The Levante and Poniente beaches in Benidorm had their wooden walk-ways and beach furniture also destroyed.

Heavy snowfall on higher grounds halted traffic on 50 roads, with vehicles needing car-chains to navigate more than 20 roads.

Two men are still missing. One who abandoned his car near Benidorm after it had been swept off the road and another man went to check on his livestock in Morella, in the province of Castellón in the Valencian Community, and didn't return.

Have you got some time on your hands?
Daytime TV eroding your brain? For just a few hours a week you can not only assist the less fortunate but improve the quality of your own life. Call Help Vega Baja and see how you can help.



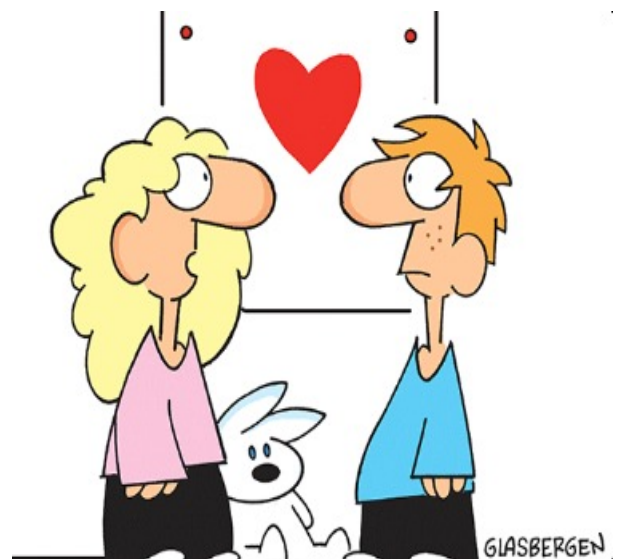
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“Valentine’s Day is the holiday where men give presents to the woman they love to make up for the way they screwed up at Christmas.”

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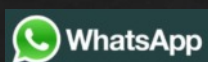


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Woman
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Radon and the EU Warning.

Radon is a naturally occurring colourless and odourless radioactive gas. It is present outdoors and indoors. It is normally found at very low levels in outdoor air and in drinking water from rivers and lakes. It can be found at higher levels in the air in houses, schools, factories and other buildings, as well as in water from underground sources, such as well water. The levels of radon in homes and other buildings depend on the characteristics of the rock and soil in the area which can vary greatly from location to location.

Being exposed to radon for a long period of time can lead to lung cancer. Radon gas in the air breaks down into tiny radioactive elements (radon progeny) that can lodge in the lining of the lungs, where they can give off radiation. This radiation can damage lung cells and eventually lead to lung cancer.

Cigarette smoking is by far the most common cause of lung cancer in the United States, but radon is the second leading cause. Scientists estimate that about 20,000 lung cancer deaths there per year are related to radon.

So, what is the situation in Spain?

Well, the EU has now issued Spain with a written warning over its radon gas levels due to lung cancer risks. EU rules stipulate that member states must have a national plan for the harmful effects of the gas. The Spanish Government has failed to implement an EU directive on exposure to ionizing radiation.

Although radon naturally seeps through the ground, high concentrations of the gas, in areas like Madrid and southern Galicia, pose greater lung cancer risks.

The European Commission has also pressed Austria, Estonia, Hungary and Belgium to do more on tackling the threat of radon.

A deadline of February 6 2018 had been set by the European Commission for member states to adhere to the correct legal framework. Spain and the other countries that have been inactive on the radiation directive now have two months to respond to the European Commission's questions. If they fail to do this, the matter will be brought before the European Court of Justice. A national survey on indoor radon levels in Spain has been carried out during the winters of 1988 and 1989. by measuring the radon concentration in 1555 randomly chosen houses. Elevated indoor levels were found to be more prevalent in the west and northwest than in the rest of the country.

New indoor radon measurements with the charcoal canister technique in the city of Valencia during 2010 and 2011 revealed that there was a low average level of indoor radon in the city, with a geometrical mean of 24 Bq/m³ and an arithmetic mean of 27 Bq/m³.

It is recommended that the radon concentration should not exceed 400 Bq·m³, suggested by the Commission of the European Communities.

Now I have never heard of the harmful effects of radon before and it got me thinking, when one looks at the coastal area where we now live here, there has been massive disruption to the surface of the land locally due to the huge building and infrastructure program over the last 30 plus years. So I wonder, has this affected the radon levels now in this area? I will find out and let you know!

Mongolian VD!

While in China, a man was very sexually promiscuous and does not use a condom all the time he is there. A week after arriving back home in the States, he wakes one morning to find his penis covered with bright green and purple spots. Horrified, he immediately goes to see a doctor. The doctor, never having seen anything like this before, orders some tests and tells the man to return in two days for the results.

