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The desperate father of missing Malen Zoe Ortiz has issued a plea for his daughter's return and said: "someone knows what happened."

Alejandro Ortiz, whose daughter disappeared in Magaluf in December 2013, posted a video on Facebook yesterday (Wednesday), after hearing the 'terrible news' about Diana Quer - an 18-year-old girl whose killer confessed this week.

Offering his condolences to Diana's family, Mr Ortiz reminded viewers that questions about his daughter's disappearance remain unanswered. Malen was 15 when she went missing.

"I know that the murderer or murderers of my daughter are in Palma and someone knows what happened," he says in the video, which had already been viewed thousands of times on Facebook last night.

He added that he is still offering a reward for information regarding his daughter's disappearance.

Mr Ortiz asked anyone

'Someone knows' Family anguish goes on

who could help to come forward "for money or for being better human beings.

"We have to look for and find the people who hurt Malén."

Linking the disappearances of the two girls, he adds: "murderers choose their victims randomly" and suggests criticism of anyone other than the perpetrator is unfair.

STILL MISSING: Malen was 15 when she disappeared.

Malén was reportedly last seen at a Magaluf roundabout on December 2, 2013, when she went to eat at her boyfriend's house in Son Ferrer, after leaving school.

She was recorded for the last time carrying a green



scooter by a petrol station security camera, after getting off a bus. She never reached her destination.

The three-minute video ends with Mr Ortiz again speaking of his sadness about the Diana Quer case.

Holiday traffic turmoil

THE Three Kings procession will see traffic disruption in central Palma.

Parking will be banned throughout the entire route from 1.30pm until 10.30pm at the earliest tomorrow (Friday).

The kings are scheduled to arrive at the port aboard the Rafael Verdera ship at 6pm, from where they will proceed along avenida Antoni Maura, el Born, Plaza del Rei Joan Carles I, Calle Unió, la Rambla, Calle del Bisbe Campins, Calle de Rubén Dario, Paseo Mallorca, Jaume III and Nuevo el Born.

Police have advised res-

idents to remove their vehicles before the roads are closed at 3.30pm.

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NEWS EXTRA

Flu stats not high

WITH just 52 cases per 100,000 people, the Balearic Islands have the lowest flu rate in Spain. The national average is 121 cases per 100,000 inhabitants.

Deep breath

BRAVE swimmers took a New Year's Day plunge into Mallorca's chilly waters at noon on Monday, with dozens rushing into the Colonia de Sant Jordi sea to overcome their hangovers.

Smelly work

IN just three months, cleaners scraped more than 44,000 kilos of waste from the Balearic coastline. Plastic, wood and dead vegetation accounted for the bulk of the material collected.



TRAGEDY: Inquest says Ema (inset) may have been asleep when she died.

Balcony death fall

Was British mum sleepwalking?

A BRITISH mother of three who died after falling more than 50 feet from a hotel balcony in Mallorca may have been sleepwalking, an inquest heard.

Ema Evans, from South Wales had been holidaying with her partner Martin and the eldest of their three children in September 2015.

An inquest heard of how she reportedly tried to sleep on the balcony of her hotel room after becoming too hot in bed and tragically fell to her death.

She died from multiple in-

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juries after the fall.

The hearing, held at Swansea Civic Centre, heard that Ema, 37, had a 'propensity to sleepwalk.'

Acting coroner for Swansea, Colin Phillips, said: "Ema had been sleeping on the balcony because of the excessive heat and humidity in a room which was not air conditioned.

"She had a propensity to sleepwalk."

Mr Phillips recorded a conclusion of accidental death.

Hero hermit

HUNDREDS of people paid their respects to Pedro Matamalas, a monk from Valldemossa who was found dead just after Christmas. His funeral took place early on Tuesday evening in a packed Valldemossa parish.

Aged 74 when he died, Matamalas had been missing for eight days before being found by a Guardia Civil mountain rescue search team. The well-known hermit had left his countryside refuge to gather moss for a nativity scene, police believe.

He was found on December 27 in a narrow ravine surrounded by the moss he was carrying. It is suspected that he fell, was injured and later died of hypothermia.

Rider dies in crash

A BIKER has died on the old Sineu road in the first fatal traffic accident of 2018 in Mallorca.

The accident happened at 5.30am in the morning when his machine left the road for reasons that are not yet known.

The 47-year-old mo-

torcyclist died at the scene.

No other vehicle was involved.

An autopsy will be performed to see if the Spanish man suffered some sort of health-related incident that caused him to lose control of the bike.

539 People drowned in Spain last year according to official figures, with 72 per cent of fatal accidents occurring in the sea.

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P23

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P33

MOTORING
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P53



1st road fatality

A MOTORCYCLIST, aged 47, became the first road fatality of 2018 when he crashed into an island near Son Llatzer hospital on New Year's Day. Last year 25 bikers were killed on Balearic roads, accounting for four out of 10 deaths.

Baby joy

A BABY girl named Janira was the first Mallorcan baby of 2018. She arrived at Son Llatzer hospital at 2.37am on Monday, weighing five pounds. Her parents live in Palma. The first Balearic baby was a boy named Gael, born in Ibiza to Ecuadoran parents.

Tunnel toll

FEARS that a free Soller tunnel would result in an avalanche of cars were unfounded. The first week without the toll has passed with traffic at normal levels. The toll was lifted on December 30 after the Council of Mallorca brought the tunnel back under public control.

Carry on reffing

TWO dozen referees from Germany's Bundesliga football league are keeping fit in Mallorca. They are staying at the Hilton in Lluçmajor and being run ragged with training sessions from dawn to dusk. Two psychologists are also there to help the refs deal with angry crowds.

Wifi boost

FREE wifi at Palma airport has been given a boost. The Airport Free Wifi Aena service is faster than before and passengers are, at least theoretically, capable of downloading high resolution videos. Advertising has also been reduced to make logging in easier.

SPANISH FACTS OF LIFE... 44

January 6 sees the arrival of the best-loved Christmas tradition in Spain, as the Three Kings bring presents for children and huge parades take place, Joe Gerrard reports.

SANTA VS THE KINGS

DEBATE rages as to who is preferred in Spain, Santa Claus or the Three Kings. In a 2015 survey of Spanish children the kings came out on top, 67 per cent to Santa's 27 per cent.

ANDALUCIAN KINGS?

THE previous Pope, Benedict XVI, claimed in his book on the nativity the three kings were from the ancient kingdom of Tarsis (Tartessos). Historians place this kingdom somewhere near Huelva, Cadiz and Sevilla, in modern day Andalusia.

PAGAN ORIGINS

THE origin of the celebration goes back further than Christianity. In pagan times celebrations were held on January 6 to welcome the longer days that followed the winter solstice on December 21.

CONTROVERSY

DURING parades Balthazar has traditionally been played by a white actor in 'blackface' make-up. Critics have branded this racist and Madrid's council employed a black actor for the first time last year in response.

We three kings

JANUARY in Britain sees families pack away their Christmas decorations and get back to business as usual.

In Spain however Christmas festivities continue until January 6, when the country celebrates the annual Three King's Day holiday, also known as Epiphany Day.

The day (El Dia de los Reyes in Spanish) marks the moment in the nativity story when the three kings or wise men visited the baby Jesus to give gifts.

The three kings in the modern-day festival, Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, are now said to give out presents to Spanish children, similar to Santa Claus in Britain and elsewhere.

Spanish children polish their shoes and leave them outside for the kings to put presents in on the night of January 5.

These presents only go to well behaved children however, and Balthazar is tasked with giving coal or wood to those children on the naughty list.

The night of January 5 also sees the annual parades (the Cabalgata de Reyes), beginning at dusk.

The three kings appear here too, standing on floats and trailers that go through Spanish towns and cities throwing sweets to excited children.

Some of these parades involve hundreds of actors and are broadcast live on Spanish TV.

On January 6 the Spanish traditionally enjoy a round bread cake called Roscon. The cakes are baked with a figurine of the baby Jesus and a dry flava bean.

The person who finds the figurine is crowned king or queen of that day's festivities. The one who finds the bean has to prepare next year's Roscons.

January 6 is marked by a bank holiday in Spain and children don't return to school until after the festival.



CROWNING GLORY: The kings in a Cabalgata de Reyes parade.

Heart horror

A NEW Year's Eve fun run through Calvia ended in tragedy when one competitor suffered a severe heart

attack. The local man, aged 49, collapsed on the track towards the end of the 6.7km run.

The man was cared for by three doctors and taken to Son Espases hospital.

97

The total number of news and features which appeared in Issue 1695 of the Euro Weekly News Mallorca edition, including 40 local stories.

PLUS THE REGULARS

News 1 - 22

Leapy 29

Couch Critic 31

Letters 38

Health & Beauty 39

Social 41 - 42

Property 45

Pets 49

Classifieds 50 - 51

Boats 52

Sports 54

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Shell shock!



Photo by Ibenise #Enfarinats/A. Guillem/Danza Invisible/Twitter



NO YOLK: Revellers hurl eggs at each other as Carles Puigdemont (bottom right) prepares to take his punishment.

INHABITANTS of Ibi, Alicante have staged their annual mock battle to mark the biblical Massacre of the Innocents by King Herod.

Known locally as Els Enfarinats - the floured ones - revellers hurl smoke bombs, flour and eggs at each other in one of the world's greatest food fights.

Clad in military gear and wearing goggles to protect their eyes, some participants also brandish firecrackers as

the flour and egg artillery whizzes by.

The fake coup d'état dates back around 200 years and sees Els Enfarinats take control of the village as they stage a revolution against the authorities.

A new mayor is elected and a series of ridiculous new laws are announced, with citizens who break them fined and the money later donated to charity.

Meanwhile, a second group called La Oposicio - the opposition - attempts to restore or-

der before both sides storm the streets armed with 12,000 eggs, 8,000 kilos of flour and 6,000 firecrackers.

Taking place on Innocents' Day (December 28), there was a political edge to this year's event, as one plucky participant dressed as ex-Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont.

He was set on by a gang of battle-hardened soldiers wielding fire extinguishers filled with flour before being locked in an imitation prison cell.

POLL OF THE WEEK

Should Spain follow Mexico's example and legalise marihuana-based products?

LAST WEEK'S POLL:
 Do you make New Year's resolutions?
Yes 19% **No** 81%

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Two earthquakes shake Spain's Costa del Sol
 7,235 views

Severe weather alerts as Spain set to be lashed by storm Bruno
 6,472 views

Storm Bruno arrives in Spain bringing rain, snow and strong winds
 4,594 views

Outrage as Spain bans fish and chips to support 'more sustainable' fishing
 4,495 views

BUNNY LANE: Barry Lane Hickey.

7,279 views
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 Severe weather alerts as Spain set to be lashed by storm Bruno

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**For week 25 December 2017- 1 January 2018*

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Friends reunited

REAL MADRID star Isco took advantage of Spanish football's winter break by visiting former teammate Alvaro Morata in London.

The 25-year-old midfielder from Benalmadena on the Costa del Sol and his stunning girlfriend Sara Salamo, 25, shared a number of pictures on social media as they took in the sights.

After checking out Camden Town the loved-up pair met with Alvaro, 25, and his newly-pregnant wife Alice Campello, 22, with the Chelsea striker captioning a photo of the quartet: 'What a joy to be able to share a while with you two. We hope to do it again soon!'

Isco and Sara made their relationship official at the end of October following months of speculation.

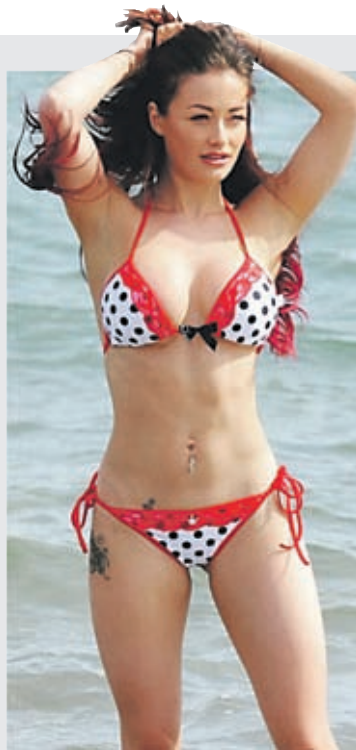
He has a young son from a previous relationship and was earlier this year linked with actress and model Carmen Muñoz before being pictured with a bikini-clad beauty at a Las Vegas hotel swimming pool.



Alvaro Morata/Instagram

ALL SMILES: Isco (second right) Alvaro Morata and their partners.

EYE POPPING: Jess Impiazzi.



Back on the beach

SHE'S rumoured to be joining the next edition of Celebrity Big Brother.

And former Ex On The Beach star Jess Impiazzi was spotted topping up her tan in Tenerife as she prepares for her next appearance on reality TV.

The 28-year-old beauty flaunted her ample curves in a tiny black-and-white bikini as she frolicked in the shallows during her winter break.

Photo credit Jess Impiazzi/Instagram

What a gem

FORMER The Only Way Is Essex (TOWIE) stars James 'Arg' Argent, 30, and Gemma Collins, 36, have set tongues wagging again.

It comes as the on-off couple teamed up for a rendition of Andy Williams' 'You're Just Too Good To Be True' during a New Year's party at TOWIE pal Elliot Wright's restaurant Olivia's in La Cala de Mijas on the Costa del Sol.



ON OR OFF?: Gemma and James.

Lady in red

SHE recently claimed she has no time for romance.

But actress, model, and bikini designer Elizabeth Hurley, 52, was snapped dancing the night away with a mystery man on New Year's Eve.

And the ageless stunner donned a Spanish flamenco-style outfit, complete with acoustic guitar and black wig, for the occasion.

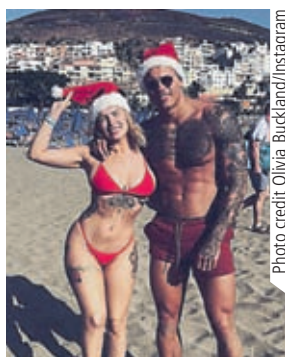


Photo credit Olivia Buckland/Instagram

FESTIVE FROLICS: Olivia and Alex.

A whole lotta love (island)

THEY shot to fame after finishing second on reality dating show Love Island in 2016.

But Olivia Buckland, 24, and Alex Bowen, 26, showed they are still going strong after jetting to Ibiza for a Christmas break.

The ITV2 stars got engaged a year ago and sent temperatures soaring again after posting a series of sizzling swimwear shots on social media.

While Olivia slipped into a barely-there red bikini which highlighted her many tattoos, Alex donned an equally skimpy pair of maroon trunks as he showed off his rippling form.

The couple admitted it was "hard work" to continue their relationship after leaving the popular show, but say their love has lasted as they made an effort to see each other daily despite their busy schedules.

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ORDER: Legal battle over bullfights heats up.

Lawyers draw blood

LAWYERS for the Balearic executive have responded to the case made by the Spanish government, which is appealing the islands' bullfighting ban.

Madrid has taken the Balearic anti-bullfighting law to the Constitutional Court. The law imposes severe restrictions on the event, banning the spilling of blood and the attendance of children. Dozens of other bureaucratic hurdles are set up to make the fights unrecognisable.

In its appeal, Madrid claims the Balearic executive overstepped its competence by banning a tradition that is part of Spain's national culture. In response island lawyers say there is no ban, mere-

ly a restriction based on animal welfare laws well within the rights of regions to impose.

Lawyers also rejected the claim from Madrid that bullfighting is a 'common cultural heritage of all Spaniards.' Instead, they argue, Spain is a pluralistic nation with different but equal cultures existing side by side.

The Balearic lawyers also cited a 450-year-old precedent. In 1567 Pope Pius V issued a papal decree banning bullfighting because of the suffering caused to the animals.

The law is presently suspended while the Constitutional Court hears the case. A decision is expected before the 2018 bullfighting season begins.



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Crisis next door

MALLORCA DAY celebrations on New Year's Eve were tinged with the political tumult in Cataluña. Thousands of people held a separate rally on Sunday demanding the release of political prisoners arrested after the crisis erupted last autumn.

Radical socialist outfit Arran has called for a mass protest on the day. The group made a name for itself in summer by smoke bombing cafes popular with tourists and gluing thousands of anti-tourist stickers to rental cars.

But the vast majority of demonstrators marched under the democratic umbrella of the December 31 Platform. Senior politicians, including Palma mayor Antoni Noguera and shamed former vice-president of the Balearic Islands Biel Barcelo, led the rally.



POPULAR: Last year's show was the most successful to date.

Looking for love 60,000 sign up for reality show

POPULAR Mallorca-based reality show Love Island has reportedly received more than 60,000 sign-ups for the 2018 edition in just 12 hours.

The ITV2 programme officially began accepting applications last Saturday ahead of the new season set to begin later this year, and has already received a staggering number of applications.

Contestants chosen for the show have the opportunity to spend up to eight weeks in a luxury villa in Mallorca while looking for love.

Hopefuls are asked to send a self-made video explaining why they think they would make a perfect contestant as well as two pictures, a headshot and a full length image.

Any photos that use filters to enhance the would-be

contestants' looks will not be considered.

Last year's version, which was won by Amber Davies and Kem Cetinay, was the channel's most popular of the show to date.

Entrants must be over 18, not employed by ITV, have a valid passport and available for at least 10 weeks across May 2018.

Applications officially close on April 30.

OUR VIEW

New Year, old problems

THE New Year brings plenty of excitement and new challenges.

Spanish families will be excited for the festival of the Three Kings - and all the festivities that Friday and Saturday brings with it.

But the end of the Christmas period also heralds the lead up to carnival season - meaning the partying will only continue. But, perhaps most pressingly, the New Year brings with it the fall out from 2017.

A full-blown drought appears increasingly likely - even if there is significant rainfall this month.

That will have implications for farming, water usage, wildlife and the environment, as climate change continues to take its toll on southern Spain.

Information is still scarce on the impact Brexit will have. British Prime Minister Theresa May has promised to look after the rights of expatriates, but the detail of any deal - if there is one - remains unclear.

Meanwhile, the impact of the Catalan election and independence crisis is still difficult to predict - and the threat of Spain being separated remains real, if unlikely.

The migration crisis, drug problems, corruption and crime will continue to be big news, as expatriates get set for the coming summer season, with tourists arriving en masse in the next few months.

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Drunk driver locked up

A DRUNK driver was jailed for two and a half years for the reckless killing of a cyclist. The woman, aged 35, failed two breathalyser tests and didn't stop after mowing down the victim on the Ma-15 near Son Llatzer.

As the sentence is over two years, she cannot ask for it to be suspended and will go to prison. She was convicted of reckless homicide and drunk driving over the 2015 crime.

Her victim was a man, aged 45, who was wearing a proper reflective vest and cycling close to the pavement just after dawn when he was struck. He suffered severe head injuries and died soon after.

Defence lawyers argued that there was no conclusive evidence that she was drunk when she hit the cyclist. When detained police reported that she had all the symptoms of intoxication, but a breathalyser test was not performed for several hours. She also claimed that the poor light made it difficult to see the cyclist.

Judges rejected the defence pointing to two separate breathalyser fails, eyewitnesses describing her woozy driving at the time, and the fact that she didn't immediately stop and call police.



NEW RATE: Hoteliers fear fallout says Gabriel Llobera (inset).

Tourist tax doubles

THE increased tourist tax came into effect on Monday. The Balearic executive hopes the new rate, which is reduced in winter but doubles in summer, will add €120 million to the treasury this year.

Excepting the off-season discount of 75 per cent, all rates are formally doubled. New tariffs are

€1 per day for campers, €2 for cruise ship passengers, €3 for mid-range hotels and €4 for luxury digs.

Considering the large winter discount and closure of many hotels, the impact is unlikely to be felt until after Easter.

Mallorca's hotel lobby opposed the tax increase vigorously, expressing fears that Turkey and other rival destinations will drop a love bomb on British and German tourists, undercutting

Mallorca with much cheaper rates and zero taxes.

Acting president of the Hotel Business Federation of Mallorca (FEHM), Gabriel Llobera, said: "These rival markets are recovering and hope to steal our clients. We are working hard to prevent this but the administration is not helping."

Hard day's night

EMERGENCY services received almost 700 calls and attended 133 incidents during a busy New Year's Eve in Mallorca. Among them was the case of a German man, aged 57, who was found dead in his Palma apartment building at 6am on Monday.

The man resided on the second floor and police investigators believe he may have fallen down a hole next to the community staircase when he returned home. They have cordoned off the area and opened an investigation.

As 2017 passed into 2018, police broke up seven fights, attended nine assaults, two robberies and two cases of dangerous driving. Firefighters attended three cases where street furniture had been set alight, and paramedics were called out to 18 incidents.

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VAMPIRE VIRUS: Xylella sucks life out of olive trees.

Brexit shields Britain from vampire bug

BREXIT could see Britain step up its import controls over the threat posed by the Xylella fastidiosa pest. Rampant in Mallorca, the bacteria has infected thousands of almond and olive trees.

A BBC report on the outbreak published last week consulted experts who described Xylella as "one of the most dangerous pathogens worldwide."

The Royal Horticultural Society has expressed fears that it could arrive in the UK hidden among the millions of plants and

trees imported from the continent each year.

In response the British environment department said: "We have pressed hard at the EU level for increased protections against Xylella, in order to prevent this devastating disease reaching our shores."

"When we leave the EU we will have the opportunity to review all of our national biosecurity measures on plant imports."

Though it is chiefly known for its destructive impact on olive and

almond trees in Italy, Mallorca, Ibiza and Menorca, Xylella can infect more than 350 different species, including vines and lavender. It dries plants out from the inside and is highly contagious. Mallorca's olive farmers narrowly escaped a huge cull being imposed by the EU last year, but prospects for almond trees aren't looking good.

Infected plant specimens from California are thought to have brought Xylella to the islands a decade ago.

Wifi wizards get online

ALL public schools in Mallorca will have ultra fast broadband by the end of the year. More than €5 million will be invested in 116 schools which don't yet have the technology.

Schools and other public centres will have the fastest broadband speed available on the island. Internet access has become a powerful learning tool in schools and every classroom will have wifi.

The plans are already a year overdue, having been delayed in the Balearic parliament over funding disagreements. Most of the schools will have fibre optic connections, except in areas where that is impossible.

Once the broadband is in place, Balearic school stu-



PAPER FREE: Online learning is the future.

dents will be able to work online on school laptops and other devices without cables. Their class lessons, individual work, and resources will be saved on the Cloud, as schools move towards a paper free environment.

Bel Busquets, the new Balearic vice-president and education minister, said:

"Technology and internet access are tools that a 21st century educational system must possess," adding that Balearic schools will be "connected to the world."

Millions more in funding is now being set aside to train teachers how to properly use rapidly evolving classroom technology.

