

Car charges dropped

A WORKER at a car dealership has been acquitted of stealing nearly €108,000 from the sale of 21 cars by an Almerian court.

Charges against the worker were dropped after prosecutors requested an acquittal during the oral hearing on the grounds the crime had not been proven.

The company's lawyers maintain the worker deserves the six-year sentence for crimes of aggravated misappropriation.

The company claims the worker took advantage of his position as manager at the dealership in Huerca de Almeria to steal €107,695 from November 2011 to July 2012.

Bad for boy racers

YOUNG drivers in Almeria are among the worst in the country, according to car insurance industry data.

The 'Youth at the Wheel' report ranked drivers aged between 18-35 by the likelihood of them having an accident on a scale of one to 10.

It found that young Almerians were among the country's worst drivers for serious accidents, along with Las Palmas, Cadiz, Sevilla and Pontevedra.

The best scoring provinces were Soria, Segovia, Cuenca, Ciudad Real, Huesca and Avila.



QUESTIONS: The evening's panel.

Home improvement

By Benjamin Park

A meeting has been held by the 'Abusos Urbanísticos Almanzora No!' (AUAN) and the Albanchez Residents Association (ARA) to discuss a solution to illegal housing issues across Andalucía.

There was a huge turnout at the Culture Centre in Albanchez, with not only residents of Albanchez, but many from surrounding areas in the Valley of Almanzora as well.

The panel hosting the evening was made up of members of respected boards in the region including President of Albanchez Residents Association, Estanislao Beltran; President of the AUAN, Maura Hillen, President of AUAN; Member of the Andalusian Parliament and National Executive of Ciudadanos; Marta Bosquet; Provincial Coordinator of Ciudadanos; Francisco Ramos; Planning lawyer, Eduardo Amor; technical architect, Benedicto Bonil and Ronnie Howley, a town planner.

The meeting gave the people who have been affected by the issues currently surrounding housing in the region the opportunity to discuss a resolution for the problem.

Many were anxious to point out that houses on asentamientos (housing waiting to be legalised via a town plan) should be given a form of permission, known as an AFO, in order to allow them to register ownership of the property.

They argued this permission would give them piece of mind during the legalisation process, which can take up to 10 years.

Gerardo Vasquez, lawyer and spokesperson for AUAN, told those present at the meeting how there had been talk of an amendment to give provisional

services to houses on asentamientos for a period of two years.

However, he argued that: "these sort of provisional licences for such short periods of time are of little use, and are certainly of little use to the houses in the Valley of Almanzora."

He went on to say: "I believe that this is the third provisional licence that I have seen since 2012 and the last ones did not work. And the type of provisional licence suggested does nothing to solve the problem of the lack of escrituras (deeds).

"To solve this problem, an AFO is required. And we are not just saying this now. We said this before during the last reform of the planning laws,

when we explained that there was a gap in the last reform because it did not provide a solution for asentamientos.

"This is what we are asking for now, simply and plainly, an AFO for houses on asentamientos."

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NEWS EXTRA

Sea weed sentence

A 30-YEAR-OLD man who tried to take 40 kilos of hashish from Guardias Viejas beach in May last year has been sentenced to three years in prison by a court in Almería.

Four hurt

FOUR people have been injured after a vehicle overturned at a roundabout in Purchena. Two 19-year-old women, a 20-year-old man and a one-year-old baby were transferred to the Hospital de la Inmaculada.

Driver tax

MORE than 3,000 drivers in Almería were sanctioned for driving without the correct insurance in 2017. A total of 3,212 drivers were given sanctions last year, at an average of eight a day.

Car stowaway charged

By Joe Gerrard

A MAN who allegedly hid under the bonnet of a car to get through Almería's port undetected could face up to four years in prison.

The 51-year-old, from Hellin, Albacete, and a 29-year-old from Talayuela, Caceras, face calls from prosecutors to be jailed after reportedly modifying the engine to hide from customs officials.

Prosecutors claimed the man was in danger from the Nissan Vanette's engine heat and toxic fumes which could have burned and poisoned him as he stowed away next to it.

The two men were picked up by officials after beginning their journey in Morocco.

Officials at the Port of Almería discovered the stowaway as they carried out checks on the boat bound for Almería.

The bonnet was reportedly

modified so that it could not be opened from the outside. When officials got it open they found the man inside the engine with a plastic sheet, according to Spanish media.

Officials picked up the stowaway and the driver of the vehicle who they claim was his accomplice. Both now face charges of crimes against the rights of foreign citizens and could go to prison if found guilty.



STOWAWAY: The man under the bonnet of the Nissan.