The man returns a couple of days later and the doctor says, 'I've got bad news for you, you've contracted Mongolian VD. It's very rare and almost unheard of here, we know very little about it.'

The man looks a little perplexed and says, 'Well, give me a shot or something and fix me up, Doc.'

The doctor answers, 'I'm sorry, there's no known cure. We're going to have to amputate your penis.'

The man screams in horror, 'Absolutely not! I want a second opinion.'

The doctor replies, 'Well, it's your choice. Go ahead if you want, but surgery is your only choice.'

The next day, the man seeks out a Chinese doctor, figuring that he'll know more about the disease.

The Chinese doctor examines his penis and proclaims, 'Ah, yes, Mongolian VD. Vewy ware disease.'

The guy says to the doctor, 'Yeah, yeah, I already know that but what can we do? My American doctor wants to operate and amputate my penis!'

The Chinese doctor shakes his head and laughs. 'Stupid American docttah, always want to opawate. Make more money dat way. No need to amputate!'

Oh, Thank God!' the man replies.

'Yes,' says the Chinese doctor, 'wait two weeks. Faw off by itself!'

Lime Bar Fishing SUNBATHING Club

Welcome to a new decade. How many of you thought you would still be here to see this in? Roll on 2030 😊 As we go into the new year, we have 20 members, 1 on the waiting list and another couple interested in joining. There is definitely something about whiling away the day, sitting in the sunshine and watching the float / rod tip (not moving) or maybe it's the attraction of watching the kingfishers zipping about in front of you (when you are awake Sweeney). It's a bonus when you also happen to catch a fish!

2 months to catch up on so here we go.

Steve Ward from Murcia has been added to the club waiting list.

The December match was held at El Bosquet again due to limited venues. We had 17 on the bank (one of the best turn outs we have had in a long time) but we had only booked pegs 1 – 16. As luck would have it, I had to fish peg 17 which is where I have had several good days in the past, so I knew where the fish were and how to catch them. 3 Rods drew an even better peg, the infamous peg 1. As it turned out Beat Me Phil won with 5.8

kilos, 2nd was Seadog with 3.7 followed closely by 3 Rods on 3.4. The fish obviously didn't like the cold weather.

At the end of the match Dodger was seen to stand up, wobble, pirouette and stagger backwards into the canal.

Luckily, a couple of the lads were on hand to drag him out, get him dried off and into his car to warm up. It turns out that he'd had a bad turn. A reminder for us all to fish with a buddy, you never know when something might happen!

Just before Christmas the weather took a turn for the better with temperatures well up in the 20s. The fish picked up on the change and resulted in Big Fish Chris landing a carp of 11.5 lbs, the largest carp so far this season. A



couple of days later the Sweeney and I had our best day fishing for months. I had 21 carp for about 35 lbs but Sweeney had 13 carp for 40 lbs (including fish of 5, 7 and 8 lbs), a cracking day.

Also trying to make the most of the good weather was 3 Rods, out early trying to bag the best peg, only to find that when he arrived, he had forgotten his seat box AGAIN! You would think that having forgotten it a couple of months' before (and being presented a mini box key ring) it wouldn't happen again. You're getting old mate.

On New Year's Eve Big Fish Chris was at it again, he landed another 15 pounder from Bigastro. As the wives hadn't let anybody else go fishing, he didn't have anybody to witness it, so doesn't count. Selfish women!

As Bigastro had been fishing so well, we

decided to hold the January match there. We had 12 anglers on the bank, but it was only 4° when we drew pegs and there was a slight ground frost too so this did not bode well. Just John drew peg 1 (next to the sluice) and was dripping like a tap, the Cheshire Cat, Sweeney and Beat Me Phil drew the favoured "productive" pegs of 4,5 & 6. As per usual on match day, the productive pegs didn't! Of the 12 fishing, we had 5 blanks and a few only caught 1 fish. The runaway winner (after complaining about his peg) was Just John with 8.6 kilos, followed by 3 Rods with 3 kilos then me with 1.9. The fish were being very wary.

Several of the carp caught did not show any indication of a bite, but as the line was tightened, a fish was on! Never mind, they all count. Several of us also had short sharp knocks only to wind in to find an empty hook. Maybe this is a sign that the "blackies" are playing with the bait, or maybe the barbel are feeding? On the day both Just John and I had a good barbel each.

Carp R Us have cleared loads of pegs at the Eden canal, while we have done the same at Bigastro. On one of the days after clearing Bigastro, 6 of us were fishing the usual spots but didn't have any indication that fish were nearby or feeding. 3 Rods decided to test his new Xmas present. A tennis ball sized sonar device! Bloody hell!