NEWS EXTRA

Bikers blessed

HUNDREDS of bikers gathered to receive a New Year's blessing in Porreres from local priest Mossen Sebastia. They remembered all those killed on the roads in 2017.

Health risk

THE SATSE nurses union has warned that Son Espases is understaffed and that one quarter of all new nurses hired lack the experience to cope with emergencies and specialist care.

Saving tricks

NINE in 10 Balearic residents said they tried to save over Christmas, the highest proportion in Spain. Tricks included cheaper gifts and using sales periods such as Black Friday.

Low season

HOTELS in Palma enjoyed a New Year's Eve occupancy rate of 70 per cent, although over Christmas they hovered at around 60 per cent. Boutique hotels fared much better.

Sofa blaze

A GERMAN woman, aged 64, suffered serious smoke inhalation when her Palma apartment caught fire. Firefighters found her unconscious and believe the fire spread quickly from the sofa.

Time's up

A NEW law ends amnesty for owners of illegally constructed rural properties. As of Monday they can now be demolished by the authorities without even the possibility of an appeal.

Advertising Feature

Brexit divorce

Commentary by Moneycorp

BREXIT negotiations continue to progress with all the ups and downs of a drama.

News of a deal on the divorce bill had bolstered hopes that the first stage of negotiations was drawing to a conclusion. However, rebellion from the DUP and Brexit secretary, David Davis' admission that the government's impact assessments don't exist cast the negotiations back on thin ice.

Theresa May negotiated through Thursday night to confirm an agreement. However, that wasn't the end of the story as this week Theresa May suffered her first parliamentary defeat at the hands of backbenchers as MPs voted in favour of a meaningful vote for parliament on the final Brexit deal.

The PM headed straight to Brussels after the vote for the next round of negotiations. Brexit may have dominated the headlines but it was not the only matter weighing on the pound. Aside from the ups and downs of Brexit, there was little to move the pound, with a mixed bag of statistics that included better than expected UK purchasing managers' index readings last Friday.

The services PMI this week was lower on the month, and at 53.8 it was quite a bit weaker than expected. Figures released by the Office for National

Statistics today show that inflation was at 3.1% in November, the highest level since March 2012. There was a brief flutter for the pound before settling at its opening levels.

Domestic statistics have driven the euro's performance in recent weeks. German factory orders showed increases of 0.5% and 6.9% on the month and the year and Swiss inflation rose to 0.8% in November as expected.

However, year-end demand by European banks for dollar funding has also contributed to the euro's weakness in recent days. The euro has fallen from a high of \$1.1960 on November 27 to \$1.1785 on December 13, a fall of 1.5%. The dip has pushed the year-to-date advance to 12.2%, according to Reuters data. This is a familiar occurrence, however, and isn't expected to indicate any longer term softening of the currency.

Despite controversial comments on Israel from President Trump, the focus in the US has also been largely domestic. Friday's US employment report showed 31k more jobs than predicted, due in part to a monthly increase of 228k in nonfarm payrolls. But earnings fell short of forecast, rising by an annual 2.5% instead of 2.7%. America's \$48.7bn trade

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deficit in October was the widest in nearly two and a half years. That figure was followed by two US services PMIs. One of them missed forecast by a point, the other by a point and a half. The dollar hesitated after the data but came back to add a net half-cent against sterling and a quarter of a cent against the euro.

However, this news and the anticipation of tax cuts only took the dollar so far. This week voters in Alabama rejected the Republican candidate in the Senate election in favour of the Democrat Doug Jones, leaving Trump with an even narrower margin for passing the bill.



Also in the US this week, the US Federal Reserve raised interest rates by 0.25%, the third increase in 2017. The move was expected, and three further increases are still expected next year. The Fed also improved their economic forecasts, projecting 2.5% growth in GDP in 2017 and 2018, although this projection rests in part on the potential tax cuts.

Meanwhile in Canada, the Canadian dollar weakened against its US counterpart after the Bank of Canada held interest rates steady and tempered expectations for a hike early next year. The tone of the central bank was more dovish than expected, particularly given last week's strong employment data.

Down under, the Australian dollar came to grief on account of weaker than expected third quarter growth. The predictions for Australian gross domestic product were that it would have expanded by 0.7% in Q3 and be up by 3.0% on the year.

Both of those targets were missed. Third quarter growth of 0.6% brought annual growth down to 2.8%. It was a case of swings and roundabouts when it came to the stats, imports went up by 2% in October but exports were down by 3%.

The New Zealand central bank gave some hope to the kiwi dollar, which edged higher earlier in the week after a statement regarding the potential to address low inflation with tweaks to monetary policy.

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Church invaders lose appeal

FIVE protesters who interrupted mass at a Mallorca church said they are unrepentant after Spain's Supreme Court rejected their appeal.

The five youngsters were fined and given a one year suspended sentence each for interfering with the right of religious expression enjoyed by churchgoers.

They were the ringleaders of a group of 30 people who invaded the Sant Miquel church in Palma on a Sunday morning in 2014. They waved pro-abortion placards and chanted anti-religious slogans.

Mass was interrupted for 10 minutes during the ruckus. The Balearic provincial court considered that an illegal infringement of the right to religious freedom.

A last minute meeting between the Bishop of Mallorca and the fivesome last year failed to make any headway. Afterwards the church pressed on with a civil case against the group.

In response to last week's upholding of the decision by the Supreme Court, the five said it 'proved the connivance between the church and supposedly non-denominational Spanish state'.

All of them are members of the radical political group Arran, known for its socialist, feminist and anti-tourism views.

New Year's revolution

IN a New Year's Eve speech, Palma mayor Antoni Noguera promised that the city would 'undergo a great social transformation' in 2018.

During the Mallorca Day celebrations, he hinted that the New Year could see the most dramatic changes in Palma's modern history.

Noguera, a Mes politician who took office in 2017, said expanding the city's greenery and protecting its environment, were top priorities.

Other planned projects include the construction of 140 sheltered homes, convert-



GET GREEN: There are major plans for Paseo says Noguera (inset).

ing the old prison into a contemporary art centre, and fighting against plans to build giant electricity pylons in Son Puig.

His plans to greenify the Paseo Maritimo by reducing traffic flow have encountered some resistance. The Council of Mallorca is skeptical of the notion that two lanes of traffic can simply be removed without generating months of chaos.

Land councillor from the PSOE, Mercedes Garrido, warned that the results could be messy without a serious plan.

But Noguera, an avid environmentalist who has rallied against pollution on Mallorca, is keen to press on and has widespread public support.

'Speed tax' slammed

A SPEED camera at kilometre 15.5 of the Ma-1 motorway has been named the most zealous in Mallorca. A report from the European Automobile Association (AEA) found that it issued 11,378 fines between January and October 2017.

The number dwarfed the second most gung-ho camera on the island - the radar at kilometre 30.1 on the Lluc-

STEALTH TAX: AEA says Mallorca's highways are money makers.

major highway - which clocked up 7,080 fines. Third place was snagged by the camera at kilometre 16.1 of the highway to Inca,



which issued 5,244 fines.

AEA president Mario Analdo questioned Mallorca's strategy of setting up most of its fixed cameras on

highways. The distribution of cameras on Mallorca "did not reduce speeding or accidents," he said, but rather "turns them into mere tax collection instruments."

AEA policy is that it is foolish to establish cameras on highways where they are easy to slow down for and accidents are less prevalent. Secondary roads have a far greater rate of fatal accidents across Spain, Mallorca included, noted the association.

The AEA voiced concerns that the real reason Mallorca picks highways for its cameras is that they are vastly more lucrative.

In the 10 months from January to October last year a total of €1.9 million was raked in by cameras across the islands. This sum does not include fines that have not yet been paid. Revenue from the top performing camera on the Ma-1 stood at €402,000.

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NEWS EXTRA**Swim danger**

TWENTY-EIGHT people drowned in Balearic waters in 2017, a 24 per cent drop on 2016 with 37 deaths. The majority of incidents took place in Mallorca over the summer months.

Mystery gun

A STREET cleaner in Palma found an unloaded 9mm pistol in a public refuse bin early on Tuesday morning. Police are investigating whether it had been used in a crime.

Free travel

CHILDREN aged 14 and under can now travel for free on public buses across Mallorca. They must carry an ID card. The previous age limit was 12.

Hard times

A POLL of senior citizens across the Balearics found that 86 per cent thought their situation hadn't gotten any better despite the financial crisis coming to an end.

Car terror

A DOMINICAN man was arrested for threatening his partner with a knife as she hid in her locked car with emergency lights flashing for help in Palma on Sunday.

Bad start

PLANE passengers on New Year's Day were greeted with lengthy passport control delays at Palma airport despite overall numbers being substantially lower than usual.

Not fare

REPRESENTATIVES of Spain's major airlines have met to protest the law regulating discounts on domestic flights for Balearic Islands residents, claiming the scheme - which offers savings of 50-75 per cent - is 'obsolete and outdated.'

ABTA, Britain's biggest travel association, warned that Europe's anti-tourism convulsions of 2017 could affect profits in popular destinations this summer.

In its annual report, the travel agents and tour operators association, highlighted Mallorca as among the places at risk of turning off

Great British turn off

British tourists.

The report states that social media helped spread news of the anti-tourism protests in Mallorca, Barcelona, Greece and Italy to millions of British homes. Brits logging into their Facebook accounts

would have been confronted with unwelcoming scenes and might decide to look elsewhere in summer 2018.

To prevent this, ABTA has urged sunny destinations to 'rethink' their tourism policies and better balance the in-

terests of locals and guests.

The association advises Mallorca, Greece and other hotspots, to avoid concentrating mass tourism in a few summer months. Politicians on Mallorca have long been trying to establish the island

as a winter retreat for families, hikers and cyclists.

A poll of Brits conducted by ABTA found that more than half would like to visit a new country or city this summer. What hasn't changed is the love for the all-inclusive deal, with a quarter considering it essential to a good holiday.

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Transgender books to hand

A TRANSGENDER activist group has dispersed 100 children's story books in public libraries for parents of children with gender dilemmas.

Chrysallis Balears is an association which wants to help transgender, or gender confused children fit better into society.

The books contain stories about children who don't identify with their biological sex. They are meant as tools for parents or teachers close to such children to better understand what they are going through.

"We want to make the reality of transgender children visible," said Chrysallis member Maria Roza, who says her son, aged nine, has asked to be a girl. "We must understand that there are people who don't identify with which sex they were given at birth".

The issue is a prickly one in Mallorca. Last summer conservative Catholic group Haizte Oir flew a plane over the island with a message warning parents against transgender indoctrination in schools.



RISING TIDE: Climate change could swamp Mallorca's beaches.

Island future predicted Heatwaves and robots

ECONOMISTS, meteorologists and other experts have predicted that Mallorca will be very different in 20 years. There will be more people but less summer tourism as the weather gets hotter and the sea level rises.

Demography professor at the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB), Pere Salva, has estimated that the population will rise by around 100,000 to push a total of 900,000 around 2040.

He predicts that immigration and the children of immigrants will drive

the population surge.

Salva estimates that life expectancy will increase, putting an immense strain on social services as one fifth of the population are aged over 65.

Tourism expert Antoni Munar has suggested that by 2040 Mallorca will only survive as a luxury destination for an elite few, rather than relying on the mass tourism of today. Cheaper, faster flights will see Brits and German gallop off to more exotic destinations, while holiday rentals challenge Mallor-

ca's hotel hegemony, he said.

Economic and Social Council of the Balearic Islands president Carles Manera has warned that an emerging American trend of robots cleaning rooms and holograms greeting guests could become par for the course.

Meanwhile the former weather chief of the islands, Agusti Jansa, estimates that in 2040 average temperatures will be two degrees higher than today. The sea level will continue to rise, threatening some of Mallorca's iconic beaches.

NEWS EXTRA

Hey big spender

SPENDING on Palma's Three Kings Parade tomorrow (Friday) has almost tripled to €250,000. There will be tight security, disabled access points and 5,000 kilos of sweets dished out.

Grisly finds

FIREFIGHTERS found the bodies of two men, aged 50 and 71, in their respective Palma homes on Tuesday. Both had been dead for days and died of natural causes.

Dodgy data

A VOLKSWAGEN Audi dealer in Palma was fined for selling a car with illegal software which manipulates the recorded emissions of pollutants to cheat environmental tests.



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OEM parts if no other parts are available. After-market parts are parts made by a company other than your vehicle's manufacturer. They are new and the spec should be very close to the original specs. However, some minor fitting adjustments may be required by the body shop. Used parts come from the scrap yard. Cars involved in accidents, engine trouble or age, mean that scrapped cars will have some working parts, which can be resold. The used parts are usually OEM parts.

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We hope the information provided in this article is of interest.

*If you would like to contact Línea Directa please call 902 123 309
More information about Línea Directa online at www.lineadirecta.com*



Innocents' Day: Best of the rest

ON the day of the Innocents - Spain's take on April Fool's Day - a few of you fell for our fishy online prank hook, line and sinker.

Here are a selection of Spain's best attempts at fooling the 'innocents.'

The Guardia Civil were on good form on social media, telling followers they had fined a ghost pedestrian for not wearing a reflective jacket and mocking up a picture of a new police Ferrari Enzo supercar which 'exceeds 350km per hour.'

The Community of Madrid announced in a press release that the eighth series of the popular HBO show Game of Thrones would be set in the capital's Royal Mail House, where the regional presidency is based. They added that the dragons might 'fly over or climb the clock tower of Puerta del Sol.'

No one appears to have fallen for it.

Football fans will have chuckled at Sports World's story that Cristiano Ronaldo is set to return the World Player of the Year Award after losing in El Clasico against Barcelona. Ronaldo is quoted as saying he must return the Ballon D'or to Lionel Messi, since "the whole planet witnessed once again" that the Argentine forward is the world's best.

Despite the chances of Ronaldo returning an indi-



GAME OF GROANS: The Royal Post Office will not become a GOT set.



Photo by Guardia Civil/Shutterstock

FAIR COP: The Guardia Civil's fake Ferrari.

GOTCHA?: Our story last week.

vidual award likely being around the square root of zero - he recently put on a gala in his own name - another site was fooled into republishing the unlikely story.

Staying with football, and La Liga outfit Eibar made the strange announcement on Twitter that their captain's dog was the club's third winter signing. The pooch supposedly signed a three year deal, sparking the hashtag #WelcomeManolito.

Meanwhile, a special television show dedicated to the day raised over €2 million



for children suffering with cancer.

According to Spanish media, the prank programme featured a fake meteorite falling next to one victim's house, before a 'government scientist' arrived to say there might be alien life within. The Athletic Madrid president was met with a herd of sheep and a 'permit' allowing them to enter into his stadium, while a world champion figure skater was told he had discovered a Picasso behind another painting in an art gallery.

Golden tickets hidden in cake

By Harrison Jones

OVER 1,000 lucky festive shoppers are set for a golden reward, after a supermarket group decided to hide gold worth thousands of euros in Spanish cakes.

Three one ounce golden pieces - worth around €1,100 each - and 1,000 one gram pieces have been placed in Roscon de Reyes, the traditional Three Kings' Day cake.

The surprise treats can be found in Su-

percor, Supercor Express, Hipercor and El Corte Ingles supermarkets throughout Spain.

The El Corte Ingles group worked in collaboration with the precious metal company Degussa to undertake the initiative.

With 600,000 cakes reportedly being produced by the supermarket for Spain's traditional January 6 festival, buyers have a roughly one in 600 chance of striking gold.



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Yes to the dress?

Drag Queen decision sparks debate

THE decision to use a drag queen as one of the Three Kings in Madrid's traditional parade has divided opinion.

Traditionalists are heavily against the move, even threatening legal action to overturn the decision, according to reports.

Traditionally, the Three Kings were played by local, male councillors - one of whom would often 'black up' for the event.

In more recent years, parades have come under pressure to stop the practice.

And in Madrid, a left-leaning council have been particularly conscious to recognise diversity.

This year, two women and a drag queen are playing Melchior, Caspar and Baltazar.

They are Roma Calderón, an actress and cabaret dancer, black hip hop artist Dnoé Lamiss and drag queen La Prohibida.

Tweeting a picture of Darth Vader, La Prohibida commented: "some protest that my participation in a children's party denatures the tradition. But nobody protested when..."

But some have taken a less light-hearted stance.

"Sometimes, a procession of Kings has to simply be what children expect it to be, a procession of Kings", said Begona Villacis, a Madrid councillor for Ciudadanos, a centre right party.

"We support Gay Pride and the rest of those celebrations, but we believe that Kings' Day should be re-

spected as a religious holiday," added Jose Luis Martinez-Almeida, council spokesman of the PP for Madrid.

One social media user added: "The inclusion of drag queens in the Cabalgata de los Reyes Magos of Vallecas has the purpose of expanding the LGTBI indoctrination that is already done in schools and disrespecting Christians."

Others have defended the decision.

Carla Antonelli, a regional parliament member for the Socialist party, said: "It's yet another example of the diversity of Madrid. It helps raise the visibility of 'trans' and LGTBI."

The leftist leader of the Puente de Vallecas council, Paco Perez, added: "It's not

MADRID SHOWS PRIDE: Queen La Prohibida will distribute sweets to children.

going to be a drag queen performance.

"The organisers have been careful with traditions and childhood sensibilities."

One activist simply wrote: #LoveWins on social media.

Three Kings' Day parades take place across Spain on Friday, the day before the official day (Saturday January 6), when children receive their presents.



Photo credit: Twitter



'EASILY €1 BILLION': The cost of the Catalan crisis to date according to Spain's economy minister Luis de Guindos (inset).

Catalan crisis 'cost €1 billion'

SPAIN'S economy minister believes the Catalan crisis has cost the country €1 billion already.

Luis de Guindos told Spanish radio that a slowdown in the region's growth - following the illegal independence referendum - has hit the country's economy.

"Cataluña used to have growth above that of Spain, it was one of the drivers of the Spanish economy," Mr de Guindos said.

He blamed the previous regional government for generating 'enormous uncertainty, concern and a loss of confidence.' Growth was reduced from 0.9 per cent to 0.4 per cent in the last quarter, he claimed.

Last month's election failed to provide a decisive result, with separatists retaining a slim major-

ity in parliament, but not taking over 50 per cent of the result. Pro-unity party Ciudadanos, led by Ines Arrimadas, won the most seats.

According to reports, 3,100 companies have moved their headquarters out of the region as a result of the ongoing crisis.

The Spanish government dissolved the regional parliament and called snap elections after an unauthorised independence referendum prompted the government to declare independence.

Various politicians were arrested, and some - including the former president Carles Puigdemont - fled. So far a government has not been formed.

Deposed Catalan leader Puigdemont, whose party came second in the elections, is still in self-imposed exile in Belgium.

Rally champ dies in horror plane

A BRITISH expatriate who was involved in an air collision between an ultralight plane and a helicopter has died from his injuries.

And the victim has now been confirmed to be 65-year-old ex-rally champion Donald Milne.

The incident occurred when a Generalitat helicopter, which was coming into land at Alicante airport, reportedly clipped the plane and fatally injuring Mr Milne.

Mr Milne was taken to hospital after the incident but later died of his injuries.

The popular Scot won the Scottish Rally Championship in 1992 and also mentored legendary driver Colin McRae.

The father-of-two had lived in Spain for the

past 20 years and was a keen flyer.

Tributes have poured in after news of his death emerged.

The Scottish Rally Championship official Twitter account posted a message which read: "We are extremely saddened to hear of the sudden passing of 1991 Scottish Rally Champion, Donald Milne. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to Quintin, Freddie and family."

Motoring journalist John Fife wrote a heartfelt message on his Facebook page.

He said: "I'm sure we'd all like to express our sincere condolences to his wife Fiona, the boys Quintin and Freddie, and their relatives and wide circle of friends. He'll be sorely missed."

Boy loses ears in dog attack

A THREE-YEAR-OLD boy has lost both ears and suffered bites to his face and left thigh after being attacked by a dog in Madrid.

The child is in a 'serious but stable' condition in Madrid's La Paz hospital after suffering the attack by a bull terrier on a farm in the town of El Molar, north of the capital.

It is reported that the boy's family was visiting a friend's house and he had been playing with the dogs at the farm.

Later they found him unconscious and wounded and rushed him to the Emergency Medical Centre in the town.

The child was stabilised at the centre and then transferred to the intensive care unit at the Hospital de La Paz

where his condition is described as 'serious but stable.'

The Guardia Civil is now investigating the incident.

The bull terrier is not included in the list of potentially dangerous dogs in the Community of Madrid.

In April a woman died in El Molar after suffering bites at her house where she was breeding pitbulls.

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DENMARK

Princess lonely

THE Australian wife of Denmark's heir to the throne has spoken about her loneliness upon moving to the country in 2004. Princess Mary met Prince Frederik in a Sydney bar.



LONELY?: Princess Mary revealed she struggled to settle in Denmark.

Joint operation

A DOPEY man carrying over a thousand joints mistook a police car for a taxi, according to Copenhagen Police. He could face jail and a fine.

the Danish government, according to reports. The public service channel will be funded by television licences.

'Danflix'

A NATIONAL streaming service to rival Netflix is being planned by

Tax cut

PRIME MINISTER Lars Lokke Rasmussen chose to talk about tax in his New Year's Day speech. He

hopes to implement plans to cut taxes for low and medium earners this year.

GERMANY

Cruise crash

AT least 25 people were injured when a 100-metre long Swiss cruise ship hit a motorway bridge on the Rhine. Four were hospitalised, but most only suffered minor injuries in the incident, near Duisberg.

tured on CCTV in Berlin. A man-hunt is underway for the four men, who broke a concrete pillar and jumped a fence.

called for advertising restrictions on sweets, junk food and beer.

Prison break

A DARING prison escape was cap-

Fat alert

A WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION expert has warned that increasing numbers of German children are overweight. The WHO

Paid to go home

REFUGEES are being offered money by the German government to go back to their homeland, according to reports. The amount of €1,000 per person and €6,000 per family is available until February.

FRANCE

Car burn

FRANCE'S annual New Year's Eve torching of cars continued on Sunday, as the total number of burned vehicles hit 1,031, according to the government. Two police officers were also attacked in Paris.

World of oysters

NEARLY a tonne of oysters has been stolen from an oyster farm near Ile De Re in western France, disappointing diners who were hoping to eat the luxury shellfish on New Year's Eve.

No fly zone

A HALF-CENTURY old anti-airport activist camp is thought to be under threat. President Macron is due to make a 'final decision' on the future of La Zad - a utopian hippy community - imminently.

Apple bitten

APPLE are reportedly facing a lawsuit in France - adding to others around the world - after allegations emerged that the company were deliberately slowing down iPhones, supposedly to save battery life.

BELGIUM

Telegrams STOP

BELGIANS sent their final telegrams last month as the service - which had been running in the country since 1846 - ended. Eight thousand telegrams went sent between January and November 2017.

Baby box

ANTWERP'S heart-wrenching 'baby box' has had a record year, according to reports. The facility provides a safe place for desperate mothers to anonymously leave babies for adoption or fostering.

Becoming Dutch

AN area the size of 23 football pitches has become Dutch. The changed status of an uninhabited peninsula on the River Meuse eases legal issues with an investigation into a headless body's discovery.

Private jets

BELGIUM'S Finance Minister has requested data from Eurocontrol on private jets in tax havens, following the 'Paradise Papers' leak. The revelations suggested industrial scale tax avoidance across Europe.

NETHERLANDS

Bizarre interview

THE US Ambassador has apologised after an embarrassing interview went viral. Confronted with previous remarks - saying the Netherlands had "no-go zones" - Pete Hoekstra cried "fake news," only to be shown the footage and then claim he had not said "fake news."

Snack ban

FEYENOORD have suspended a player for one match and two training sessions after he was caught eating a white bread roll and croquette at half time. Michiel Kraer was also fined.

Wind power

A VAST island surrounded by wind turbines could send electricity to the Netherlands and the UK. Plans by the Dutch power grid, to build the farm off the East Yorkshire coast, could save billions of euros.

Inequality

DUTCH CEOs earn 171 times more than their average employees, according to an analysis by Bloomberg. The study shames the country as fifth worst in the world for wage inequality.

SWEDEN

Not Maddie

A SWEDISH woman who sparked a media frenzy in Italy after being mistaken for missing Maddie McCann has reportedly returned home. Embla Jauharvi was discovered speaking English on the streets of Rome in 2016.

Gender-neutral God

THE Church of Sweden has told its clergy to use gender-neutral terms when referring to God. They are encouraged to sacrifice phrases like 'The Lord' and 'He' in favour of the simple 'God.'

Stunning survival

THE Swedish town of Gavle is celebrating after its 13-metre high Christmas goat survived for more than three weeks. The festive straw decoration has traditionally fallen victim to fire-wielding pranksters, since 1966.

Wolf hunt

CAMPAIGNERS' attempts to stop a wolf hunt reportedly failed earlier this week, when a cull of the animals was set to go ahead. The licensed hunt permits 22 killings. Around 350 wolves live in Sweden.

NORWAY

PM Trumps

ERNA SOLBERG, the Norwegian Prime Minister, is set to be the first world leader to visit US President Donald Trump this year. Miss Solberg is visiting the White House on January 10.

Sex scandal

THE Deputy Leader of Norway's opposition party has temporarily stood down in the wake of sexual harassment allegations. Trond Giske, from the country's Labour Party, apologised for 'unsuitable' behaviour but rejected several more severe allegations.

Auto-dim

A FIVE-MILE stretch of road will reportedly be home to auto-dimming street lights to save energy. Thousands of kilowatt hours will be saved by the lights, which brighten from 20 per cent to 100 per cent when detecting movement.

Gas high

NORWAY'S pipeline gas exports to Europe hit a record high last year, according to gas company Gassco. This year's total was a 7 per cent increase on 2016.

ECB approves takeover of BMN

AGREEMENT has been received from the European Central Bank (ECB) to allow Bankia to formally take over BMN.

The Banco Mare Nostrum (BMN) which was set up just seven years ago received a massive cash injection from the Spanish government due to its instability and now the merger will make the new group the fourth largest bank in Spain.

Once the merger goes through, the government expects to be able to recoup some of the funds invested in both banks.

Spain's military spend

THE Spanish government has said that it will increase its military to approximately €18 billion by 2024 in order to meet a benchmark set by NATO in 2014.

At a 2014 summit, members of each of the 28 countries that comprise NATO reportedly promised to move towards contributing 2 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to defence spending within a decade.

According to reports, the rise will lift the defence budget by 80 per cent by 2024, but that increase still

By John Smith

equates to a figure that is below the 2 per cent of GDP benchmark set by NATO.

Depending on GDP growth, this increase could see Spain's spending equate to between 1.5 and 1.6 per cent, with the earliest that Spain could possibly reach the 2 per cent goal reportedly being 2028.

Spain is currently one of the lowest spending NATO countries on defences, forecast to spend just

0.92 per cent in 2017.

It is however a major supplier of military hardware around the world as it produces naval vessels as well as aircraft with the UK as one of its largest customers followed by other European countries and Saudi Arabia which is its major purchaser of ammunition and shells.

Time will tell whether Brexit will have a serious negative affect on Spain's arms industry which could then inhibit the planned NATO spend.

Credit rating group S&P rate India

ACCORDING to credit rating organisation, Standard and Poor's (S&P), the Indian banking sector is now on the same level as Spain in category 5 BBB-.

These two countries share a slot with Ireland, Italy, Panama, Bermuda, Poland, Peru, Qatar, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates and the decision has been made due to the rate of bad loans that have been granted over the years.

This rating is just positive and the countries in that category are 'considered lowest investment-grade by market participants.'

The company considers that those classed as BBB- do have the potential to grow their economies and to be considered a safer investment option in the future.

Quote of the Week

"We don't want anyone to be left behind and that's why we're going to improve wages, starting with the lowest." Mariano Rajoy on the decision to raise the national minimum wage by 4 per cent.

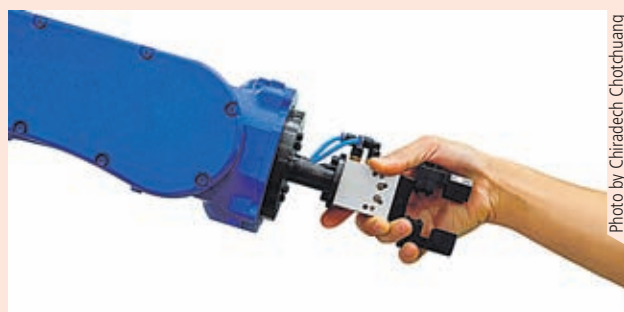


Photo by Chiradech Chotchuang

AUTOMATION: When man meets machine.

Robots might hurt humans

A BRITISH thinktank The Institute for Public Policy Research has published a paper concerning the introduction of robots which if correct could have meaning for Spain.

Whilst it sees the benefits of such automation within the workplace, it also believes that government needs to be aware of the possible changes in social mobility which could adversely affect the economy.

Whilst much has been said about Artificial Intelligence, the

area that is most likely to be affected is those which require little skill.

It is posited therefore that lower-skilled jobs could well be phased out, meaning that only those with higher-skills would be able to find work and then obtain higher wages.

With the high unemployment in Spain, the economy could become even more burdened by the increasing number of people unable to find work and claiming social security.

» BUSINESS EXTRA

Another move

ENDESA is one of the latest of 3,160 companies to have moved headquarters out of Barcelona. In this case its electrical distribution group formally registered its new office in Madrid, but has not confirmed the reason for the move.

Large fine

A FINE of €500,000 has been levied on investment company Renta 4 Banco by the National Securities Market Commission. Whilst the Commission refers to a very serious infringement concerning lack of clear data, Renta has confirmed that it intends to appeal.

Cross over

MARÍA GARAÑA, vice president of the business solutions division of Microsoft for EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) is moving to the UK. Not only is she crossing the channel, but is crossing from Microsoft to Google as general director of professional services.



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Apple to reduce costs

AS reported in the Finance pages in last week's edition of EWN, Apple confirmed that it has been slowing down some older iPhone models. It has now announced that by way of apology it

will be reducing the cost of replacement batteries from \$79 (€66) to \$29 (€24) and plans to issue new software so customers can monitor battery health.

LONDON - FTSE 100

CLOSING PRICES JANUARY 2

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Anglo American	1,548.50	-6.55	-0.42	21,595.93
Associated British Foods	3,200.00	380.00	13.48	22,428.13
Admiral Group	2,032.00	30.00	1.50	5,626.53
Ashtead Group	1,899.00	-93.00	-4.67	9,818.93
Antofagasta	982.50	-22.50	-2.24	9,784.63
Aviva	500.75	-5.75	-1.14	20,096.48
AstraZeneca	5,119.50	0.00	0.00	63,280.09
BAE Systems	567.50	-5.50	-0.96	18,112.05
Barclays	203.13	-0.70	-0.35	34,692.11
British American Tobacco	5,013.00	-21.04	-0.42	113,660.42
Barratt Developments	648.75	-2.08	-0.32	6,565.59
Berkeley Group Holdings (The)	4,201.00	25.48	0.61	5,734.84
British Land Co	689.00	-2.50	-0.36	6,862.07
BHP Billiton	1,522.25	-10.53	-0.69	31,670.52
Bunzl	2,051.00	-21.00	-1.01	6,913.44
BP	522.40	-2.82	-0.54	102,782.14
Burberry Group	1,787.50	-4.50	-0.25	7,605.21
BT Group	271.55	-3.15	-1.16	26,515.19
Coca-Cola HBC	2,490.00	70.00	2.89	8,840.64
Carnival	5,046.00	154.00	3.15	10,268.69
Centrica	138.00	0.70	0.51	7,727.92
Compass Group	1,550.00	-50.00	-3.13	24,965.43
Croda International	4,423.50	-0.50	-0.01	5,787.85
CRH	2,728.50	71.50	2.69	22,339.15
DCC	7,242.50	-222.50	-2.98	6,654.39
Diageo	2,722.75	-37.86	-1.39	67,063.95
Direct Line Insurance Group	410.80	29.10	7.62	5,171.38
Experian	1,610.00	-26.00	-1.59	14,891.32
easyJet	1,437.50	-26.50	-1.81	5,723.77
Ferguson	5,410.00	80.00	1.50	13,337.26
Fresnillo	1,380.00	-49.00	-3.43	10,242.82
G4S	290.00	23.00	8.61	4,041.90
GKN	310.00	-9.40	-2.94	5,446.12
Glencore	389.43	-0.16	-0.04	55,484.53
GlaxoSmithKline	1,320.25	0.00	0.00	64,948.48
Hargreaves Lansdown	1,777.50	-24.50	-1.36	8,466.59
Halma	1,250.00	-10.00	-0.79	4,768.30
Hammerson	556.00	9.00	1.65	4,308.68
HSBC Holdings	766.50	-1.81	-0.24	152,439.40
International Consoltd Air Gr	637.00	-14.00	-2.15	13,271.35
InterContinental Hotels Grp	3,885.00	-834.00	-17.67	8,958.04
3i Group	951.00	37.50	4.11	8,828.86
Imperial Brands	3,168.00	0.00	0.00	29,885.35
Informa	721.75	1.71	0.24	5,978.16
Intertek Group	5,192.50	12.45	0.24	8,303.54
ITV	166.00	0.50	0.30	6,617.77
Just Eat	690.25	-90.75	-11.62	5,167.43
Johnson Matthey	3,270.00	195.00	6.34	5,982.12
Kingfisher	336.00	-1.70	-0.50	7,455.63
Land Securities Group	1,015.00	7.00	0.69	7,466.32

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Legal & General Group	271.25	-2.05	-0.75	16,147.20
Lloyds Banking Group ORD	67.94	0.00	0.00	48,628.35
London Stock Exchange Grp	3,789.50	0.00	0.00	12,995.69
Micro Focus International	2,446.50	-76.50	-3.03	10,765.02
Mediclinic International	662.75	13.25	2.04	4,744.16
Marks & Spencer Group	327.00	12.20	3.88	5,139.06
Mondi	1,975.50	44.50	2.30	9,288.64
Morrison (Wm) Supermarkets	216.00	-3.90	-1.77	5,162.93
National Grid	874.80	-2.19	-0.25	29,370.23
NMC Health	2,890.50	0.00	0.00	5,803.59
Next	4,626.50	101.50	2.24	6,633.33
Old Mutual Group	221.50	-10.20	-4.40	11,093.68
Paddy Power Betfair	8,800.00	-25.00	-0.28	7,439.60
Prudential	1,904.25	0.00	0.00	48,678.79
Persimmon	2,499.00	-239.00	-8.73	8,453.37
Pearson	730.00	-6.00	-0.82	5,886.50
Reckitt Benckiser Group	6,918.50	-30.72	-0.44	47,961.43
Royal Bank of Scotland Grp	266.50	-11.50	-4.14	33,039.86
Royal Dutch Shell	2,479.00	-7.97	-0.32	113,135.52
RELX	1,727.50	-11.50	-0.66	18,453.48
Rio Tinto	3,941.00	-45.55	-1.16	52,145.06
Rolls-Royce Group	858.00	11.00	1.30	15,580.64
Randgold Resources	7,210.00	-200.00	-2.70	6,829.72
RSA Insurance Group	650.75	18.25	2.89	6,392.62
Rentokil Initial	319.00	1.00	0.31	5,756.36
Sainsbury (J)	240.00	-1.40	-0.58	5,298.11
Schroders	3,519.00	0.00	0.00	7,955.99
Sage Group (The)	785.00	-13.00	-1.63	8,542.29
Segro	588.00	0.00	0.00	5,827.00
Shire	3,895.25	-11.05	-0.28	35,291.79
Smurfit Kappa Group	2,506.00	0.00	0.00	5,864.30
Sky	1,031.00	19.00	1.88	17,241.74
Standard Life Aberdeen	445.70	9.10	2.08	12,838.92
Smith (DS)	517.75	-3.42	-0.66	5,467.65
Smiths Group	1,492.50	1.50	0.10	5,908.25
Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust	444.50	-4.50	-1.00	6,272.23
Smith & Nephew	1,300.00	12.00	0.93	11,231.14
SSE	1,303.00	-17.00	-1.29	13,186.72
Standard Chartered	780.05	-5.43	-0.70	25,506.95
St James's Place	1,225.50	-6.43	-0.52	6,433.54
Severn Trent	2,111.00	-51.00	-2.36	5,086.81
Tesco	209.28	0.02	0.01	17,070.43
TUI AG	1,565.00	25.00	1.62	8,987.02
Taylor Wimpey	209.70	3.30	1.60	6,776.07
Unilever	4,124.75	-7.93	-0.19	50,807.47
United Utilities Group	815.50	-14.00	-1.69	5,601.71
Vodafone Group	234.93	-0.05	-0.02	62,497.41
Worldpay Group	459.20	33.20	7.79	8,456.00
WPP Group	1,357.50	16.50	1.23	17,156.79
Whitbread	3,923.50	-76.50	-1.91	7,267.37

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DOW JONES

CLOSING PRICES JANUARY 2

COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE%	CHANGE	VOLUME(M)
3M	235,370	-0.15%	-0,350	140,521,82
AMERICAN EXPRESS	99,3100	-0.39%	-0,3900	86,547,04
APPLE	169,230	-1.08%	-1,850	872,628,18
BOEING CO	294,910	-0.49%	-1,440	176,094,70
CATERPILLAR	157,580	-0.53%	-0,840	94,159,42
CHEVRON	125,19	-0.31%	-0,39	238,169,71
CISCO SYSTEMS	38,300	-0.75%	-0,290	192,302,08
COCA-COLA	45,88	+0.35%	0,16	196,033,30
DOWDUPONT	71,22	-0.41%	-0,29	167,016,80
EXXON MOBIL	83,64	-0.45%	-0,38	355,582,18
GENERAL ELECTRIC	17,4500	+0.52%	0,0900	151,205,61
GOLDMAN SACHS	254,76	-0.68%	-1,74	96,314,63
HOME DEPOT	189,5300	-0.13%	-0,2500	222,374,37
IBM	153,42	-0.40%	-0,62	142,450,59
INTEL CORP	46,1600	-0.13%	-0,0600	217,704,67
J.P.MORGAN CHASE	106,9400	-0.79%	-0,8500	373,064,89
JOHNSON & JOHNSON	139,7200	-0.60%	-0,8400	377,026,22
MC DONALD'S CORP	172,1200	-0.57%	-0,9800	137,378,99
MERCK AND CO. NEW	56,27	-0.58%	-0,33	153,699,10
MICROSOFT	85,540	-0.21%	-0,180	662,046,38
NIKE	62,55	-0.64%	-0,40	82,043,18
PFIZER	36,2200	-0.41%	-0,1500	216,612,10
PROCTER AND GAMBLE	91,880	-0.21%	-0,190	233,848,93
TRAVELERS CIES	135,64	-0.01%	-0,02	37,148,74
UNITED TECHNOLOGIE	127,57	-0.43%	-0,55	102,105,15
UNITEDHEALTH GROUP	220,46	-1.04%	-2,31	214,725,97
VERIZON COMMS	52,93	-0.94%	-0,50	216,883,47
VISA	114,02	-0.29%	-0,33	207,324,56
WAL-MART STORES	98,7500	-0.65%	-0,6500	293,646,06
WALT DISNEY CO	107,5100	-0.24%	-0,2600	162,605,57

M - MILLION DOLLARS

NASDAQ

CLOSING PRICES JANUARY 2

COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE NET / %
Most Advanced		
Presbia PLC	\$ 3.78	0.66 ▲ 21.15%
Atara Biotherapeutics, Inc.	\$ 18.10	2.85 ▲ 18.69%
Merus N.V.	\$ 19.40	2.75 ▲ 16.52%
QIWI plc	\$ 17.33	2.11 ▲ 13.86%
Casa Systems, Inc.	\$ 17.76	2.02 ▲ 12.83%
Insys Therapeutics, Inc.	\$ 9.62	1 ▲ 11.60%
TiVo Corporation	\$ 15.60	1.60 ▲ 11.43%
CRISPR Therapeutics AG	\$ 23.48	2.23 ▲ 10.49%
Flex Pharma, Inc.	\$ 3.49	0.33 ▲ 10.44%
ProQR Therapeutics N.V.	\$ 3.225	0.30 ▲ 10.26%
LexinFintech Holdings Ltd.	\$ 13.90	1.27 ▲ 10.06%
Most Declined		
Forward Pharma A/S	\$ 3.68	0.62 ▼ 14.42%
ADTRAN, Inc.	\$ 19.35	2.90 ▼ 13.03%
Zion Oil & Gas Inc	\$ 2.16	0.24 ▼ 10.00%
Infinity Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 2.03	0.20 ▼ 8.97%
Papa Murphy's Holdings, Inc.	\$ 5.38	0.52 ▼ 8.81%
Medallion Financial Corp.	\$ 3.53	0.34 ▼ 8.79%
Synlogic, Inc.	\$ 9.70	0.93 ▼ 8.75%
Future FinTech Group Inc.	\$ 4.17	0.37 ▼ 8.15%
China Finance Online Co. Limited	\$ 2.68	0.22 ▼ 7.59%
Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 3.68	0.29 ▼ 7.30%
Mersana Therapeutics, Inc.	\$ 16.43	1.24 ▼ 7.02%

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PRICE MOVEMENT

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Multi Asset Conservative B EUR

Multi Asset Balanced B GBP

Multi Asset Balanced B EUR

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Multi Asset Growth B EUR

DEALING PRICE

£1.1633

£1.0803

£1.3338

£1.2267

£1.4921

£1.3794

PRICE MOVEMENT

£0.0027

£0.0025

£0.0044

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£0.0052

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*Fees and exchange rate data for banks taken from the International Money Transfer Index™ (IMTI™).

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SPT6085EN

GBP set to end the year weaker, EUR/USD up 16 cents

Ask the expert

Peter Loveday

Contact me at euroweekly@currenciesdirect.com



THIS year was another dramatic year for the major currencies. Read our summary of the year's biggest news, and find out what you should be looking out for in the year ahead.

Latest currency news

Over the last 12 months the GBP/EUR exchange rate has fallen from €1.17 to €1.13, EUR/GBP has risen from £0.85 to £0.88 and EUR/USD has advanced from \$1.04 to \$1.20.

What's been happening?

Brexit continued to dog the pound in 2017. Slow progress in negotiations kept Sterling under pressure throughout the year, but it was political news that inspired the most significant GBP movements.

Prime Minister, Theresa May's decision to call a snap election back in April initially drove the pound to its best levels of the year, but an ill-judged campaign saw the Conservatives lose their majority and Sterling lose its strength.

The pound's been battling its way back over the last few months, despite concerns that the Bank of England (BoE) will leave interest rates on hold next



UNCERTAIN TIMES: An eventful year ahead.

year after raising borrowing costs for the first time in over a decade in November.

However, while the British government finally concluded the first stage of Brexit negotiations, concerns that the second stage could prove just as protracted prevented the pound from seeing much benefit.

In terms of euro movement, the early half of the year was dominated by fears of a rise of populism, with the common currency unsettled by speculation that elections in the Netherlands and France could result in victory for Eurosceptic parties.

These fears proved unfounded, and the euro

gained after Emmanuel Macron secured victory in France. However, a surprising result in September's German elections left the common currency on less stable ground during the last quarter of the year.

Although the Eurozone's economic recovery continues apace, stagnant Eurozone inflation, and the expectation that the European Central Bank (ECB) will choose to leave monetary policy accommodative for the foreseeable future have conspired to limit the euro's gains against the pound.

EUR/USD has surged by around 16 cents this year, however, despite the Federal Reserve increasing interest rates three times.

What do you need to look out for?

The currency market in 2017 has certainly been a volatile one and 2018 looks set to be equally eventful.

The outlook for pound exchange rates is highly dependent on the second phase of Brexit negotiations. Progress would be Sterling supportive, while delayed or fractious trade discussions could send GBP lower.

The BoE interest rate hike outlook will also be key to how GBP performs in the months ahead. Sterling will benefit if wage growth rises, inflation remains persistently high, and the odds of a rate hike in 2018 improve.

Meanwhile, the euro could be boosted if the political situation in Germany stabilises and Eurozone data continues outperforming forecasts.

However, as it would take a notable uptick in consumer price pressures to significantly alter the ECB's stance on monetary policy, EUR exchange rates may be restrained by inaction from the central bank.

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A vital bid has been received for Niki More flights to Spain

IT would seem that the New Year may bring some positive news for Austrian and German travellers to Spain as IAG hopes to purchase Niki Airline for €20 million.

Originally founded by former racing driver, Niki Lauda, the Austrian holiday airline suffered from its association with Air Berlin which was declared insolvent in August after main shareholder Etihad Airlines (of the United Arab Emirates) withdrew its support.

Whilst Air Berlin cancelled its flights at that time, Niki continued, with support, in the hope and expectation that it would be rescued by Lufthansa, but when the European Commission expressed its concern over the possible takeover by the German company of both Air Berlin and Niki, the 'plug was pulled' and Niki ceased trading.

With flights to seven Spanish destinations including Malaga and Palma de Mallorca, the Austrian airline was an important link for Austrian



Photo by Oliver Holzbauer/Wikimedia

GOOD NEWS: Niki flight from Palma arriving at Frankfurt.

and German holidaymakers and its closure alongside Air Berlin was not helpful to the Spanish tourist economy.