He swung it out into the bays where the fish are "normally" holed up. Absolutely nothing. He drew the sonar across the river and the fish weren't shoaled up but stemming the current in mid-stream about a foot off the bottom..... That's not what Mr Crabtree would have deduced from the conditions! With this technical knowledge at our fingertips, we started to trot our bait down the middle, a foot off the deck... Still not a bite!

I should have just left the swim feeder in the margins and had another cup of coffee.

Ask Santa for a depth charge device next year, that will wake the buggers up - Bah Humbug!

The photo shows 3 Rods and his "technical" assistant Just John sonar trolling for fish.



Next ~~meeting~~ bun fight is at The Lime Bar @ 17.00 Mon 3rd February.

Fishy Fingers!

The town was so dull that when the tide went out it refused to come back.

Fred Allen

Phoenix Golf Society

Vistabella held on the 19th January was our last golfing venue for The Phoenix Golf Society – our last game.

We would like to express our thanks to everyone in Jessies Bar for putting up with us and to Jules and Cath for the very nice spreads they gave us.

Jessies Bar Golfers the Next Outing Is at La Torre 29th January. We would also like to thank all the Phoenix golfers for their support over the years.

Nearest the Pin - Hole No. 2 Brian Wilson

“ - Hole No. 7 Brian Wilson

Overall Winner - Pat Brennan

Second Place - Brian Wilson

Some of our players will now play at Jessies Bar.



BUS SERVICE ORIHUELA COSTA - ORIHUELA

There is now a bus service linking Orihuela Costa to the city of Orihuela. It operates all year round from Monday to Friday except for public holidays and all of August.

Buses leave Zenia Boulevard at 7:00, 13:00 and 19:00, stopping at the Town Hall Playa Flamenca at 7:05, 13:05 & 19:05; Torrevieja Hospital at 7:15, 13:15 & 19:15; Entre Naranjos at 7:30, 13:30 & 19:30; arriving at Orihuela Bus Station at 9:00, 14:00 & 20:00.

The return trip leaves the bus station at 9:30, 15:25 & 20:55,

stopping at Entre Naranjos at 10:00, 15:55 & 21:25; Torrevieja

Hospital at 10:15, 16:10 & 21:40; the Town Hall in Playa Flamenca at 10:25, 16:20 & 21:50; and Zenia Boulevard at 10:30, 16:25 and 21:55.

A ticket from one end of the line to the other costs just €1.35. (Costa News)



I'm not stealing it
I'm moving it closer to my home.

Self-Diagnosis!

A young “lady” from Essex is involved in a car crash and is heavily concussed in the vehicle and slightly hysterical when the ambulance arrive. A medic say “Don’t worry love we’ll have you out of here in no time, I’ve just got to check a few things” He holds up two fingers and asks “How many fingers have I got up?”

She screams “OH MY GOD I’M PARALYZED FROM THE WAIST DOWN!”



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Mitigating CGT.

On selling property in Spain, you are liable for two taxes: plusvalia and capital gains tax - CGT
four strategies to mitigate a seller's exposure to CGT; which range from completely negating it, to reducing it significantly. The first three strategies apply only to Spanish tax residents; the last one applies to both residents and non-residents alike.

Four strategies to mitigate a seller's CGT liability

1. ABSOLUTE RELIEF: All tax residents over 65-years-old are exempt from paying CGT on selling their main abode (*vivienda habitual*, in Spanish legal jargon).
2. CAPITAL GAINS TAX: To mitigate this if you are seller in Spain, there are four key strategies you need to think about

Any resident seller under 65-years-old is exempt from paying CGT on selling their main home providing the following conditions are met:

- Seller is under sixty-five year-old.
- Seller is (tax) resident in Spain.
- Dwelling must be his main home (main abode and must have dwelled in it permanently for the three previous years). It may be less than three years under exceptional circumstances i.e. job change, marriage or separation.
- Sales proceeds reinvested in a new main home (in Spain or else in the EEA/EU, including the United Kingdom in a pre-Brexit world). Any sales proceeds not reinvested will be taxed apportioning them.
- Possibly a two year deadline to reinvest the sales proceeds (on a new main home).

3. PENSION ANNUITIES

This third tax relief is in addition to the above two main home tax reliefs. Applies to residents.

Any capital gains made by resident taxpayers over 65-years-old will go untaxed provided the following are met:

- Sales proceeds reinvested in pension annuities.
- Capped at €240,000.
- Six-month deadline as from sale.

4. TRADITIONAL METHOD

Your lawyer can offset from your CGT liability on selling, all expenses that went towards buying the property plus any refurbishment costs, provided you have VAT invoices to back them up. Applies to both residents and non-residents.

Lawyer's fees (on buying).

Notary fees (on buying).