Niki Lauda had himself indicated that he would be interested in taking back the airline, but the liquidators appear to prefer the concept of IAG (owner of Aer Lingus, BA, Iberia and Vueling) injecting funds into the failed airline and relaunching as an

arm of Vueling.

In addition to the initial purchase price of €20 million, IAG has indicated that it will keep on some 740 staff and will spend a further €16.5 million on assimilating the airline into the group.

The acquisition which still has to be approved by the EU will bring with it 15 aircraft and a number of important landing rights in Austria, Germany, Spain and Switzerland.

Approval has already been given for easyJet to take over Air Berlin's base at Tegel Airport in Berlin and it will operate internal German flights, but also regular flights from the German capital to Palma de Mallorca, having taken over a number of routes from the bankrupt airline.

Although fairly vocal in its criticism of the support given by the German government to Lufthansa in its bid to obtain ownership of Air Berlin, Irish based airline, Ryanair has currently missed out on the opportunity to add to its fleet.

Future car production looking positive

THE Spanish automobile industry is forecast to produce three million vehicles in 2018 according to Spain's Association of Car Manufacturers (ANFAC).

This would bring production back to the same level as 10 years ago when the world financial crisis struck.

In 2017 production was broadly the same as 2016 with an estimated 2.8 million vehicles being produced, but the future forecast is positive because of the need to increase the number of alternative energy vehicles for the internal market.

With the value of the automobile industry representing nearly 10 per cent of Spain's GDP, any significant movement in production and sales will be good for the economy.

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Photo Credit: Eqtec Iberia

EQTEC IBERIA: A gasification plant in Croatia.

Irish company take-over Spain

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FOLLOWING a suspension in trading in its shares, Irish company EQTEC has returned to the UK AIM market following a €16 million take-over of a Spanish company. This was a somewhat complicated arrangement as the deal was technically a reverse take-over of a fellow subsidiary of its Spanish parent Eboss energy.

The all share arrangement saw it gain ownership of Eqtec Iberia which specialises in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of power plants.

EQTEC which produces energy from waste products believes that

the Spanish company's EGT gasification technology will help the Irish company to extend its involvement with energy projects in the UK.

Coinciding with the acquisition, EQTEC issued a further 246.5 million shares at a heavily discounted price to raise £1.6 million (€1.8 million) of working capital and installed a new board of directors.

The new Irish company with access to both the British and European market believes that it is now ideally placed to become a leading player in the creation of electricity by converting waste into synthetic gas.

Disney to expand its coverage through pay TV

THE Disney Company has its eyes firmly fixed on expansion of its services within Spain and has entered into two deals with major telecoms suppliers.

On December 22, it launched Movistar Disney, as part of the Movistar+ pay TV offer which is a 24-hour a day service broadcasting a whole range of different Disney-owned properties.

In addition to cartoons and children's programmes, it will also be supplying the latest and classic movies from both Walt Disney Studio and Pixar which includes the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise and a whole selection of animated films such as Toy Story.

Existing subscribers to Movistar+ will receive this new channel at no addition-

al cost.

To add to its coverage in Spain, the company which had an estimated worldwide turnover of \$55 billion (€46 billion) has also signed a new deal with Vodafone's Videoclub which supplies video-on-demand through set-top boxes and Vodafone TV Online.

Some of the Disney channels are already available to view with Vodafone TV Online contracts, but the video-on-demand option is a new pay service which not only gives access to the studio's movie selections (including some Star Wars products) but also allows subscribers to see pay-TV channels, Disney Channel, Disney XD and Disney Junior seven days before other suppliers.

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British heritage is disappearing

LEAPY LEE SAYS IT

OTHERS THINK IT



THE Ghosts of Christmas Past. That, I'm afraid is all that London (and according to colleagues, most of our other great cities) had to offer this Yuletide. This was my first Christmas visit to the great Metropolis in over 30 years, which is about the time I began voicing my concerns over the future of our British heritage and democratic freedom.

Well I'm afraid 'Leapy's Rants' of yesteryear are now manifesting in harsh and terribly sad reality. I truly did feel like a stranger in the country of my birth. Whole areas, that in days of yore, glistened and danced with lights and decorations marking the most important event in the Christian calendar, now show no signs of special celebration or joyful occasion whatsoever.

Indeed, in many places, whole rows of shops bore no Christmas decorations at all, not even stuck on bits of cotton wool graced the bare windows that prevailed on a number of high streets I visited. Where were the wonderful Salvation Army Bands that once regaled us with joyful carols and uplifting seasonal music on the street corners of our main shopping areas?

When I rang the Sally Army offices to enquire



LONDON: Still festive in places including Regent Street as seen here.

as to their conspicuous absence, I was informed that these appearances were local decisions and I needed to contact the area offices for more information, (no joy with that at the time of writing!). Not one carol singer presented themselves at the portals of our fairly suburban semi, or in any other street as far as I could make out.

Frankly I'm not angry anymore (I'm not allowed to be!), merely saddened by the manifestation of all my worst predictions. As I prophesied all those years ago, there is no need for violent confrontation, or indeed any stomach for it among the diverse cultures now rapidly becoming more and more glaringly apparent.

The outcome of the present cultural revolution is being decided by sheer weight of numbers alone. All too late you see, should have restricted the borders years ago. Ah well, hate to say I told you so but.....!

Anyway, before I close this subject, although Christmas tinsel was also missing from a considerable number of its larger stores, the centre of London still regaled all with the breathtaking overhead street decorations that are just about unsurpassed in any other city in the world. Shame it was all restricted to about a square mile. Ah well, make the most of it. To my reckoning, their days are probably numbered as well.

And so, another 12 have snuck up on us. To all my readers, friends, dissenters and those who would like to see me in the stocks, I wish you a healthy, happy and peaceful New Year.

Keep that mail coming in. Remember the pen is a mighty therapeutic sword (feels great to get it off yer chest dunnit?). Don't forget my trio of books on Amazon. Delighted to report 560 sales to date. Must be doing something right. It's all a game folks. Hang in there.

Keep the faith

Love Leapy

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leapylee2002@gmail.com

Leapy Lee's opinions are his own and are not necessarily representative of those of the publishers, advertisers or sponsors.

TECH FOR THE TIMID

A word in your eye

Since starting to word-process Terence Kennedy no longer has terrible handwriting; now he just calls it his 'own font.'

NOVELIST Lee Child recently confessed his difficulty when writing a new book: he can't figure out Word's automatic page numbering. Can you?

Decades after the nostalgic clacking of typewriters gave way to the magic of the word-processor, at best, we sit in the driver's seat and can just about steer the thing. It's surprising how few of us can manage to even switch on the wipers, as it were.

With most people using less than 10 per cent of what these programs can do, say the experts, Lee Child's dilemma sounds familiar. (He gets around it, incidentally, by simply writing his next book over the previous one).

Microsoft certainly didn't help back in the day when it managed to infuriate pretty much everyone with Clippy the dancing paperclip to 'help' us find our way around Word. If that's not when the Oxford Dictionary admitted 'computer rage' as a real term, it should have been.

I graduated years ago from PC-Write with the screeds of keystroke

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WORD PROCESSING SYSTEM 2: £2,995
(Lease for approx. £18 per week)
Dual density SUPERBRAIN together with the dual purpose Olivetti 121 Daisywheel printer/typewriter (can be used as a separate electronic typewriter) and the WORDSTAR Word Processing Package with special function keys.

WORD PROCESSING anno 1982: €7,500 in today's money.

cheat-sheets needed to work it, to the much-lamented WordStar and then the doyen of them all, WordPerfect. Which wasn't, but it tried.

'Also-rans' apart, today we're down to just two main alternative word-processors of note against Microsoft's steamroller. WordPerfect staggers on, still cherished particularly by lawyers who love its ability to sort all their 'whereas and inasmuch as the party of the first part' convolutions

into very pretty sub-sub-sub-paragraphs. Then there's the excellent though slightly-dated and astonishingly free complete office suite, LibreOffice. Did I mention that it's

free? It's free. Amazing.

As a self-confessed computer nerd I can happily fossick among the esoteric delights of obscure software manuals, or get my smart TV to play files from my tablet which got them from my computer which got them from my router which got them from dark web programs which fell off the back of the internet.

But I still have to admit defeat with even the simplest things in Word occasionally:

Where the hell is my euros symbol?

Why must my shopping lists automatically have bullet points?

Why do I keep having to scroll all the way past Albanian, Burmese, Corsican and Dzonghka (what?) to specify English for each and every document I create? Thank heavens my native language isn't Wolof or Yoruba.

How do I start page numbering after the title pages?

How do I place photos on the page where I want them, not where Word decides they should be?

And most exasperatingly of all: exactly where has Word automatically decided to save my precious document this time? I want it back, dammit!

Should you 'RTFM'?

YOU don't have to buy a Dummies book just to put words on a screen, despite how patronisingly-amusing they can sometimes be.

There are plenty of free tutorials online not just for Word in its various three-yearly iterations, but for the whole Office shebang, including excellent guides at <https://www.gcflernfree.org/subjects/office/> or <http://www.free-training-tutorial.com/microsoft-word-online.html>.

There's a popular smartphone app called Tutorials for Word - Free, or you can download a free starter guide to use offline: <https://www.computer-pdf.com/office/word/472-tutorial-introduction-to-word-2016.html>. A Google search will reveal these and fleets of other free and paid options.

Whatever you do though, don't ever admit that you need a manual to anyone below 40, for whom the well-known acronym RTFM is a despicable admission of defeat. RTFM? Read The (er, Flaming..) Manual.

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THURSDAY	BBC one	BBC TWO	itv	CHANNEL 4	CHANNEL 5	sky sports main event
04 JANUARY	4:45pm The Farmers' Country Showdown 5:30pm Antiques Road Trip 6:15pm Pointless 7:00pm BBC News at Six 7:30pm BBC London News 8:00pm Celebrity Mastermind 8:30pm EastEnders 9:00pm DIY SOS The Big Build 10:00pm Death in Paradise	5:15pm Planet Earth II 6:15pm Flog It! 7:00pm Eggheads 7:30pm Great British Railway Journeys 8:00pm Kate Humble: Off the Beaten Track 8:30pm Christmas University Challenge 2017 9:00pm Hairy Bikers' Mediterranean Adventure	3:00pm Midsomer Murders 5:00pm Tipping Point 6:00pm The Chase 7:00pm ITV News London 7:30pm ITV News 8:00pm Emmerdale 8:30pm Tonight 9:00pm Emmerdale 9:30pm Coronation Street 10:00pm Piers Morgan's Life Stories	4:00pm The Secret Life of the Zoo 5:00pm A Place in the Sun 6:00pm Come Dine with Me 7:00pm The Simpsons 7:30pm Hollyoaks 8:00pm Channel 4 News includes sport and weather. 9:00pm Food Unwrapped 10:00pm Diet Special 10:00pm Hunted	4:20pm Deadly Stage Fright 6:00pm 5 News at 5 6:35pm Barging Loving Celebs 7:30pm 5 News Tonight 8:00pm Baby Ballroom 9:00pm Big Family Values: More Kids Than Cash 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother 11:00pm Celebrity 100% Hotter! 12:05am Celebrity Big Brother's Bit on the Side	2:00pm SKY Sports News 3:00pm SKY Sports News 4:00pm Info not available 4:30pm SKY Sports News 5:00pm SKY Sports News 6:00pm SKY Sports News 7:00pm SKY Sports News 8:00pm Info not available 8:30pm Football 11:30pm Harry Kane's 2017 12:00pm Live PGA Tour Golf
FRIDAY	4:00pm I Escaped to the Country 4:45pm The Farmers' Country Showdown 5:30pm Antiques Road Trip 6:15pm Pointless 7:00pm BBC News at Six 7:30pm BBC London News 8:00pm Celebrity Mastermind 8:30pm Match of the Day Live 11:00pm BBC News at Ten 11:25pm BBC London News	6:15pm Antiques Road Trip 7:00pm Eggheads 7:30pm Great British Railway Journeys 8:00pm Natural World 9:00pm Mastermind 9:30pm Christmas University Challenge 2017 10:00pm Rome Unpacked 11:00pm QI 11:30pm Newsnight	5:00pm Tipping Point 6:00pm The Chase 7:00pm ITV News London 7:30pm ITV News 8:00pm Emmerdale 8:30pm Coronation Street 9:00pm River Monsters 9:30pm Coronation Street 10:00pm The Big Soap Quiz: Coronation Street v Emmerdale	2:05pm Posh Pawn 3:10pm Countdown 4:00pm The Secret Life of the Zoo 5:00pm A Place in the Sun 6:00pm Come Dine with Me 7:00pm The Simpsons 7:30pm Hollyoaks 8:00pm Channel 4 News 9:00pm Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast 10:00pm The Beatles	2:35pm Family Secrets 4:20pm Deadly Paradise 6:00pm 5 News at 5 6:35pm Barging Loving Celebs 7:30pm 5 News Tonight 8:00pm Greatest Celebrity Wind-Ups Ever! 9:00pm Costa Del Celebrity 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother 11:00pm Will and Grace 11:30pm Celebrity Big Brother	4:45pm Best of Sky Cricket 5:00pm SKY Sports News 6:00pm SKY Sports News 7:00pm SKY Sports News 8:00pm Info not available 8:30pm Sky Sports Tonight 9:00pm Sky Sports Tonight 10:00pm Sky Sports Tonight 11:00pm The Debate - Live 12:00pm Cricket
SATURDAY	5:00pm Final Score 6:10pm Celebrity Mastermind 6:40pm BBC News 6:50pm BBC London News 7:00pm And They're Off... for Sport Relief 7:40pm Pointless 8:25pm Wedding Day Winners 9:30pm Casualty 10:20pm BBC News 10:35pm Hard Sun	4:00pm The Letter 5:30pm Natural World 6:15pm Trust Me, I'm a Doctor 6:45pm Tom Kerridge's Lose Weight for Good 7:15pm Hugh's Wild West 8:15pm A House Through Time 9:15pm Dad's Army 9:45pm Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs 10:15pm Feud: Bette and Joan	3:40pm The Greatest TV Moments of All Time 5:35pm ITV News London 5:45pm ITV News 5:55pm The Chase 7:00pm Celebrity Catchphrase 8:00pm Take Me Out 9:00pm The Voice UK 10:35pm ITV News 10:50pm Spectre 1:30am Jackpot247	12:45pm Sun, Sea and Selling Houses 1:45pm Darts 6:30pm A Place in the Sun 7:30pm Channel 4 News 8:00pm Spying on the Royals 9:00pm Princess Diana's The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2 10:00pm The Transporter 12:40am	4:30pm 5 News 4:35pm The Hundred-Foot Journey 5:55pm 5 News Weekend 6:00pm Playful Pups Make You Laugh Out Loud 7:00pm The Wonderful World of Puppies 8:00pm Greatest Celebrity Wind-Ups Ever! 9:00pm Blind Date 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother	9:00am Good Morning Sports Fans 9:30am Cricket 4:00pm Rugby Union 6:30pm Rugby Union 8:45pm My Icon 9:00pm Sky Sports Tonight 10:00pm Live NFL: Wild Card Round Game 2:00am Live NFL: Wild Card Round Game
SUNDAY	2:40pm Match of the Day Live 5:00pm Escape to the Country 5:30pm Songs of Praise 6:05pm Antiques Roadshow 7:05pm BBC News 7:20pm BBC London News 7:30pm Countryfile 8:30pm Still Open All Hours 9:00pm Attenborough and the Sea Dragon 10:00pm McMafia	2:40pm Money for Nothing 3:10pm Talking Pictures 3:50pm Ladies in Lavender 5:30pm Flog It! 6:15pm Ski Sunday 7:00pm The Real T rex with Chris Packham 8:00pm Robot Wars Special 9:00pm Dragons' Den 10:00pm Michael Palin: A Life on Screen	2:40pm The Big Soap Quiz: Coronation Street v Emmerdale 3:45pm Celebrity Catchphrase 4:45pm ITV News London 5:00pm ITV News 5:10pm Happy Feet Two 7:00pm Dancing on Ice 9:00pm Vera 11:00pm ITV News 11:10pm Captain Phillips	1:30pm Darts 6:30pm The Great Festive Bake Off 7:45pm Channel 4 News 8:00pm The World's Wildest Weather 9:00pm The Biggest Little Railway in the World 10:00pm SAS: Who Dares Wins 11:00pm The Sweeney 1:10am Moonrise Kingdom	1:40pm Practical Magic 3:40pm Will and Grace 4:10pm Blind Date 5:15pm The Love Punch 7:00pm The Two Ronnies 9:00pm Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights 9:55pm 5 News Weekend 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother 11:00pm Hot Pursuit 12:00am 5 News	9:30am Cricket 4:15pm Football 6:15pm My Icon 6:30pm Live NFL: Wild Card Round Game 10:00pm Live NFL: Wild Card Round Game 2:00am SKY Sports News 3:00pm SKY Sports News 4:00pm SKY Sports News 5:00pm SKY Sports News
MONDAY	4:45pm The Farmers' Country Showdown 5:30pm Antiques Road Trip 6:15pm Pointless 7:00pm BBC News at Six 7:30pm BBC London News 8:00pm The One Show 8:30pm An Inside Out Special 9:00pm EastEnders 9:30pm Panorama 10:00pm Silent Witness	4:15pm The Great British Winter 5:15pm Planet Earth II 6:15pm Flog It! 7:00pm Eggheads 7:30pm Great British Railway Journeys 8:00pm Match of the Day 8:30pm Kate Humble: Off the Beaten Track 9:00pm Only Connect 9:30pm University Challenge	4:00pm Dickinson's Real Deal 5:00pm Tipping Point 6:00pm The Chase 7:00pm ITV News London 7:30pm ITV News 8:00pm Emmerdale 8:30pm Coronation Street 9:00pm Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury 9:30pm Coronation Street 10:00pm Next of Kin	12:00pm Sun, Sea and Selling Houses 1:05pm Darts 6:00pm Come Dine with Me 7:00pm The Simpsons 7:30pm Hollyoaks 8:00pm Channel 4 News 9:00pm How to Lose Weight Well 10:00pm The Undateables 11:00pm First Dates Hotel 12:05am Derry Girls	4:15pm Killer Mom 6:00pm 5 News at 5 6:30pm Neighbours 7:00pm Home and Away 7:30pm 5 News Tonight 8:00pm Car Crash TV 9:00pm Police Interceptors 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother 11:00pm Not So Sweet Sixteen 12:05am Celebrity Big Brother's Bit on the Side	9:30am Cricket 4:45pm Best of Sky Cricket 5:00pm SKY Sports News 6:00pm SKY Sports News 7:00pm SKY Sports News 8:00pm To be Announced 8:30pm La Liga Greatest Games 8:40pm La Liga Greatest Games 8:55pm Football 11:00pm Cricket
TUESDAY	4:00pm I Escaped to the Country 4:45pm The Farmers' Country Showdown 5:30pm Antiques Road Trip 6:15pm Pointless 7:00pm BBC News at Six 7:30pm BBC London News 8:00pm The One Show 8:30pm EastEnders 9:00pm Holby City 10:00pm Silent Witness	4:15pm The Great British Winter 5:15pm Planet Earth II 6:15pm Flog It! 7:00pm Eggheads 7:30pm Great British Railway Journeys 8:00pm Rick Stein's Road to Mexico 9:00pm Inside the Factory 10:00pm House of Saud: A Family at War	3:00pm Judge Rinder 4:00pm Dickinson's Real Deal 5:00pm Tipping Point 6:00pm The Chase 7:00pm ITV News London 7:30pm ITV News 8:00pm Emmerdale 8:30pm Save Money: Good Food 9:00pm The Martin Lewis Money Show Live 10:00pm School for Stammerers	1:00pm Channel 4 News 1:05pm Darts 6:00pm Come Dine with Me 7:00pm The Simpsons 7:30pm Hollyoaks 8:00pm Channel 4 News 9:00pm The Secret Life of the Zoo 10:00pm 24 Hours in A and E 11:00pm Working Class White Men 12:00am Naked Attraction	4:15pm Eyewitness 6:00pm 5 News at 5 6:30pm Neighbours 7:00pm Home and Away 7:30pm 5 News Tonight 8:00pm Secrets of the National Trust with Alan Titchmarsh 9:00pm Greatest Diets: Fact or Fiction? 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother	9:00am Good Morning Sports Fans 9:30am Cricket 4:45pm Best of Sky Cricket 5:00pm SKY Sports News 6:00pm SKY Sports News 7:00pm SKY Sports News 8:00pm Info not available 8:30pm Live Carabao Cup 11:00pm The Debate - Live 12:00am SKY Sports News
WEDNESDAY	3:15pm Father Brown 4:00pm I Escaped to the Country 4:45pm The Farmers' Country Showdown 5:30pm Antiques Road Trip 6:15pm Pointless 7:00pm BBC News at Six 7:30pm BBC London News 8:00pm The One Show 9:00pm The Truth About Looking Good	4:15pm The Great British Winter 5:15pm Great Barrier Reef with David Attenborough 6:15pm Flog It! 7:00pm Eggheads 7:30pm Great British Railway Journeys 8:00pm Rick Stein's Road to Mexico 9:00pm Tom Kerridge's Lose Weight for Good 9:30pm Trust Me, I'm a Doctor	3:00pm Judge Rinder 4:00pm Dickinson's Real Deal 5:00pm Tipping Point 6:00pm The Chase 7:00pm ITV News London 7:25pm Party Political Broadcast by the Conservative Party 7:30pm ITV Evening News 8:00pm Emmerdale 8:30pm Coronation Street 9:00pm Britain's Brightest Family 9:30pm Coronation Street	12:00pm Sun, Sea and Selling Houses 1:00pm Channel 4 News 1:05pm Darts 6:00pm Come Dine with Me 7:00pm The Simpsons 7:30pm Hollyoaks 8:00pm Channel 4 News 9:00pm Kirstie and Phil's Love it or List it 10:00pm Kiri	3:15pm NCIS 4:15pm The Wrong Babysitter 6:00pm 5 News at 5 6:30pm Neighbours 7:00pm Home and Away 7:30pm 5 News Tonight 8:00pm Starting Up, Starting Over 9:00pm GPs: Behind Closed Doors 10:00pm Celebrity Big Brother	3:00pm SKY Sports News 4:00pm Info not available 4:30pm SKY Sports News 5:00pm SKY Sports News 6:00pm SKY Sports News 7:00pm SKY Sports News 8:00pm Info not available 8:30pm Live Carabao Cup 11:00pm The Debate - Live 12:00am SKY Sports News 1:00am SKY Sports News 2:00am SKY Sports News

The schedules for the television programme pages are provided by an external company: we regret that any changes or errors are not the responsibility of Euro Weekly News.



The Street is currently a 'must see'

CORONATION STREET (ITVI, weekdays) fans are reportedly shocked by recent events focusing on Alya. Apparently the producers suffered a backlash from vocal viewers when they introduced a pre-watershed storyline with offensive language and racial abuse, but before Christmas I asked for something chunky from soap writers and *The Street* has delivered.

Recently, Alya was in the throes of closing a business deal with Aidan Connor, played brilliantly by Shayne Ward, and was joined by new clients Dale and Justin Parker at The Bistro.

You need to suspend belief that Bistros anywhere actually look like the one used in *The Street* - what is with those lights and the freaky Father Christmas on the bar - but having got over that, Dale and Justin racially abused Alya and threw some disgusting language at her.

This made uncomfortable viewing and I was genuinely shocked by what was said, but judging by the chatter on social media, the storyline got people talking. It will be interesting to see where the writers take this next.



Photo by ITV

DO NOT MISS: Coronation Street.

Fans of the show no doubt share my own bewilderment around why residents have deserted Roy's Milky for Costa Coffee. That isn't a con leche on the sand, but the high street brand. Where have Costa opened a branch in Weatherfield?

New Year's Eve television limped us into 2018 with a predictable offering of *Graham Norton* (BBC1), *Jools Holland* (BBC2) and the ITV News.

I worry about Graham, does he ever sleep? It seems to me that the only person who gets more air time than Mr N is Paul O'Grady and Paul has to share with miscellaneous pooches on ITVI, so it's not all about him.

The BBC had Ed Sheeran on both main channels, *Top of the Pops* on BBC1 and with *Jools* on BBC2, so clearly someone somewhere in Broadcasting House is a fan. I'm not and

was pleased to have a small party to head off to in my local Plaza.

New Year's Day was altogether a better TV offering. Two shows from BBC1 stood out for me. Firstly, *Grandpa's Great Escape* starring Sir Tom Courtenay was an early evening delight. If I'm honest, I am not usually a big fan of anything David Walliams but I really enjoyed this. Jennifer Saunders was brilliantly cast as up to

no good Miss Dandy; not sure if this one has made it to Catch Up, but if you missed it, try and search it out.

Mrs Brown's Boys was a welcome burst of humour later on New Year's Day. I loved Agnes being part of the neighbourhood watch scheme. Fans of the show will be pleased a new series of *All Round to Mrs Brown's* is scheduled for later in 2018 - I don't see the attraction myself but, for me the original format of the show shouldn't have been messed around with.

I am also really enjoying the latest BBC1 drama *McMafia* (next episode Jan 7 at 10.00pm). A little like Ed Sheeran, the star of this crime, honour and family masterpiece is everywhere but unlike Ed, James Norton is brilliant. This is an eight part burst of thrilling action which sees James playing an ethical banker (don't Google that, will you) forced to enter a world he is trying to leave behind.

If you liked James in *Granchester* and what wasn't to like, you will enjoy this one too.

Happy New Year everyone.
Critique - AWL, Casares, Costa del Sol

Outsider coming along nicely

Cassandra Nash

A weekly look

- and not entirely impartial reaction - to the Spanish political scene

THE Partido Popular has a problem on two fronts. One, as the governing party in Spain it has lost credibility in Cataluña where it nominally governs after suspending the region's autonomous status.

Following the regional elections it now has only four MPs in the regional parliament, on level pegging with the anti-system CUP party.

The second problem that the PP must contend with is the Ciudadanos party, the most-voted in the Catalan elections. Ines Arrimadas, Cs leader in Cataluña, didn't put a foot wrong

there, compared with the clumsy footwork executed by the PP's Xavier Garcia Albiol.

But the problem posed by Cs is not confined to Cataluña. Rajoy and his closest advisers see the party snapping at the party's vulnerable flanks nationwide and stealing votes in the same way that Podemos has poached PSOE supporters.

And unfortunately for Rajoy, there is not even a whiff of corruption attached to Cs, unlike the PP which despite all its efforts cannot exorcise the

spectre of corruption that still haunts the party.

Agreeing to agree

WHEN Francisco Franco died in 1975, wounds from the Civil War still afflicted and influenced Spaniards who had fought or lived through the 1936-1939 conflict, regardless of which side they or their families fought on.

Lingering or inherited rancour did not prevent the apparently impossible from happening and despite hiccups - the Atocha massacre of left-wing lawyers, the attempted military coup of February 1981 - the Spanish took the road to democracy.

They reached their destination because Adolfo Suarez's government obtained consensus from communists and the right wing alike. It was feasible because everyone at the time wanted consensus without believing this demonstrated weakness.

The pro-independence parties and the national government headed by Mariano Rajoy hope for consensus in Cataluña, but neither will cede a centimetre for fear of appearing to

waver.

And unfortunately for Spain and Cataluña they are the weaker for it.

Move along, please

MADRID mayor Manuela Carmena had already earned the enmity of thousands of citizens with driving restrictions in the centre of the city.

As Christmas approached, the former Supreme Court judge and a lawyer who by chance escaped the Atocha massacre in 1977, went one step too far.

Calle Preciados and Calle Carmen were made one-way for pedestrians with others due to follow.

Anyone who has ever tried to shop

in Madrid over the holiday season would agree with the wisdom of this move. Apart from anything else it has prevented head-on collisions between people absorbed in their mobiles.

Play the game

FIFA recently warned the government not to meddle in the election process of a new president for Spain's Football Federation (RFEF).

This is temporarily headed by Juan Luis Larrea after former president Angel Maria Villar, now bailed, had to step down following corruption charges.

Failure to comply could bar Spain's national side from all international competitions including the next World Cup in Russia FIFA warned.

As though Spain didn't have enough to cope with over Cataluña, it's facing a crisis with far-reaching effects on the nation's happiness and well-being.

Tinker with laws if you have to Sr Rajoy. But leave the footie alone.

Footnote

TO put the lid on it, Barça beat Real Madrid on their home ground in the Bernabeu stadium 0-3 two days after the elections. And Rajoy a Madrid fan, too.

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Photo credit Ciudadanos

MOST VOTES:
Ines Arrimadas.

Advertising feature

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THURSDAY THOUGHTS

By Graham Braben, Albox

A messy ending!

WELL, that's it, two reports I saw recently prove beyond doubt that life as we know it is spiralling to a crashing, messy end! First of all, just at the beginning of November, someone was caught cheating at Scrabble! Really! That's tantamount to pinching someone else's Squeezy bottle so you can make your Blue Peter replica of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, without putting in the hard yards before you start.

When I read that there was this - alleged - cheating in a tournament by a well respected Scrabblist, I just had to pinch myself, what could possibly motivate the person in question do this? I'm sure that, in Scrabble circles, whatever the tournament was is very important, but to the rest of the world, it probably matters as much as the results of the forthcoming games in the Birkenhead Sunday League Division 3 fixtures.

Then there is the strange case of McGruff the Crime Dog. You may not know McGruff but it was actually an actor dressed as a private eye dog to be part of a campaign in America to increase personal safety and crime awareness.

One of the actors who played McGruff was stopped in his car by the police for a minor offence - driving whilst under the influence of Lassie perhaps? To cut a long story short, they found drugs in his car then, when they went to search his house they found more drugs and, amongst other things, a grenade launcher! The positive side though is that now this man gets to raise crime awareness in prison as he got a 16 year sentence.

Thankfully it wasn't all bad news for him, he was put on a free course of worming medication!

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Readers interested in submitting articles for this guest column should send articles of around 250 words on topics felt to be of interest to the cosmopolitan EWN readership to editorial@euroweeklynews.com.

Playing the name game: what your name says about you...

Nora Johnson

Breaking Views

Nora is the author of popular psychological suspense and crime thrillers and a freelance journalist. To comment on any of the issues raised in her column, go to www.euroweeklynews.com/3.0.15/nora-johnson

WHAT will fashionable babies be called in 2018? Will slebs carry on giving kids daft names (Apple, Moon Unit etc) or follow the example of George and Amal Clooney with more traditional ones (Ella and Alexander)?

Whilst I'm all in favour of the Clooneys' choice of names, let's hope their kids don't grow like their parents telling the rest of us what we should be doing, whilst they themselves live a life of wealth and privilege far away from the effects of the policies they espouse. You know how it usually goes: lots of trips to Africa, visiting broken-down schools and orphanages. Great photo opportunities all round!



TRADITIONAL CHOICE: George and Amal Clooney.

When I was a girl, we were given girls' names rather than the names of fruits, continents or the place where we were conceived. The world has changed and will doubtless change again before long.

Things have certainly changed in France where a baby was named 'Jihad' ('holy war'). The chief prosecutor in France (which suffered Europe's worst Islamist terror attacks in recent years) had to rule on the case after the couple's name for their

son was referred by authorities in Toulouse.

As for the UK, I've always had a weakness for great name combinations. Sue, for instance, who married a Mr Flay and Annette, a Mr Curtain (think about it!). I know someone who went to a school with a girl called Justine Bardon. So far, so good. Her mother remarried, taking the husband's name: Case. She was known by all as Justine Case.

One morning, the headmistress announced to the whole

school at assembly that Justine had won a prize. She declared, "And first prize goes to Justine ... Bardon-Case". She was never forgiven for making the kids miss the opportunity they'd all been waiting for...

Finally, there used to be a well-known printing firm in Belfast NI called 'Reid and Wright' and in Sligo a firm of solicitors called 'Argue and Phibbs.' Not to be outdone, there was also a policeman in the Bedfordshire force of the 1980's called Robin Banks...

Nora Johnson's psychological crime thrillers 'The Girl in the Red Dress,' 'No Way Back,' 'Landscape of Lies,' 'Retribution,' 'Soul Stealer,' 'The De Clerambault Code' (www.nora-johnson.net) available from Amazon in paperback/eBook (€0.99; £0.99) and iBookstore. All profits to Costa del Sol Cudeca cancer charity.

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MADDOCKS' VIEW ON LIFE



' YOU TWO DELIVER THE GIFTS - I'M OFF TO SEE HARRY AND MEGHAN! '

Trivia from around the world

*** There is a giant Coca Cola logo in Chile that can be seen from space. It was made using 70,000 glass bottles and constructed to celebrate the soft drink brand's 100th anniversary.



FIZZ FACT: The giant Coca Cola logo.

*** There are secret poems written on sidewalks in Boston, United States, that can only be seen when it rains or when liquid is poured on the lettering.

*** New Zealand was the first country in the world to allow women to vote in 1893, 25 years before the UK and 38 years before Spain.

*** In Tokyo, Japan, you can see the head of Godzilla on top of the Toho Building in the Shinjuku neighbourhood.

The head towers over the city at 40-feet tall, with glowing red eyes and claws, and roars every few minutes.

*** The world's longest fence is 5,614 km long and can be found in Australia. It was originally built to keep wild dogs away from fertile land.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE sunrise in parts of China can be as late as 10am because the country operates on a single clock despite spanning five geographical time zones.

Women's wit

Beauty is when you can appreciate yourself. When you love yourself, that's when you're most beautiful."

Zoe Kravitz, Actress



Famous quote

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."

Thomas Edison, Inventor

World of English

Polyptoton - repetition of word in same sentence with multiple inflectional endings "The signora at every grimace and at every bow smiled a little smile and bowed a little bow..."

YOUR STARS

FOR NEXT 7 DAYS

AQUARIUS (January 21 - February 19)

Eager Mars meets affluent Jupiter and enriches your financial forecast. It might show a foretaste of money to come, or on-stream benefits. If you intend to make alterations to your personal and home interests, you'll undoubtedly cope with both offbeat and upbeat activities.

PISCES (February 20 - March 20)

One thing is certain, when you come through this week's restless planetary antics, you won't be totally the same Piscean who walked in. Whether you're figuring out numbers, analysing your dreams, or getting into a playfully social mood, there'll be much to enjoy and put to the test.

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)

Education, media, creative and social connections are given star merit. The solar eclipse in your own sign bursts with vitality and success, more so for an array of bold moves, replacements and makeovers covering your personal affairs.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)

Stand by for a week of whoosh and whirl. More importantly, try to avoid getting tongue-tied or dogmatic on Tuesday and Friday. Promising potentials appear, especially if you spruce up your competitive streak.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Throughout this fortunate week, whatever else you decide, refuse to discard your hopes and wishes. As a Gemini, you like to have two strings to your bow of life, which gives you an alternative option, especially if the going gets tough.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

A vivid star pattern portends a frantic personal and social diary. Ensure that any tight planning is carefully handled, especially if you hope to fit in everything you would like to say. Don't allow Monday or Wednesday's tensions to spoil opportunities for settling something important.

LEO (July 24 - August 23)

Pave the way for any ambitious schemes you may have, rather than actually starting them. With

your ruler the Sun eclipsing your kindred fire sign, determined Aries, you are now more likely to get the support and affection you need from the powers that be or someone who thinks the world of you.

VIRGO (August 24 - September 23)

Even if the opposite to what you want happens, it could prove useful. One clue to this week's planetary crossword puzzle is 'What word could also mean success?' Check it out, and make it work for you. Never forget that important ideas and developments can stem from seemingly trivial discussions.

LIBRA (September 24 - October 23)

The solar eclipse in your opposite sign of Aries intensifies your willpower. Before you say 'go', find out where you stand. It might pay you to leave things be for a little longer to see if anything begins to change. Some of the consequences of your actions will become obvious as your charming ruler Venus begins to have an effect.

SCORPIO (October 24 - November 22)

The planets mobilise your streak of Scorpio daring, but don't stretch your limits. Your most effective weapon against personal and work-related pitfalls is your ability to be objective. Your desire to make specific situations and conversations work needs to be combined with your faith that they will work. Even if a different approach is required, try it and see.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 - December 21)

The main gist of the solar eclipse in fiery Aries and the link between plucky Mars and your ruler friendly Jupiter will stir surprises. Whether you create the right atmosphere all round depends on how you interpret other people's views. Stick to crisp, simple but sensitively tuned answers, then no one can accuse you of not trying.

CAPRICORN (December 22 - January 20)

Hard-working, enterprising and self-sacrificing are just some of the words that describe your zodiac sign. It will be these qualities that count. Friday will boost your powers of persuasion, but you won't have too much to complain about if you follow this lucky trend into next week's encouraging tide.

LOTTERY

UK NATIONAL LOTTERY	IRISH LOTTO	EURO MILLIONS		LA PRIMITIVA		EL GORDO DE LA PRIMITIVA
Saturday December 30	Saturday December 30	Tuesday December 26	Friday December 29	Thursday December 28	Saturday December 30	Sunday December 31
(33) (37)	(2) (8)	(4) (17)	(4) (8)	(3) (5)	(8) (9)	(10) (12)
(42) (47)	(14) (18)	(30) (43)	(22) (23)	(21) (26)	(11) (21)	(26) (31)
(55) (58)	(39) (44)	(44)	(48)	(28) (34)	(42) (44)	(52)
BONUS BALL	BONUS BALL	LUCKY STARS	LUCKY STARS	REINTEGRO	REINTEGRO	REINTEGRO
(34)	(16)	(2) (10)	(1) (12)	(42) (2)	(22) (8)	(2)
		EL MILLON: VLD65841		JOKER: 347 442	JOKER: 2 084 066	

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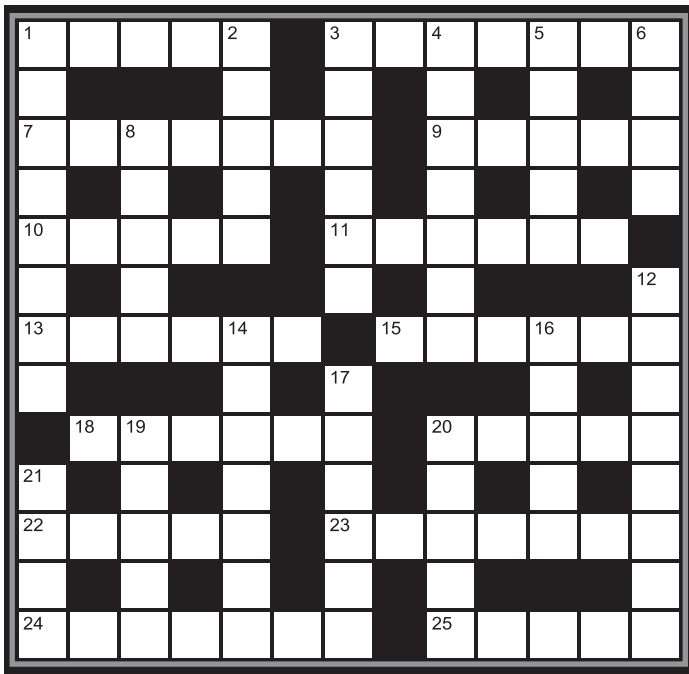
Cryptic

Across

- 1 It's dead easy when commander-in-chief gets to hospital (5)
- 3 Use Band-Aids without a split (7)
- 7 Retsina cocktail is not so nice (7)
- 9 Flies the deer back north in (5)
- 10 Order some sudden action (5)
- 11 He's after lamplblack to feel better (6)
- 13 Notice cut in playground equipment (6)
- 15 English flower festival (6)
- 18 Prisoners of a cleric and leading light (6)
- 20 Once a sort of river craft (5)
- 22 As a refugee you are forbidden to enter the city area (5)
- 23 Liberal in vicious scrap (7)
- 24 The varied uses of a classical hero (7)
- 25 Inspect German car factory's centre (5)

Down

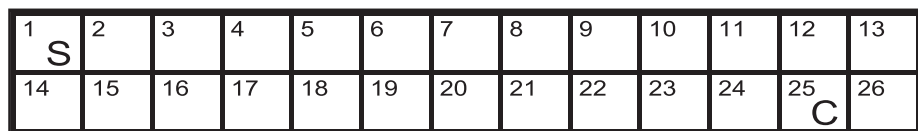
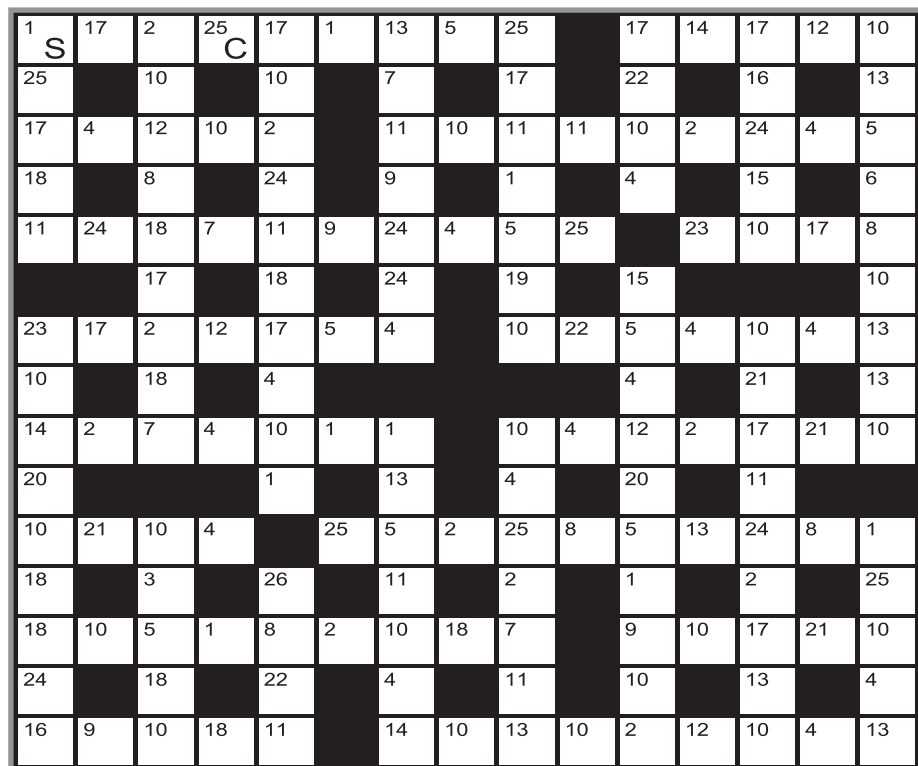
- 1 Reduce cones, end problem (8)
- 2 Lift one in many (5)
- 3 Engineers in some French ship providing force (6)
- 4 Leo, perhaps, or a foreign lady (7)
- 5 Part of Ottawa's harbour is flooded (5)
- 6 Be in a hurry to use a punctuation mark (4)



- 8 A quiet street to cut off (5)
- 12 Minimal French cheese celebration? (8)
- 14 Musical direction by an Italian poet (7)
- 16 Tango danced in Friendly Islands (5)
- 17 Against poetry on the radio (6)
- 19 Mabel arranged a leisurely walk (5)
- 20 A girl from the Channel Islands taking everything back (5)
- 21 Only fair (4)

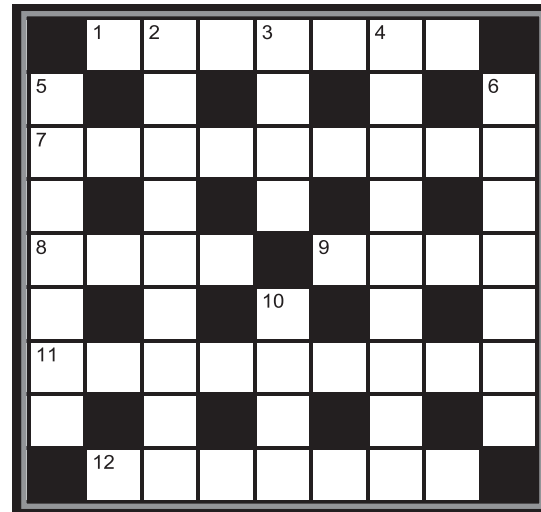
Code Breaker

Each number in the Code Breaker grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In this week's puzzle, 1 represents S and 25 represents C, so fill in S every time the figure 1 appears and C every time the figure 25 appears. Now, using your knowledge of the English language, work out which letters should go in the missing squares. As you discover the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and the control grid.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION FACING PAGE

Quick



Across

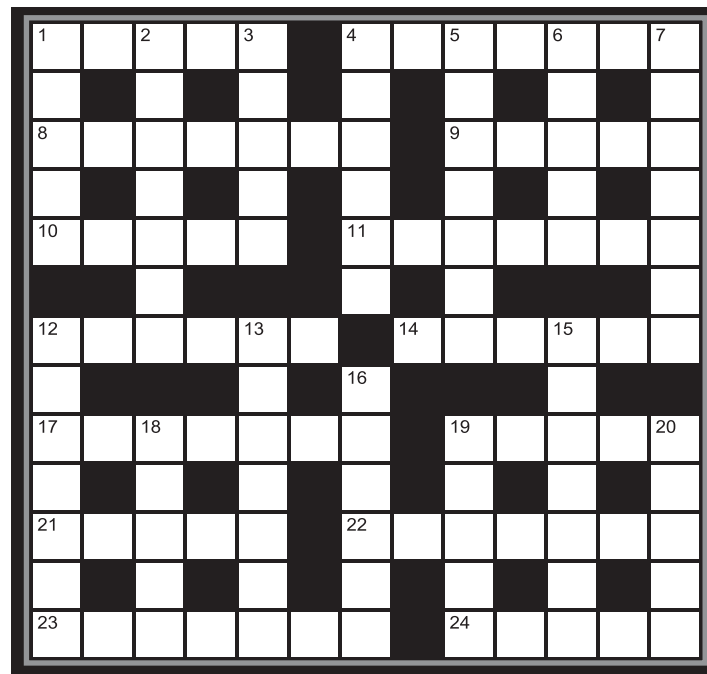
- 1 Brings in from abroad (7)
- 7 Having full belief (9)
- 8 Relating to the mouth (4)
- 9 Can do (4)
- 11 Light silvery-grey metal (9)
- 12 Communication (7)

Down

- 2 Being on a very small scale (9)
- 3 Leave out (4)
- 4 Quivering (9)
- 5 Entertainer who performs spectacular gymnastic feats (7)
- 6 Small, narrow rivers (7)
- 10 Triumphs (4)

English - Spanish

The clues are mixed, some clues are in Spanish and some are in English.