Land Registry fees (on buying).

Taxes (on buying).

All property-related improvements (not maintenance costs) i.e. glass curtains, refitted kitchen, roof re-tiling, wood flooring, A/C, house alarm etc.

Estate agent's commission (on selling).

Lawyer's fees (on selling).

The Plusvalia Tax

This tax is levied on any increase in the value of the land your property stands upon when it is sold to a new owner. It is important to note that the tax is only applied to the value of the land, and not to the property on it. Furthermore, it only affects lands that are classified as urban, not those defined as 'rustic'. Each municipality is responsible for collecting this tax themselves.

The tax must be paid within 30 days of the property being transferred to the new owner.

In the case of a property sale, the seller must pay the tax.

If the property is left as an inheritance, then the person receiving the property is responsible for paying the tax.

The Plusvalia tax is calculated by multiplying the tax base by the tax rate:

a) The tax base is the increase in value that the property has experienced during the time it has been owned by the seller. This increase is calculated by multiplying the cadastral value of the property at the time of its sale by the annual rate set by each municipal council (with the maximum limit established by law). The calculation is based on whole years, not on fractions of years.

b) The type of lien is the rate set by the municipal council, and there is a 30% limit established by law.

There are, however, some variations depending on the years of ownership.

It is possible to estimate what you will owe on Plusvalia by visiting the relevant council's web page, where you will find a handy tool to calculate it, but please be aware that this is only an estimate and not necessarily the exact final sum.

If the seller is not resident in Spain, the buyer's lawyer will normally insist on withholding funds to pay the Plusvalia on the seller's behalf to prevent the possibility of the buyer becoming liable for the Plusvalia in the event of non-payment.

What happens if the property sale price is lower than the purchase price?

This situation often occurred during the recession when property prices fell.

However, the relevant fiscal laws decreed that there should be an assumption that there is always some increase in value. Don't expect fairness from the local council. In practice it remains problematic for non-residents to get their money back in the event of a dispute.

(Sources: Raymundo Larraín Nesbitt, Larraín Nesbitt Lawyers & Adam Neale is the owner of Terra Meridiana Olive Press)

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PUBLIC HOLIDAYS - RED DAYS -VALENCIA.

1 Jan Wed New Year's Day; 6 Jan Mon Epiphany; 19 Mar Thu St Joseph's Day; 10 Apr Fri Good Friday; 13 Apr Mon Easter Monday; 1 May Fri Labour Day; 24 Jun Wed St John's Day; 15 Aug Sat Assumption of Mary; 9 Oct Fri Valencian Regional Holiday; 12 Oct Mon Fiesta Nacional de España 1 Nov Sun All Saints' Day; 6 Dec Sun Constitution Day; 8 Dec Tue Immaculate Conception; 25 Dec Fri Christmas Day.
(These dates may be modified. Search gva.es for updates.)

Bonnie Tyler, the Welsh rock legend with a voice like sandpaper, will be giving a concert in Torrevieja on Saturday, July 11. It will take place on the site of the weekly market - Parque Antonio Soria. More details when available.



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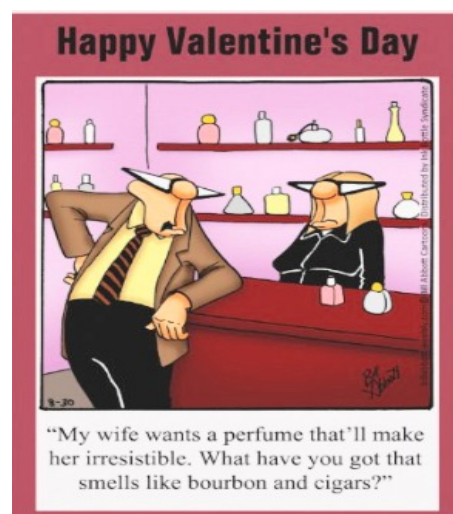
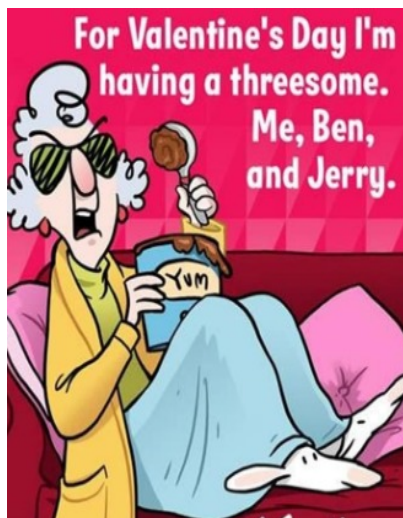
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The editor, Mick, can be contacted at mick.dreamscene@gmail.com or at 586 Dream Hills. (Or in some Bar!)