Across

- 1 Raw (uncooked) (5)
- 4 Spoon (7)
- 8 Biscuit (7)
- 9 Nidos (5)
- 10 Gust of wind (5)
- 11 Dummy (for baby) (7)
- 12 Día libre (3,3)
- 14 Ruidos (6)
- 17 Path (7)
- 19 To put (5)
- 21 Hedgehog (5)

- 22 Oraciones (7)
- 23 Uña de pie (7)
- 24 Temprano (5)

Down

- 1 Puro (5)
- 2 Desafortunado (7)
- 3 Sheep (5)
- 4 Puddle (6)
- 5 Kangaroo (7)
- 6 Nave (de iglesia) (5)
- 7 Respuestas (a

- preguntas, en examen, test) (7)
- 12 Postre (7)
- 13 Mop (for floor) (7)
- 15 To smile (7)
- 16 Evangelio (6)
- 18 Playing card (5)
- 19 Paz (tranquilidad, no guerra) (5)
- 20 Oxidado (5)

CROSSWORD PAGE

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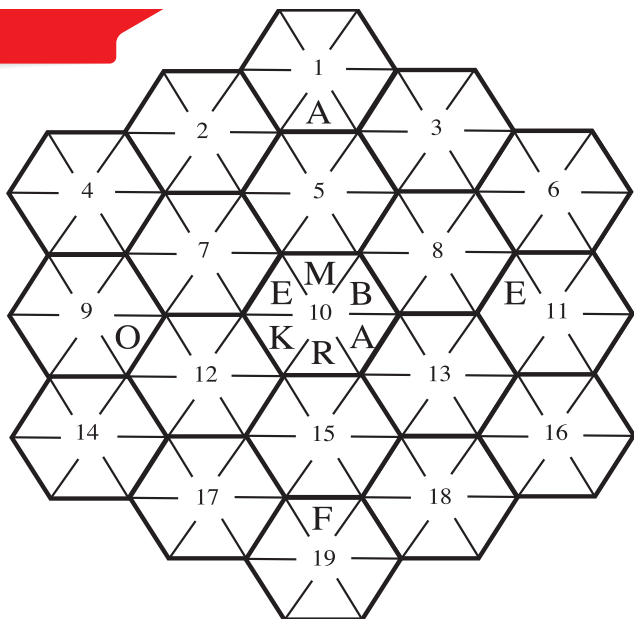
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Hexagram

- BARBER
- BEATEN
- BEHOLD
- BONNET
- DREAMT
- EMBARK (10)
- EYELET
- FOURTH
- INFECT
- LAMBDA
- PONCHO
- SELVES
- SHELVE
- SWEATY
- TELLER
- VERBAL
- VOTARY
- WORKUP
- WORSEN



The purpose of the Hexagram puzzle is to place the 19 six-letter words into the 19 cells. The letters at the edges of interlocking cells **MUST BE THE SAME**. The letters in the words must be written **CLOCKWISE**. The word in cell 10 (**EMBARK**) and one letter in four other cells are given as clues.

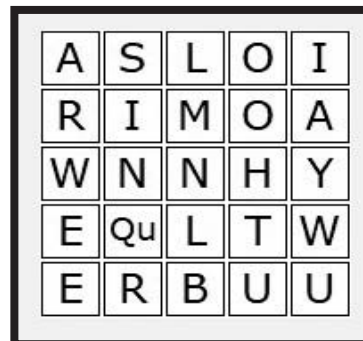
LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

- 1 Knives 2 Aching 3 Awaken 4 Shanty
- 5 Nation 6 Facial 7 Govern 8 Twinge
- 9 Result 10 Viewer 11 Paunch
- 12 Cheery 13 Guffaw 14 Bushel
- 15 Earthy 16 Facade 17 Choice
- 18 Curfew 19 Rotund

Boggled

How many English words can you find in the Boggled grid, according to the following rules?

- The letters must be adjoining in a 'chain'. They can be adjacent horizontally, vertically or diagonally.
- Words must contain at least four letters and may include singular and plural or other derived forms.
- No letter may be used more than once within a single word, unless it appears twice.
- No vulgarities or proper nouns are permitted.



TARGET:

- Average: 18
- Good: 26
- Very good: 37
- Excellent: 47

SCORING:

- 4 letters: 1 point
- 5 letters: 2 points
- 6 letters: 3 points
- 7 letters: 5 points
- 8 or more letters: 11 points

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

sorer sorel songs droll drone dorks doric donee rodeo redone reeds order oreos lords kerner kernel kerns kefir kroner kroner erode eerie nerds needs jerks jello cered cello ironed irons ferns freer fired firer groks green greens grief snore snored snorer sneer snell scene

Nonagram

How many English words of four letters or more can you make from the nine letters in our Nonagram puzzle? Each letter may be used only once (unless the letter appears twice). Each word **MUST CONTAIN THE CENTRE LETTER** (in this case H) and there must be **AT LEAST ONE NINE LETTER WORD**. Plurals, vulgarities or proper nouns are not allowed.



TARGET:

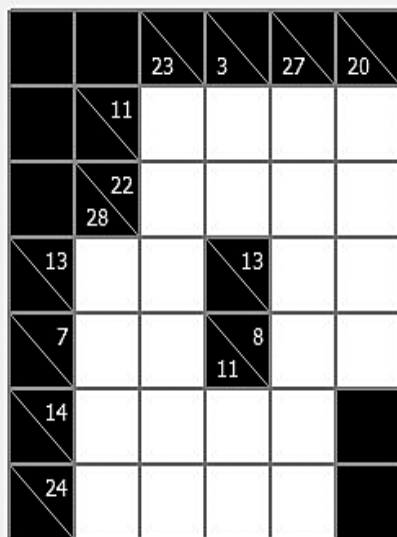
- Average: 17
- Good: 23
- Very good: 34
- Excellent: 44

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

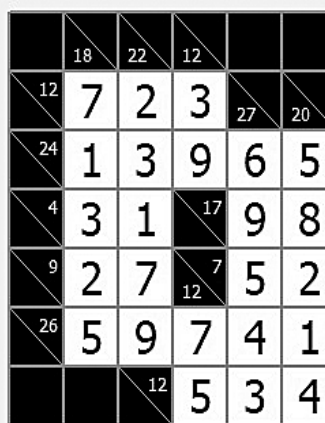
file filo fire fled flew floe flow foil fold folk ford fore fork fowl frow kerf lief life rife wife wolf field filed filer fiord fired flier fried kefir lifer rifle florid flowed flower foiled folder forked fowled fowler refold rifled wolfed lifework **FIELDWORK**

Kakuro

Fill all the empty squares using the numbers 1 to 9, so that the sum of each horizontal block equals the 'clue' on its left, and the sum of each vertical block equals the clue on its top. No number may be used in the same block more than once.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

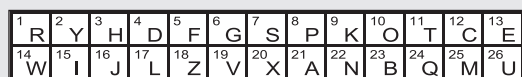


LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

QUICK

- Across:** 1 Hopes, 4 Son, 6 Let, 7 Piano, 8 Apt, 9 Year, 11 Yell, 14 Ant, 15 Robin, 17 Era, 18 Ear, 19 Bonus.
- Down:** 1 Happy, 2 Pea, 3 Slow, 4 Stare, 5 Net, 10 After, 12 Lends, 13 Grab, 14 Ate, 16 Ban.

CODE BREAKER



CRYPTIC

- Across:** 1 Ladders, 5 Slice, 8 Abode, 9 Actress, 10 Acetate, 11 Scale, 12 Easier, 14 Septic, 18 Loads, 20 Repaper, 22 Contact, 23 Evade, 24 Merit, 25 Restore.
- Down:** 1 Leakage, 2 Drone, 3 Elevate, 4 Scales, 5 Sates, 6 Inexact, 7 Ensur, 13 Spanner, 15 Express, 16 Cortège, 17 Crater, 18 Locum, 19 Scant, 21 Plato.

ENGLISH-SPANISH

- Across:** 1 Saleros, 5 Menos, 8 Torre, 9 Anciano, 10 Iron, 11 Cojinete, 13 Grillo, 15 Waiter, 18 Cucumber, 19 Plug, 22 Alumnos, 23 Nogal, 24 Ovens, 25 Suegras.
- Down:** 1 Sitting, 2 Largo, 3 Reed, 4 Season, 5 Mochilas, 6 Nearest, 7 Smoke, 12 Alemanes, 14 Include, 16 Regalos, 17 Feasts, 18 Clavo, 20 Lugar, 21 Knee.

App of the week



Rolly Vortex

In this game, players must roll quickly, be alert and manage their way through obstacles to score the highest result possible.

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BOOKS



Beware of the quiet ones

TWELVE YEARS after they took part in their first bank heist, Carl Fisher celebrates his 40th birthday, but just hours later his body is discovered in his hot tub with a single gunshot to his head in what is believed to be an execution style killing.

Talented detective, Grace Dalton, is called to find the killer but struggles to mentor her new partner, rogue DS Ryan Nash.

With the suspect list ever-growing and prime suspect murdered, Dalton soon finds herself plunged into a maze which leads her to the highly controversial and dangerous Ringfield Estate.

Ruled by a vicious gang who call themselves 'The Ringfield Crew,' Dalton must face media scrutiny and public criticism in order to pursue her line of enquiry.

With her career in jeopardy, and leads turning into dead ends, she juggles increasing pressure from her superiors with her own personal demons, but will her intuition guide her to the killer?

books@euroweeklynews.com

Mallorca

weather

TODAY



TOMORROW



SATURDAY



Malaga Today: Max 22, Min 11-S Fri - 18 7 - Sh Sat - 13 5 - C Sun - 12 5 - C Mon - 14 5 - S Tues - 15 9 - S Wed - 15 8 - C	Almeria Today: Max 20, Min 10-S Fri - 20 8 - S Sat - 14 6 - C Sun - 12 6 - C Mon - 14 7 - S Tues - 14 9 - S Wed - 15 8 - S	Bilbao Today: Max 19, Min 12-Cl Fri - 13 6 - Sh Sat - 9 5 - Sh Sun - 8 4 - Sh Mon - 8 2 - Sh Tues - 10 4 - Sh Wed - 11 5 - C	Madrid Today: Max 14, Min 7-C Fri - 10 1 - Sh Sat - 8 0 - Sh Sun - 8 -1 - C Mon - 8 -3 - C Tues - 8 0 - C Wed - 9 1 - C
Alicante Today: Max 23, Min 11-S Fri - 20 9 - S Sat - 15 6 - Sh Sun - 14 6 - Sh Mon - 15 7 - C Tues - 15 8 - Cl Wed - 16 8 - Cl	Benidorm Today: Max 24, Min 8-S Fri - 20 9 - S Sat - 15 6 - Sh Sun - 14 6 - Sh Mon - 14 8 - C Tues - 15 7 - Cl Wed - 16 8 - C	Mallorca Today: Max 20, Min 8-S Fri - 17 9 - S Sat - 15 7 - Sh Sun - 14 6 - Sh Mon - 14 7 - Sh Tues - 14 7 - Sh Wed - 14 8 - C	Barcelona Today: Max 20, Min 10-S Fri - 17 8 - S Sat - 13 5 - Sh Sun - 12 5 - Sh Mon - 13 4 - Sh Tues - 12 4 - C Wed - 13 4 - S

S: Sun ☀ Cl: Clear ☁ C: Cloudy ☁ Sh: Showers ☁ Th: Thunder ⚡ Sn: Snow ❄

Euro Weekly News strives for accuracy, but cannot be held responsible for any errors in published forecasts

BIRTHDAYS

- **Labrinth, Music Producer, January 4, 29**
Hip-hop producer Labrinth shot to fame after co-writing and producing Tinie Tempah's hit single Pass Out in 2010 and has gone on to have hits including Earthquake, Beneath Your Beautiful and Jealous.
- **Marilyn Manson, Rock Singer, January 5, 49**
Born Brian Hugh Warner, the shock rocker first made it big with his cover of Sweet Dreams are Made of These, and is



Nicolas Cage.

known for his disturbing, horror-inspired fashion sense.

- **Eddie Redmayne, Actor, January 6, 36**
The British actor won an Academy Award for his portrayal of Stephen Hawking in the 2014 film The Theory of Everything and has also starred in critically acclaimed films My Week with Marilyn, Les Misérables and Harry Potter spin-off Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.
- **Nicolas Cage, Actor, January 7, 54**
Cage is known for starring in a number of

Hollywood movies and won the academy Award for Best actor in 1995 for his role in Leaving Las Vegas, going on to also star in Gone in 60 seconds, National Treasure and Kick-Ass.

- **Stephen Hawking, Physicist, January 8, 76**
Legendary physicist who became renowned for creating a cosmology that relied on the unification of the theory of reality and quantum mechanics. His book, A Brief History of Time stayed on the Sunday Times' list of best-sellers for a record 237 weeks.

Sierra Nevada SNOW REPORT



Snow is forecast to fall tomorrow (Friday) evening and throughout the weekend as temperatures plummet below zero. Monday will see lows down to -14 degrees, with snowfall and sub-zero temperatures expected to persist over the remainder of the week.

1066 - Harold II crowned King of England

Following the death of Edward the Confessor, Harold Godwinson, head of the most powerful noble family in England, is crowned King Harold II.

1768 - First modern circus staged
Englishman Philip Astley stages the first modern circus in London, including acts such as trick riders, acrobats, clowns and trained animals.

1789 - First US presidential election

America's first presidential election is held with voters casting ballots to choose state electors. Only white men who owned property were allowed to vote.

1838 - Morse demonstrates the telegraph

Samuel Morse's telegraph system is demonstrated for the first time at the Speedwell Iron Works in Morristown, New Jersey.

1933 - Golden Gate Bridge is born

Construction begins on the Golden Gate Bridge as workers begin excavating 3.25 million cubic feet of dirt for huge anchorages.

1972 - Fire breaks out on Queen Elizabeth

The ship, Seawise University, formerly known as the RMS Queen Elizabeth, sinks in Hong Kong Harbour despite a huge firefighting effort over two days.

1996 - GM announce electric car

At the 1996 Greater Los Angeles Auto Show, General Motors announces it will build an electric car, dubbed the EV1.

1999 - The Euro debuts

For the first time since Charlemagne's reign in the ninth century, Europe is united by a common currency when the euro debuts as a financial unit. Eleven EU nations launch the currency.

This week in history

Sudoku

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3X3 box contains the digits 1-9. There's no maths involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Word Ladder

HAIR

Move from the start word (**HAIR**) to the end word (**FILM**) in the same number of steps as there are rungs on the Word Ladder. You must only change one letter at a time.

FILM

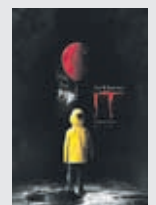
WILM
FILL
HILL
HALL
HAIL
HAIR
Solution

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

6	5	7	8	2	4	3	1	9
8	3	1	7	5	9	4	2	6
9	2	4	6	3	1	7	5	8
4	8	5	2	7	3	9	6	1
1	6	9	4	8	5	2	7	3
3	7	2	1	9	6	5	8	4
2	4	3	5	6	8	1	9	7
7	1	8	9	4	2	6	3	5
5	9	6	3	1	7	8	4	2

	3							5
6		9			1			7
			5	9				1
				1				7
	4		3			5		2
			4				8	1
	2							
	1		6	3	8			
3				5	9			

DVD
Stay away from the drains



A SMALL group of neighbourhood children are terrorised by a demonic clown, Pennywise.

Pennywise, who lives in the underground sewer system, is able to see the fears of the children and turns their ultimate nightmares into a reality.

In order to fight the clown the group band together to figure out just who Pennywise is, why he has invaded their small town and where he will strike next.

When one of the group's families is torn apart by the clown, they must fight back and battle their deepest fears.

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Big thanks to Good Samaritans

SIR,

I would like to say a big THANK YOU to a very kindly couple who came to our help at Velez-Malaga Supermarket on Saturday December 23.

My wife and I were on our way to Mijas Costa for Christmas when we decided to stop at this supermarket for some shopping. My wife managed to turn over her mobile scooter and was badly injured.

This very nice couple came to our rescue and were a big help, and with their help and the help of the security forces there we managed to get her to hospital.

Unfortunately with all that was going on we did not get the names of this couple, so I am hoping that they read your wonderful paper as we very much appreciated their help.

*Mr and Mrs Frost,
location undisclosed*

Gender issue

LEAPY LEE'S latest comment brings me to write to a newspaper for the first time in my life.

He says of Joshua Sutcliffe that he is

Hunters not a wildlife threat

YOUR recent feature clearly heads with 'The two sides of the Spanish hunting story.'

I have hunted in many countries in the course of my career as a field exploration geologist, often being required to feed many workers, necessitating the taking of several large antelope a week while in Central and East Africa.

Modern day ethical hunting is a field sport meriting praise. Those participating become truly conversant with ecology and all of nature. They know that in order to have game to hunt, the most important aspect is that natural habitat must be preserved and all wildlife respected. That way there is sustainable use of land and habitat so that there will



| SUSTAINABLE AND ETHICAL?: Hunting is a controversial subject.

be game to hunt in future years.

Greens and animal rightists are vociferous against hunting, yet they contribute little in terms of actual payment towards habitat preservation. The more habitat lost to agriculture and housing development the less wildlife there will be. Only when game becomes a contributor

to economics is its existence guaranteed. In Africa, indeed in most countries nowadays where there are wildlife reservations, most game reserves receive more funding from highly controlled 'unpopular' hunting, often as controlled culling, than from other visitors and tourists' fees.

Hector Kleinot, Estepona

an unfortunate and caring teacher who faces suspension because he said "well done girls" to a group which included a transgender boy. In fact, he persistently and deliberately misgendered the child and the parents only became involved as a result of his persecution.

Leapy then goes on to say: "Chromosomes identify a person's gender at birth OK? Problem solved?"

Well, problem not solved for the millions of transgendered people in the world for whom life is made so miserable that 42 per cent of them commit suicide!

Transgender people have always existed. This is not a new thing. Excellent treatments are now available, but transitioning is still a long, hard road.

All the rest of us need to do is be kind and understanding and accept diversity. Problem solved!

Angela, Mijas Costa, Malaga

Dear Angela,

I HAVE nothing whatsoever against transgender or any other sexual preference of our fellow human beings. You have totally missed the point of my article. I was simply pointing out the absurdity and confusion which resulted in this unfortunate teacher in danger of losing his job for addressing a group of girls as 'girls.'

What was he supposed to say? "Well done girls and er.....?" That attitude to my mind reeks of discrimination. Those who are indecisive should be given every sympathy and encouragement to follow whatever course their hearts and minds tell them, but for sheer convenience and uncomplicated order those born with male genitalia should to my mind be referred to as boys and those with the female equivalent girls. Hope this clears up any misunderstanding and thanking you for your interest. I leave you with the kindest of regards.

Lee (Leapy) Graham

What a waste

THERE is supposed to be a national water shortage, especially in Murcia and Almeria provinces. This morning, in Mojacar, I saw guys from Ferroviario (paid by our rates) watering the cycle track and the cactuses on the beach!!!!

Roger Page, Mojacar

Sunny smiles

HAVING spent part of New Year's Day in glorious sunshine on the beach I can only say that while climate change is of course a terrible thing, sometimes I don't mind it at all!

*Margaret Freeman,
Alhaurin de la Torre*

HAVE YOUR SAY

All letters by email or post should carry the writer's address, NIE and contact number though only the name and town will be published.

Readers who have missed correspondence can see all letters - which can be edited before publication - posted on: www.euroweeklynews.com.

Toll road charges go up in Andalucia

I avoid them now and will definitely avoid in the future. Counter productive. If they lowered the toll then more people would use them.
Stella Scott

Can't ever recall paying a toll and have no intention of ever doing so. I will stop driving this November on my 80th, so can't see that that is going to be difficult.
Ted Milsom

What idiots are responsible for making these stupid decisions?
Andy Funnell

Boy, aged three, savaged in dog attack

So sorry for the boy, bless him but it is the parents that are to blame when it comes to being in a situation with dogs and even more so with other people's. It is NOT the dogs that are at fault and society keeps discriminating between what is a good breed and bad breed dog! There is no such thing, just bad owners that take these animals on with zero knowledge on animals. People have so much to answer for.
Deb Morgan

What where the parents and dog owners think-

Comments from EWN online

ing??? My god! Three-year-old toddler playing with a friend's dogs??? You just don't allow it!! It's common sense! Hope the poor child is ok.
Julie Jones Peel

Road traffic deaths up in Spain

Too many pedestrians wander across the roads wherever they fancy, no zebra, no traffic lights. They also expect drivers to stop, and give them a dirty look if they don't. So many step on to zebra crossings without looking first, and assume cars will stop. People seem to go about in a trance these days and it makes driving quite worrisome.
Jenny Dodd

So so many drive too close, and seem to lack the ability of complete over all awareness, cou-

pled with the lack of forward planning and use of indicators.
David Starkey

Let me tell you why, Every day I'm out in my van I see, bus drivers, van drivers, HGV drivers, coach drivers, Kids on motos, even people sitting up my a**e doing 120 on the motorway, all on their mobile phones and the police do nothing about it. Start banning these people instead of giving them stupid fines.
Matt Coy

Legendary Costa del Sol entertainer dies

Shocked to hear this... was honoured to have him perform one of his last shows before he retired. He was a pleasure to work with.. a true genuine gentleman. RIP BUNNY X
Andrea Galacher

So sad, was only talking to him the other week and wished him a Happy Christmas!! Many a good night I had in his bar over the years!! May he Rest In Peace x
Berni Hickey

What a shame. He was a Genuine Legend. R. I. P.
Tomas Kirken

Burn fat with a winter workout

FOR those of us not blessed with the metabolism of Kate Moss, the effort to lose the pounds accrued over Christmas can seem like a Herculean task.

But if you are embarking on a fitness regime this January, there may be a way to boost the effectiveness of your workout without breaking any more sweat.

According to one personal trainer, working out in the cold really does help you burn more fat by taking advantage of your body's natural shivers.

Max Zeumer from the 13th Street New York Health and Racquet Club has told one publication his tips for burning off calories using the winter's naturally cooler temperatures without having to put any extra effort in.

He explained: "Your body will work really hard to stay warm and burn a ton of calories to do it, but that really only starts when you're shivering."

The trainer said the good news is the workout does not have to be too strenuous, explaining: "If you want to burn a couple of extra calories, just walk outside. It sounds funny, but it will add up."

There are added health benefits too, "indoors, you're not exposed to sunlight, which means you're not getting enough vitamin D. When you're not getting enough vitamin D, your simple carb



cravings are increased," explains Zeumer.

He concludes, "outside, you get vitamin D, which you really need since you have a

deficit in the winter. It will reduce those sweet cravings, plus improve your serotonin, which both makes you happier and will boost your immunity."

OUTDOOR EXERCISE:
Recommended in winter.

Scarlet fever on the rise

IT might sound like a disease from a bygone era, but cases of scarlet fever increased by 55 per cent in the UK last week.

In total, 544 people were struck down with the illness in just one week, bringing the year's figure to 17,350 cases, the highest it has been since 1967.

The infection - which mainly affects children under 10 - can cause a fever, rash and sore throat, with severe cases sometimes leading to pneumonia. Although the illness is more commonplace in winter and spring months, experts are also blaming declining living standards for the rise in cases.

In the late 19th century and early 20th century the in-

fection was widespread, mainly due to poor hygiene, and was deadly for large numbers of children.

The illness is on the rise again though, with cases rising dramatically since 2014, although experts are unable to explain why.

Since July this year 5,743 cases have been reported, a sharp rise from the 4,292 in the same period in 2016.

Symptoms of the illness include a blotchy rash which is pink or red in colour and often located on the chest or abdomen, followed by a sore throat, fever and headache within a week.

Those infected should seek medical treatment which may include antibiotics and rest.

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Five courses or nothing!

Mike Senker

In my opinion

Views of a Grumpy Old Man



WELL that's that lot over for another year. Christmas and New Year's Eve done. I went to the UK for Christmas. Was it uneventful? What do you think? The BA flight out was absolutely fine. They put a big label on my wheelchair saying, 'return to aircraft door on arrival.' Did they? Of course not and it finished up going to the baggage reclaim. I had a bit of a moan but there's no point. It's nothing to do with BA - it's the ground staff and they do as they wish.

We then went to the 4-star quaint pub/hotel I had booked. Well, the only four stars I saw were through the hole in the roof! I walked in the room and knew instantly we had a problem. The girl that was checking us in didn't know anything about the rooms as I'd asked for a room with disabled access.

She was just the barmaid and was helping out as the manageress wasn't there. So in steps my daughter, who has become very protective of her 'rents in recent years, and demands to see the manageress. When the boss finally appears Dr S explains the room is totally unsuitable for a disabled person and, on top

of that, the room is really shabby. The boss, who was nice and polite, agreed and said, 'I suggest you find somewhere else to stay!'

So there we were - Christmas Eve and there's no room at the inn! Sound like a familiar story? There was nothing else to do but go last-minute shopping for food, pressies and now a hotel room.

As luck would have it, the extraordinarily expensive, beautiful hotel just down the road we had originally discounted due to the horrendous price, had had a cancellation. So our budget trip turned into an expensive but luxurious outing and a good time was had by all.

One thing I did find strange was that on Christmas Eve the only food choice at this fabulous hotel was either a £75 per head five-course dinner or nothing! No room service - literally nothing - which I thought was a bit out of order. Anyway I'm not one to complain, as you know, plus it was the season of goodwill or maybe it was Mrs S dragging me out of reception that stopped me screaming the place down. How can anyone think a five-course dinner or nothing is acceptable?

So here we are in 2018. My New Year resolution suggested by Mrs S is to moan less. Yeah right 'o let's see how we go with that one!

columnists@euroweeklynews.com

Email: *mikesenker@gmail.com*.

LEGALLY SPEAKING

Time to check your lights again

WE answer some common driving questions, kindly provided by members of the Guardia Civil based in Torreveija, Costa Blanca, who set up the N332 website and Facebook page to help break down barriers.



ESSENTIAL: Working lights.

ALTHOUGH we are getting closer to the time when the evenings start to get lighter, the lights on our vehicles have possibly been in use more than ever, and so it's a good time to check that all of the lights on our vehicles are fully working.

Until quite recently, all vehicles had to carry a spare set of bulbs, this is no longer the case. The Spanish government recognised that changing a bulb is no longer a simple task, and in many cases can only be done by qualified mechanics, and so carrying a spare set was pointless, if the ability to change the bulbs had been removed.

However, it is still important to check all of the lights on a regular basis, even those not used too often, such as fog lights.

It is better to have an assistant to help you do this so that one of you can be in the car operating the switches, the other on the outside monitoring the results.

Remember, check every light, headlights (including full beam), indicators and hazard lights (front and back), rear lights and brake lights, reversing and fog lights, and the lights that illuminate the number plate at the rear.

If your vehicle is a modern one you might also have Daytime Running Lights installed. Although these lights are often more reliable than traditional lights, on account of them being LEDs, they should also be checked on a regular basis.

If you don't have anybody to help you can still carry out the checks by using reflective surfaces such as shop windows or other parked vehicles. Make sure you do this in an isolated location though as you don't want to confuse other motorists.

If any of the lights have failed make sure you get them replaced immediately as it is an offence to drive with defective lights.

For more news and articles visit www.n332.es or search N332 on Facebook.

Can their plan work?

Q. My partner and I reside in Mallorca. We are both residents. I started a Death Benefit Policy with her as beneficiary some years ago. My teenage daughters live in South Africa with their mother. They will move to Europe and study at universities when they finish school. They both have Netherlands passports as I have. My partner has a German passport. The insurance policy will pay out a substantial amount on my death. What is your opinion of the following plan?

My partner could purchase two apartments in the names of my daughters to avoid inheritance tax on them when she herself dies. She would establish an usufruct enabling her to rent out the flats until she dies. After that my daughters will be in full possession of them. Can we do this?

H L (Balears)

A. Yes, you can do it. It might be a good idea for you and your partner to register in Mallorca as a 'pareja de hecho,' which is a

David Searl
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in Spain



common-law couple and gives you many husband and wife benefits, such as lower inheritance tax. You need a good lawyer to see you through this.

Send your questions for David Searl through lawyers Ubeda-Retana & Associates in Fuengirola at Ask@lawtaxpain.com, or call 952 667 090.



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Mickey and Friends in Alcudia

THE wonderful world of Walt Disney visits the Auditorium in Alcudia for one evening on Saturday January 13.

Youngsters will adore the colourful fun of Mickey In Search Of Lost Magic a travelling children's musical which visits the wonderful world of imagination and fairy tales as well as some of the most popular Disney cartoons.

In this magical children's musical, the audience will help Mickey, Minnie, Donald and Goofy to save the Kingdom of Fantasy before Maleficent and other Disney villains can seize power. The heroes of the piece will travel in search of the magic lost through a series of the famous different worlds of Aladdin, Peter Pan, Beauty and the Beast, Frozen and The Little Mermaid.

This is a musical journey for the whole family that will delight parents and children alike as no matter how old we are, the inner child always wants to emerge and enjoy the realm of fantasy.

With an early starting time of 6pm to take into account the little ones, tickets are just €10 in advance per person (including children over the age of three) or €12 on the night and are available direct from the Auditorium.

Symphonic Queen on tour

EACH year sees different rock stars fall by the wayside due to their extravagant lifestyles or simply because old age catches up with them.

It is now no longer possible to see so many famous bands from the 1970s but many live on through high quality tributes and one of those will be playing in Mallorca this year.

The Symphonic Queen show has been seen by nearly 500,000 people and its seventh tour will see the musical extravaganza arrive at the Palma

Auditorium on Saturday January 27 with tickets costing €40 and €45 for the spectacular performance starting at 9.30pm.

For those who love the music of one of the greatest bands of all time, this will be the only show presented by the One World Symphonic Orchestra in Mallorca during this tour and tickets may be purchased online.

The orchestra and a huge cast of rock musicians and singers from a range of Scandinavian and other European countries

will once again present this highly praised show which covers the entire catalogue of Queen in a way which is quite unique.

This promises to be an exceptional show which combines the talents of professional rock musicians and a symphony orchestra in a two hour show.

Visit <https://www.queen-symphonicrhapsody.com> to find out more about the show and to view videos of past performances.



TRIBUTE: A killer Queen performance. |

A NATIONWIDE tour by the Film Symphony Orchestra playing music from Star Wars is coming to an end soon after two performances in Palma next Saturday and Sunday.

This tour has proven to be very popular with some locations being completely sold out so those wishing to see either performance at the Teatro Trui in Palma need to consider checking availability as soon as possible.

Saturday's performance starts

May the force of the orchestra be with you

at 7.30pm whilst Sunday's is slightly earlier at 7pm with tickets for both evenings costing from €35 to €55 and reservations may be made online at <http://www.filmsymphony.es>.

This tour is entitled The Music of the Galaxies and the full orchestra under the direction of Constantino Martinez-Orts will only play music from the Star Wars saga, specifically Star



STAR WARS: The full orchestra performing on stage.

Wars IV: A New Hope, The Empire Strikes Back, The Return of the Jedi, Phantom Menace, Attack of the Clones and The Force Awakens.

The tour commenced in 2017 in honour of the composer of the music for the films, John Williams who was 85 on February 8 last year and finishes with a last performance in Tenerife at the end of January.

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A happy wine



WHILE Lambrusco is not among Italy's best wines it is one of the leaders in export sales and can be found in wine shops and supermarkets throughout Spain.

Lambrusco is the name of an Italian red grape and the wine from Emilia Romagna and Lombardy has a history dating to Etruscan's times.

Most Lambrusco is made from more than one variety and often blended to a maximum 15 per cent with other grapes, including Ancellotta, Marzemino, Malbo Gentile and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Mostly frizzante (slightly sparkling), Lambrusco can be secco (dry), amabile (semi-sweet) and dolce (sweet).

It is typically made using the Charmat process with a second fermentation conducted in a pressurised tank. While the grape is not particularly sweet, most commercial Lambrusco is sweetened with the addition of grape must.

Lambrusco denominations are:

LAMBRUSCO: An alternative to Spanish wine.

Grasparossa di Castelvetro: From the smallest producing region, typically dry, full bodied, tannic with a deep purplish-red colour.

Mantovano: The only Lambrusco from Lombardy, either dry or semi-dry.

Reggiano: The most exported and made from up to four types of Lambrusco grapes: Maestri, Marani, Montericco, and Salamino with up to 15 per cent Ancellotta.

BACCHUS CELLAR

by Lorenzo Barbareschi



Salamino di Santa Croce: Consists of at least 90 per cent of Salamino grapes; frizzante, light in colour and body and semi-sweet or dry.

Di Sorbara: Regarded as the highest quality; fragrant, with high acidity and berry flavours with deep ruby colour.

Generally inexpensive with little complexity and easy to drink, unfortunately the quality of exported Lambrusco rarely equals that found in its native region.

Salute and happy tasting.



PARTY: Fire Demons in Mallorca.

Celebrating Saint Anthony

A NUMBER of towns around Mallorca are going to be very busy on Tuesday January 16 and the following day celebrating the Feast of St Anthony.

As patron saint of animals his feast day is celebrated in Arta, Manacor, Muro, Pollença, Sa Pobla and Son Servera but it is in Sa Pobla where the biggest celebrations take place.

The actual feast only takes place on January 16 and 17 but as those are weekdays, the town intends to party all over the preceding weekend as locals and visitors enjoy

watching and remembering a number of traditional celebrations and attend a number of different concerts.

It is a great excuse to party and there will be plenty of parades including those of the 'Big Heads' as well as an agricultural event as the saint is particularly associated with pigs and is often referred to as Sant Antoni del Porquet.

There will be human towers, drummers, dragons and demons with the main celebration being the dance of the demons, which represent the devils that tempted Saint

Anthony in the desert.

After the excitement of the demons and the gradual return to normality there will be a special mass to not only celebrate the saint but to bless the animals of the town which can be quite a chaotic occasion depending on the mood and variety of animals that turn up.

The Sa Pobla fiesta is likely to be the biggest and most popular, although it must be remembered that when thousands of people turn up for such an event, parking and security can be difficult.

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Live a healthy happy life

Every month I write about how the Astrology, Numerology, and Tarot for the month ahead affects you. Below is your forecast for January 2018:

Sally Trotman

www.sallytrotman.com

Sally Trotman is a qualified Counsellor who works with Astrology, Numerology and the Tarot. Each month she will deliver the forecast as an intuitive tool to aid increased self awareness.



ASTROLOGY: MAKE A PLAN

Sun in Capricorn : Until January 21, the sun is ruled by the earthy sign of Capricorn. The influence of this sign will enable you to make a practical plan for the year ahead. This no nonsense sign is helping you to overcome procrastination and to think big.

Create goals which excite you and motivate you to get up in the morning! Where would you like to be by the end of the year?

Get in tune with the moon: This month on the January 2 and 31, the moon is full. The first full moon is ruled by the sensitive sign of Cancer, bringing the focus to your home and asking you to look at how you nurture yourself. The second full moon of the month is ruled by the fiery sign of Leo,



MAKE A PLAN: Create goals which excite you and motivate you to get up in the morning.

helping you to become a self confident and generous leader, in all areas of your life.

This blue moon month is a powerful way to start the year, so make the most of this positive energy by finding a balance between meeting your own needs and helping others. Listen to your intu-

ition, and each day act on what you know to be right for you.

NUMEROLOGY: FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT

Number 1: In numerology, numbers are seen as symbols that carry energy. The number one indicates a time building new foundations, initiating projects

and using your creativity. Is there anything new you wish to begin this year? Or is there perhaps a hobby or talent you would like to develop? January is the perfect time to start something new, so consider your natural gifts in order to develop a new skill this year, which you are passionate about.

The Magician: make it happen!

In the Tarot deck The Magician is the first card in the Major Arcana deck. Depicted as a man with many tools at his disposal, this card reminds you that you have all the necessary skills to create the life you desire and deserve. Become clear about what you want and set an intention for the month ahead.

Take action everyday towards fulfilling your goal. Consider where you might be creating blocks to success through self doubt or fear, and repeat a positive affirmation to help you with this. Living a healthy and happy life is your birthright, so take steps today towards this in whatever way you feel inspired.

YOUR 2018 FORECAST

Sally Trotman is an Astrologer, Numerologist, Reiki Master and Counsellor. To book in for a one hour Astrology, Numerology and Tarot Forecast via Skype, Facetime or email visit her website www.sallytrotman.com or email at sally.trotman@btinternet.com.

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Gaston comments, "We speak fluent English, German, Dutch and Spanish, which enables us to support the widest group of owners, buyers and renters across Mallorca."

In addition to sales support; the concierge service is designed to provide all the support services required so that owners do not have to be involved at any stage in the day to day rental of their property and can rest assured that all management requirements; laundry, daily cleaning, security, key handling, occupier meet and greet and pool and garden maintenance are being attended to promptly and correctly on their behalf.

The company has prestigious offices in Pal-



SON SERVERA: A spectacular villa in the north east.

ma and whilst they operate mainly in the high demand southwest from Puerto Andratx to Palma they actually cover the island including Pollensa, Son Vida, Santa Maria and Portixol.

Gaston said "Owners struggling to sell should call us today. Our weekly advertising is 'free to owners' and we will be delighted to in-

clude their properties, at no charge."

The Mallorca Deal have expanded their marketing to include, not only their three independent websites in English, Spanish and German, but the leading property search portals in

the UK, Spain and Germany, such as Zoopla, On the market, Rightmove, Kyero.es and Fewo.de giving them unparalleled access to promote their clients' properties across the island and abroad.

Luxury property listings include exceptional villas such as:

Son Servera, NE Mallorca

This spectacular villa provides seven bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms in the main villa plus an independent casita providing an eighth double bedroom, situated in the beautiful countryside of the north east coast of Mallorca and close to the lovely beaches of Costa de Los Pinos and Canyamel.

With superb sea views from the landscaped gardens and pool this contemporary villa, beautifully furnished throughout is strikingly spacious and simply fabulous. Must be seen. Constructed: 622m2. Plot: 15,000m2 (approx four acres). Guide Price: €2,850,000



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NEW data from the Ministry of Development reveals that almost €54 billion worth of transactions took place in Spain's real estate market between January and September.

During the same period in 2016 the amount was closer to €44 billion and the total for the year was €60 billion. The record high remains 2010 when more than €80 billion of capital shifted in 12 months.

With the data in for most of 2017, it shows that Madrid, Cataluña and Andalucía together accounted for more than half of the total value of Spain's real estate



BOOMING: The Spanish property market is on the rise.

market. The €54 billion spent relates to 374,027 properties sold during the period, an 18.5 per cent rise on 2016.

Second-hand homes accounted for roughly €48 billion, while new homes lagged behind, reaping just €6 billion. In 2018, new homes are expected to account for a larger share of the market.

Also this year the total number of sales is expected to surpass 550,000 as the property market continues its successful recovery. A study from Servihabitat projects sales to increase at a faster rate this year than they did in 2017.

Casa cash flowing

SOARING: Home prices in Andalucía continue to rise.



Prices enjoy quality quarter

HOUSE prices shot up by 2 per cent in the final quarter of 2017. The average cost per square metre now stands at €1,228.

Also in the final quarter, 117,068 sales were made, bringing the total for 2017 to 491,005 sales, slightly less than the most optimistic projections last January of a half million sales.

A report from the Gesvalt housing consultancy describes the October to De-

cember results as indicating that 2017 was a year of consolidation for Spain's property market.

"The market is growing more slowly but more in line with the wider economy," said general director, Sandra Daza. "This is a sign that prices are starting to reflect anticipated growth, that construction will become more economically viable, and both home prices and rents will continue to rise."

Gesvalt also noted that there have been wide variations in Spain's different regions when it comes to prices. The company says that tourism is the main indicator of how high prices will rise, or how low they will fall.

While the national average was a 2 per cent increase in the final quarter, in Madrid, Galicia, Murcia and Andalucía the increase surpassed 5 per cent. In places like Cantabria and La Rioja, prices fell.

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Ever heard of Lluçmajor? Nice town in the south eastern part of Mallorca, very well communicated with Palma and offering some of the most interesting coast sites on the island.

<p>Ref 3117, Vallgornera, 170,000€</p> <p>Apartment with 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, living room, kitchen, laundry room, large balcony, garage, community pool, aircon Living area 73m2.</p>	
<p>Ref 3059, La Rapita, 189,000€</p> <p>Semi-detached house with 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lounge with American kitchen, garden and roof terrace. 75m² living area.</p>	
<p>Ref 3115, Son Bielo, 268,000€</p> <p>Terraced house near the sea with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, laundry room, private garage, garden, aircon</p>	
<p>Ref 3112, Campos, 1,060,000€</p> <p>Large finca perfect for keeping horses: main house 4 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, kitchen/diner, garage. Guest house for total reform, large stables, own well, mains electricity. Totally constructed 750m2, plot 70,500m2</p>	
<p>Ref 3118, Lluçmajor, 106,500€</p> <p>Apartment in good state of repair, 3rd floor. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lounge, kitchen, 2 balconies. No lift. Living area 90m2 plus terraces.</p>	
<p>Ref: 3104, Algaida, 160,000€</p> <p>Plot with building permission, mains electricity and mains water possible. Nice views.</p>	

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The easy way to grow your own fresh and tasty potatoes even in a small space

GRAEME TYRRELL

IF you have even had the privilege of eating home grown potatoes from an organic garden you will probably always be disappointed with commercially grown potatoes.

The difference in taste is dramatic as the additional micronutrients give a flavour and vigour to the potatoes that is hard to find from most potatoes in the market place.

The problem with growing your own potatoes though is the hard work to harvest them from the soil and the damage that can occur when digging with ordinary home garden tools.

There is an easy way however to make the growing and harvesting much more enjoyable and productive without the hard work. Some potatoes can even



SEED POTATOES: Ready to plant.

be grown in containers on your balcony or terrace with good results from following a few simple steps.

If you have a vegetable garden this procedure has been well proven to work in northern Europe with less weeding and the ability to selectively harvest the best potatoes and let the rest continue to grow and mature.

The procedure is quite simple and just requires straw and a nutrient rich compost with plenty of manure included to provide ample nitrogen and other essential growth elements.

In the garden you need to have a way of containing the potato bed. You can dig a trench in the soil, just get some hay bales to act as a wall to surround the area you want to grow the potatoes in or use blocks, bricks or wood planks to make raised bed on the soil surface to the size you want.

Add the straw and compost in layers or mixed together to fill the trench, raised bed or container about 15cm deep. Place seed potatoes at about 30cm apart in all directions in the garden for the largest potatoes, but they can be 20cm apart in containers for smaller but a more plentiful harvest.

Next, cover the seed potatoes with layers of straw and compost another 15cm deep. The straw/compost mixture will settle and the growing potatoes will need to be covered, so more mixture will need to be added.

It is important to keep covering the emerging potato plants around the base of the plant to ensure that the expanding potatoes growing from the roots are not exposed to the light as they will turn green and will not be suitable for eating.

This method requires regular watering but as the mixture holds the water so well it requires less watering than soil based culture. Weeds are much less of a problem and are much easier to remove from the mixture.

Harvest is easy as you can just lift the straw to check the progress of the potatoes and remove the potatoes that you consider ready and leave the rest to keep growing until needed. Just make sure you press back the mixture to exclude the light from the roots and remaining potatoes.

It's a great way to enjoy delicious potatoes without the hard work.

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RENT A WOODCHIPPER

Traditionally small wood remnants such as branches are burnt to ash, which is a waste. It's better to mulch them into small wood chips and use them for covering your garden. It prevents the soil from drying out in the summer and eventually it will compost and give nutrients back to the soil. It's better for both the garden and the environment.

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Make your poinsettia last

WITH a little care, the extremely popular Christmas houseplants, poinsettias, can be made to last from one year to the next and there is a simple trick which can be employed to make them bloom just in time for the festive season.

Rather than allowing your plant to die this year, follow these tips to keep it alive and have it ready to party again come next December.

The plants originate in Mexico, where in the wild they grow into tall shrubs. To create the houseplant sized versions we find in the shops, growers use dwarfing hormones in the soil. Once these wear off, careful pruning will be needed to keep them manageable and suitable for indoor decoration.

In March the plant will shed its leaves: this is the time to cut stems down to a length of around 10cm. Coat the cut ends in white petroleum jelly and keep the plant

warm and relatively dry until new growth appears.

Poinsettias do not need too much water, in fact overwatering will cause the leaves to yellow, wilt and drop off. Diluted liquid fertiliser should be used once every two weeks during the spring and once a week in the summer to feed the plants and keep them healthy.

Come autumn, about eight weeks before you want your plant to burst into colour, begin

giving it 'short-day' treatment. This consists of plunging the plant into total darkness for 14 hours every night to trick it into thinking winter has already arrived. During the day, place it on a warm, sunny windowsill so it gets as much light as possible.

POINSETTIA: Likes as much light as possible.



Furniture fashions

A WEBSITE has revealed the UK's top furniture trends of 2017.

And as trends tend to come to Spain a few months later, it's a safe bet to say some of these pieces will be featuring heavily in shops in the year ahead.

So if you want to stay on-trend in your interior design why not take a look at the list below?

According to website Homewings, one of last year's major crazes was velvet sofas, particularly in midnight blue. These comfy pieces are hard-

wearing and hide stains better than other colours so this look could be around for a while.

The velvet trend also extends to pouffes and ottomans. Perhaps a cheaper and simpler way to include this trend into your existing space, this fashion works particularly well if you choose a piece in a complementary colour to your existing furniture to make it really stand out.

Benefiting from the trend for mixed-material furniture - and particularly the use of copper - marble-topped tables

were the website's biggest seller last year. This simple look manages to combine luxury with the rising industrial chic look gaining popularity.

Dark wood - which has been unpopular for years in the UK - is making a comeback, particularly in the form of furniture inspired by the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s. So if you have any hand-me-down or inherited pieces from the 20th century now would be a great time to display them.

Finally, the winter months in Spain are the perfect time to warm up an interior with a

rug and geometric patterns are currently making a splash. Berber types in neutral colours are currently in fashion and are easy to fit into most existing spaces.



BLUE VELVET SOFAS: A 2017 craze.

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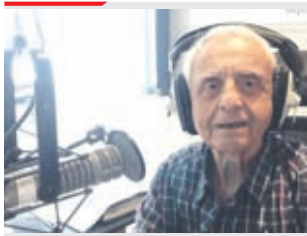
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Your dog and new baby



POOCH PALS: Only introduce your dog to your baby when he is calm.

GRADUALLY introduce changes in your dog's routine as soon as you know baby is on the way - if he does not connect them with the baby's arrival he has less reason to be jealous.

- Your dog should not be the centre of attention at all times, and should not sit on your lap (if at all) only when invited by you.

- Get him used to being away from you sometimes in another room, or indoor kennel ('crate'), and ban him from the nursery.

- Take a refresher course at a training school, and think about practice walks with the pram - it can be trickier than it sounds!

- Check with your vet about canine hygiene and worming.

When your baby is born your dog may be left for hours while you are in hospital, or upset by the excitement if

you are at home. Arrange for someone he knows to look after/walk him. It is an old wife's tale (letting your dog drink breast milk or play with dirty nappies) this will not help your dog

and baby to become friends, but sending home a blanket that the baby has slept on may help your dog to get used to her scent.

When you come home let someone

else hold your baby while you greet your dog; introduce them later when he is calm. Do not try to keep your dog and baby completely apart, you won't be able to keep it up!

Teach them both to interact calmly and gently, no licking by the dog or grabbing by the child.

Never ever leave dogs alone with babies or young children; shut your dog out of the room or pop the baby in a secure play-pen. This applies every time you use the bathroom, answer the door/phone or get a meal. It is not a matter of 'trust.'

Toddlers can accidentally injure or alarm dogs (eg by falling on them) and startled dogs may react impulsively, lashing out or biting.

The most tolerant dog needs peace and quiet sometimes; allow him a place (eg his bed) he can escape to without being followed. Allow the child to go there at other times to prevent it becoming an exclusive area which he feels entitled to defend.

When your baby starts to crawl and walk teach your dog to step back out of her way in doorways and on stairs.

IS it true you can cut out the cost of pet care when you go on holiday?

Yes it is! You can join a membership network like HouseSitMatch.com to find suitable pet-sitters and house-sitters securely online.

Many pet owners are completely shocked at the end of a holiday to find that their pet care costs have almost doubled the cost of their trip.

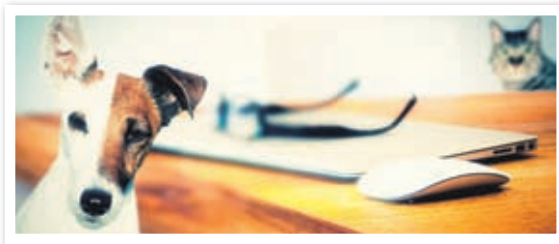
Are the petsitters and housesitters checked?

Yes! HouseSitMatch is a safe alternative that enables you to meet sitters with police and background checks in place, so you can go on holiday with peace of mind.

Aren't there any costs?

Yes there is a small membership fee each year which starts as low as £35 per year. By joining a house-sitting membership network for a moderate annual fee you can

Free pet-sitters ... cut the cost of pet care?



PET CARE: Find a suitable pet-sitter free online.

secure access to suitable free pet-sitters all year round.

Who are these petsitters and why will they want to housesit for free?

Most of the pet-sitters and house-sitters who join HouseSitMatch are looking to spend time in a new location and to exchange their experience as pet-sitters for free accommodation while they discover a new location.

Client testimonial - Susan, Pet owner

I have absolutely no reservations about using HouseSitMatch in looking after my pets and home. Lamia is always available and extremely flexible in ensuring the well-being of the animals and security of all. I would use HouseSitMatch always knowing I can leave home without any worries.

Do you need a house or pet-sitter? Get in touch. House-sitting can be a win-win for both parties, free house and pet-sitting and the experienced and checked sitters get free accommodation!

Register as either house-sitter or homeowner now with a 20 per cent off introductory offer using coupon code PERFECT20.

To find a house or pet-sitter go to www.HouseSitMatch.com call Lamia on 00 44 (0) 777 214 2742 or email admin@housesitmatch.com

Make it a mini one!

THERE'S a new farmyard pet trend ready to descend on households in 2018. Chickens and micro-pigs are old news; get ready to welcome micro cows.

While miniature cows are yet to be found in most pet shops, there are now specialised breeders in the US giving people the chance to have their own tiny farmyard in the back garden.

Although the average cow can grow to be more than six feet tall, micro cows grow to be the same size of the average pet dog and weigh less than a quarter of the average bull.

They are also cheaper to keep than most cows as they don't require expensive handling equipment.

Lovable Little Ones, a cattle breeder in Colorado, US, claims micro cows are "exceptional pets that demonstrate a great deal of affection, are very social, and are easy to take care of."

They are also apparently an inexpensive way to teach children about responsible farming and how to take care of animals.

According to Dustin Pillard, who raises and sells mini cows in Iowa, US, micro cows have "personalities like a dog."

Pillard explains: "They run around like a dog, they like people and are calm and sociable. They also love attention. It is hard not to fall in love with a little mini calf that barely comes up to your knees."



Laureen Carruthers/Facebook

AMOOZING: Micro cows are the latest pet trend.



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Single handed attempt to beat world record

LEE SPENCER known as the Rowing Marine enjoyed a cup-of-tea and chat with Prince Harry before leaving the UK today (Thursday)

He is now undertaking final preparations to become the world's first physically disabled person to row solo and unsupported from mainland Europe to mainland South America on behalf of The Endeavour Fund and the Royal Marines Charity.

Setting off from Ocean Village Marina, Gibraltar on January 18 in his seven metre rowing boat, Lee will be attempting to row solo and unsupported 3,500 miles across the Atlantic Ocean.

Lee is on a personal mission to challenge the perceptions around disabilities.

Ironically having survived 24 years as a Marine and three operational tours of Afghanistan unscathed, Lee lost his right leg when he stopped to help a motorist on the M3 in Surrey in 2014.

Lee was hit by flying debris as he made his way to the stricken vehicle and his right leg was severed in the impact.

"Prince Harry's support and the work he and the Endeavour Fund do has made a very big difference to many people's lives and in a very real way. When you meet him you feel an overwhelming sense of fellowship and I particularly respect the fact he has kept and will continue to keep wounded and injured servicemen and women in the na-



Photo by Liz Williams

WOW: The brave Rowing Marine starts his journey in two weeks.

tion's conscience and that he genuinely cares," Lee commented about the meeting.

"I don't believe anyone should be defined by something they

can't do or their limitations. It's about rediscovering who you are, not redefining who you are and being labelled. I hope I am able to inspire all those who seek to

rediscover themselves and raise awareness and funds for two very worthy charities who have supported and inspired me," he added.

Mallorcan triumphs in Australia

COMPETITORS from Club Nautic s'arenal won a record 50 titles during 2017.

The president of the Club, Oscar Estellers was delighted by the result saying that the racing team, in recent years, has been spectacular thanks to the dedication and hard work of all those involved.

He made a point of mentioning the growth of the club and the participation of the athletes, coaches, parents, physical trainers and many others who worked hard to help make the club such a success.

Spanish sailors started



Photo by Club Nautic s'arenal

TRIUMPHANT: Aina Colom and Vicky Sisk taking part in the 420 World Championships down under.

the new year well with a number of triumphs in the 420 World Championship held in Fremantle Australia with three Spanish boats

taking the top three places in the Under 17 class.

Mallorcan sailors did well with some of the medals finding their way back to Club Nautic s'arenal.

Whilst the women were not quite so successful they still managed a number of respectable results.

The 420 World Championship began on December 26 and ended yesterday, with more than 130 participants from different countries among all different categories.



Ainhoa Sanchez/Volvo Ocean

MAPFRE: Leaving Melbourne en route to Hong Kong.

HAVING taken a breather to enjoy Christmas and the New Year the yachts competing in the Volvo Ocean Race left Melbourne last Tuesday set for Hong Kong.

The overall leader, Spanish branded and skippered MAPFRE took the fleet out of Port Philip Bay at the start of the 6,000 nautical mile leg four which takes in Hong Kong for the first time but within four hours of the start, Vestas 11th Hour Racing snatched the lead.

Its skipper seemed more comfortable in dealing with the heavy sea at the narrow entrance to the Bay with MAPFRE in second place.

New Year, new leg

By the second day of racing, the lead had changed again with the Dongfeng Race Team grabbing the lead and MAPFRE falling back to fourth although the entire fleet was within 31 nautical miles of each other and there is plenty of time for the race to develop.

One potential problem for this particular leg is the fact that the boats will pass through the doldrums where yachts in particular can become becalmed or dramatically slowed down.

Currently it is estimated that the leader should arrive at Hong Kong harbour by January 21.

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**Clarkson
Quote of the Week**

“On the Chrysler PT Cruiser. “The front looks like a face, a friendly face from the land that gave us friendly fire.”

Some might say...



Built in Britain

BREXIT and diesel concerns have seen British drivers lose their appetite for British-built cars. Domestic demand for cars built in the UK crashed by almost 30 per cent at the tail end of 2017.

Exports rose but couldn't make up for the drop in domestic sales. Now 85 per cent of all cars built in Britain are sold abroad. Overall in 2017 domestic demand dropped by 9 per cent, leading to an overall decline of 2 per cent.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), cites Brexit uncertainty and diesel tax confusion as reasons for the demand drop.

Chief executive Mike Hawes said the figures show the importance of negotiations with the EU over Britain's future car trade with the bloc.

By Matthew Elliott

VOLKSWAGEN is attempting to undo the damage done by the diesel scandal and return to its hippie routes.

The German giant has revealed plans for 30 new electric models to be released by 2025, including a green-friendly remake of its legendary microbus.

Named the Buzz, the electric hippie wagon is slated for release in 2022 and appeared for a test run in the fitting location of Venice Beach, California.

Other electric concept cars unveiled include a hatchback and crossover SUV, which should both be in production by 2020. Most of the buzz will be about the Buzz, which is suitably colourful in a two-tone yellow and has spin around front seats that can face backwards.

Back in the realm of reality, Volkswagen is enjoying rave reviews for its new T-Roc SUV. It has now debuted in the UK and

Hippie bus is back Plus T-Roc acclaim



GAME CHANGERS: VW'S T-Roc and electric Buzz (inset) part of image makeover.

across Europe, with the 114hp 1.0 litre TSI model with front-wheel drive and a manual gearbox expected to be the top seller.

Though with a slightly less

powerful engine than other SUVs in a packed market, the T-Roc is advertised as perfect for nipping around town and is 225kg lighter than previous models. It is simi-

lar to Audi's Q2 and smaller than Volkswagen's own Tiguan.

It is mechanically basic but practical and modern, with no elaborate 4Motion all-wheel dri-

ve but an eight-inch infotainment system, two-climate control system, and optional LED headlights.

It is comfortable, agile and comes with a three-year, 60,000 mile warranty. There are no electric or hybrid options, aiming at the petrol market. UK prices begin at around £20,000 (€22,500).

ROAD TEST by Nick Fletcher

Subaru Outback SE Premium



THERE are plenty of four-wheel-drive models to tackle tough terrain and there are many SUV models which are great on the tarmac but less so off-road.

There are also many people who would like a combination of the two, and the Mitsubishi Outback is an outstanding example of a vehicle able to take on this dual role. It is a formidable off-roader which is also at home on city streets, an ideal blend for those who meld urban and rural lifestyles.

The Outback is quite refined to drive, very well equipped, looks stylish and classy and prices start at €37,197 (£32,995). There is a sporty 2.5 litre petrol model for those seeking sharper performance but for most, the

well-proven 148 hp 2.0 litre diesel will be the choice, and this was the version I tested.

In SE Premium Lineartronic trim, with CVT auto transmission and all wheel drive, it costs €39,452 (£34,995) and is exceptionally well equipped. Standard kit includes alloy wheels, roof rails, auto LED lights and wipers, powered tailgate, leather upholstery, powered and heated front seats, slide/tilt sunroof, privacy glass, seven-inch touchscreen infotainment system, Bluetooth, sat-nav, connectivity, adaptive cruise control, dual-zone climate control, reversing camera, hill start and hill descent assist, keyless entry and push-button start.

It also has plenty of safety features including multi-

airbags, blind-spot warning, lane-change assist and rear cross-traffic assist. Top speed is 191 kph (119 mph) and the 0-100 kph time of 9.9 seconds is nippy for a vehicle of this size and weight. It is quite frugal too - fuel economy is 16.4 kpl (46.3 mpg).

The engine pulls smoothly and quietly and the CVT box changes with minimal fuss. The gears can be manually shifted with paddles if required. With nicely-weighted steering and a well balanced suspension set-up, everything combines to give a refined drive on smooth surfaces.

The Outback also feels quite nimble in town, quite easy to handle and park. On the open road, it corners well with reassuring grip.

THE OUTBACK: Makes a strong visual statement.

Model tested is UK-specification and equipment levels and prices may vary in other markets.

The exterior of the Outback makes a strong visual statement, and while the cabin is laid out for functionality rather than style, it still looks smart.

There is plenty of room for five occupants, and the boot space of 559 litres (expanding to 1,848 litres) is substantial.

The Outback comes over as a robust yet refined contender, underpinned by Subaru's excellent reputation for dependability.

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Toffees' Big Sam chews over Giroud's wife's orders

LIVERPOOL host Everton in the FA Cup third round on Friday at Anfield with The Toffees backed with almost 8,000 fans for the tie.

Everton's ticket allocation of 7,946 tickets is the biggest travelling support they have taken across Stanley Park since the all-seater stadium was introduced in 1994.

Everton gaffer Sam Allardyce, looking to sign a new striker in the January transfer window, said: "Up front is an area we need to improve in January, a quality front man."

Everton's interest in Arsenal's Olivier Giroud has been given the cold shoulder by Allardyce - and Giroud's wife:

"As far as I know he doesn't want to move north of Wat-



UKSPORTSCENE

with Andrew Atkinson

ford - well his wife doesn't," said Big Sam.

"It's very important to the wives - believe you me - normally they are the bosses," said Allardyce.

FA Cup third round: Friday: Manchester United v Derby, Liverpool v Everton. Saturday: Ipswich v Sheffield United,

Watford v Bristol

City, Bir-

mingham v

Burton, As-

ton Villa v

Peterborough.

Bournemouth v Wigan, Coventry v Stoke, Newport v Leeds, Bolton v Huddersfield, Yeovil v Bradford, Brentford v Notts County, QPR v MK Dons, Exeter v West Brom.

Doncaster v Rochdale, Middlesbrough v Sunderland, Fleetwood v Leicester, Blackburn v Hull, Cardiff v Mansfield, Manchester City v Burnley.

Wolves v Swansea, Stevenage v Reading, Newcastle v Luton, Millwall v Barnsley, Fulham v Southampton, Wycombe v Preston, Norwich v Chelsea, Carlisle v Sheffield Wednesday.

Sunday: Nottingham Forest v Arsenal, Tottenham v AFC Wimbledon, Shrewsbury v West Ham. Monday: Brighton v Crystal Palace.

Pep's Silva lining
DAVID SILVA has been heralded as one of the main keys that have unlocked Manchester City's door to win the Premier League.



STRIKER SOUGHT: By Sam Allardyce in the January transfer window.

"He has absolutely everything," said City boss Pep Guardiola as the Blues enter 2018 topping the table.

Valencia youth Silva was at Valencia CF for six years, winning one Copa del Rey in 2008, prior to joining City in 2010.

Silva, set to feature in City's FA Cup third round tie against Burnley on Saturday, in his eighth season at City, has won the FA Cup, two Football League Cups and two Premier League titles.

"I'm so happy for him," said Guardiola, who awarded Silva

the captain's armband at City in the absence of Vincent Kompany this term.

"He is a real leader - he never hides - and always wants the ball to make something," praised Guardiola, in the wake of Silva attracting interest from AC Milan and Las Palmas.

Silva, who won his first international call up aged 20, capped 118 times, a member of Spain's 2014 FIFA World Cup and UEFA Euro 2016, is set to be named in national coach Julen Lopetegui's 2018 World Cup squad.

Born in Arguineguín, Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Silva departed Valencia CF to City in 2010, the club having been thwarted to sign Silva and Valencia teammate David Villa in 2008, in a £135m deal.

Silva, who celebrates his 32nd birthday this month, has been among the goals in City's table-topping campaign: "He has absolutely everything," said Guardiola.

"I think he is a star. At 31 years old he is enjoying to learn more - to score goals - that is so important," said Guardiola.

'HE HAS EVERYTHING':
David Silva.



David Silva/Twitter

SPORTSCENE SPAIN

with Andrew Atkinson

Kane's Real deal

REAL MADRID and Manchester City are in a race to sign England's Spurs star, striker Harry Kane - described by Spurs boss Mauricio Pochettino as the world's best.

"Harry is world class - the number one striker in the world - who's better than him?" said Pochettino.

Kane, with a touted value of £170m, netted his eighth hat-trick of 2017 in Spurs' 5-2 win against Southampton on Boxing Day.

Kane bagged 39 Premier League goals in 2017, breaking Alan Shearer's record for goals scored in a year: "A massive achievement for Harry, and well deserved," said Pochettino.

Pochettino, desperate to keep Kane, said: "Harry is a talented player - that's the secret - we are so ambitious and looking forward.

"Hopefully the next year will bring us a lot of victories - we want to win every game - who knows what can happen?"

City gaffer Pep Guardiola also has Real Sociedad's defender Inigo Martinez on his radar.

Dutch courage

BARCELONA are linked with Manchester United defender Daley Blind who could be allowed to begin negotiating a pre-contract agreement with foreign clubs from January.

Barca, keeping tabs on the Dutch star's contract talks, are set to swoop for Blind - for free - if United don't trigger an extension on his contract. Blind, a £14m signing by ex-United boss Louis van Gaal in 2014, sees his current contract expire next summer.

United are set to trigger extension contract clauses with Ander Herrera, Luke Shaw and Ashley Young.

Real Madrid are targeting Inter Milan forward Mauro Icardi along with Arsenal's Alexis Sanchez.

Gareth to bale out

REAL star Gareth Bale is set to snub a move to Manchester United - to remain at the Bernabeu in the January transfer window - moving to Old Trafford in the summer.

United have reportedly agreed a deal with Wales international winger Bale, 28, valued by

Real at £79m, with United planning a £53m bid, to lure the ex-Spurs ace away from the Bernabeu.

Manchester United's Angel Gomes is a target for Borussia Dortmund. Stoke's Switzerland international Xherdan Shaqiri, 26, is eyed by West Ham. United host Derby County on Friday in the FA Cup third round.

Shanghai SIPG star striker Hulk, 31, linked with Chelsea and Manchester City, hasn't ruled out a move to the Premier League.

"I received contact from the Premier League which I admire very much, the best league in the world," said Hulk.

Luiz Real chance

DAVID LUIZ'S uncertain future at Chelsea - after a rift with Blues boss Antonio Conte - has alerted Real Madrid. Brazilian centre-back Luiz's spell at Stamford Bridge could be set to end with Zinedine Zidane set to bolster his defence in the January transfer window.

Luiz, wanting a regular slot on Conte's team-sheet, is in his second spell at Chelsea after re-joining the Blues in a £34m move from Paris Saint-Germain in 2016.

Chelsea travel to Carrow Road on Saturday to

play Championship club Norwich City in the FA Cup third round.

Valverde's targets

ARSENAL duo, Barca target Mesut Özil and Real Madrid and Manchester City target Alexis Sanchez, are both out of contract in June.

Özil and Sanchez become free agents in the summer and are eligible to negotiate with clubs in January.

Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger, whose Gunners meet Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup third round on Sunday, signed Özil and Sanchez at a combined cost of £74m.

Liverpool and Brazilian star Philippe Coutinho remains Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde's transfer target. Barca are also eyeing Özil to play alongside midfielder Andres Iniesta. Barca trio Arda Turan, Alexis Vidal and Denis Suarez have uncertain futures.

Schalke midfielder Leon Goretzka, 22, is interesting Bayern, Real Madrid, Barca and Arsenal. Schalke midfielder Max Meyer, refusing to sign a new deal, is eyed by Liverpool.

Barcelona star and Argentine midfielder Javier Mascherano has been linked with a move to Liverpool.

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