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POLICE have arrested a 42-year-old man on suspicion of criminal damage, coercion and threats in La Mojenera, according to reports.

After an alleged crusade against a local woman, the man - identified as JLH and from La Mojenera - is said to have damaged a vehicle and bar near where she works.

'Harassment campaign' ends in 'criminal damage'

According to police, local officers and Guardia Civil collaborated in their operation to arrest the man, at 12.10am on the morning of January 10, shortly after he is accused of causing the damage.

Police say they received 10 phone calls on the night of the incident.

The young woman claims the accused harassed, followed and coerced her for several weeks before the incident.

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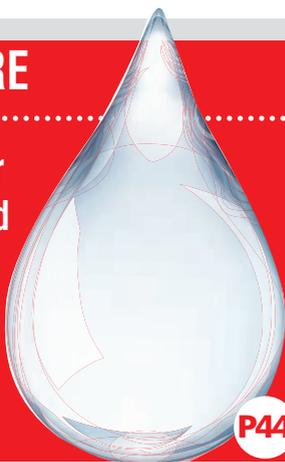
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SPECIAL FEATURE

As the Spanish water crisis deepens, David Noon asks what can be done to stop the drought in its tracks.



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Readers' views on eclectic topics in print and online.

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ALL THE LATEST CAR NEWS PLUS OUR WEEKLY TEST DRIVE



Careless thief

A MAN has been sentenced to four years in prison after robbing a bar in El Ejido. Police were reportedly only able to find the thief after he left a garment of clothing at the scene of the crime which had his DNA on it.

Social media stalker

A 42-YEAR-OLD man has been arrested in La Mojenera after coercing and harassing a fellow employee. Police were made aware of the man's actions after he allegedly damaged a vehicle in the area and were subsequently informed of the threats to the employee and her boss made over social media.

Migrants rescued

SALVAMENTO Maritimo has rescued a total of 144 people from three boats on the Alboran Sea.

According to reports, two of the boats, carrying 93 people in total were moved to the Port of Motril in Granada, while the remaining people were picked up in Almería.

Baby death

AN inquest into the death of a four-month old baby from Almería in a Málaga hospital has opened, with the parents demanding that the video of an operation be shown. They believe the surgeon influenced their decision to consent to the operation and has questions to answer.

Job seekers

A COMPANY in Adra is offering 22 positions for the long-term unemployed, as part of a state-backed jobs programme. The programme includes training to improve the chances of finding work. Those interested are invited to a meeting today (Thursday).

SPANISH FACTS OF LIFE... 46

If there's one thing Spain isn't lacking, it's cathedrals. From the classics to more modern designs, Kat Ashton explores some of the most interesting and beautiful ones the country has to offer.

See, pray, love

THERE are over 90 official cathedrals in Spain, many of which have been declared UNESCO World Heritage sites.

As the architecture and history of these religious buildings reflects the Christian reconquering of Spain following the Moorish period, it is hard to determine which the oldest cathedral in Spain is as several were built as mosques, while the 10th century basilica in Foz, Galicia is no longer classified as a cathedral, although it was in the past.

Every major town and city has its own stunning masterpiece, to the point where 'cathedral fatigue' is apparently a recognisable condition amongst tourists. While they are all beautiful, there are so many that share similar features, they can start to blur into one.

However, there are some true stand-outs that are always worth a visit.

The Mezquita, Cordoba

Right in the historic centre of the southern city is this unusual landmark, which is also one of the oldest buildings still standing in Spain. Part of Cordoba's cathedral belonged to the old mosque which was converted into a Catholic church when the city returned to Christian rule during the Reconquista in 1236, but its Arabic origins are still apparent. The mismatch of different cultures and religions has blended to create a work of unforgettable architecture.

Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar, Zaragoza

Situated in the city halfway between Madrid and Barcelona, the cathedral sits on the banks of the river Ebro, making the site picture perfect with the reflection in the river - especially at night. Legend says the Virgin Mary appeared to the Apostle James as he was praying at that spot by the river, and the cathedral is revered throughout Spain for this reason.

Sevilla Cathedral

The biggest gothic cathedral in the world, the sheer size of Sevilla's cathedral is awe-inspiring in itself. Covering over 11,500m², the cathedral has undergone many significant transformations since it was first built in the 15th century. Its first dome collapsed early on and part of the cathedral had to be rebuilt, but the new dome was destroyed by an earthquake in 1888. It is also the resting place of Christopher Columbus, who is buried there.



MODERN MARVEL: Sagrada Familia in Barcelona.



STUNNING: Zaragoza cathedral.

Santiago de Compostela Cathedral

The final destination of thousands of pilgrims who take on the 'Camino de Santiago' each year, the cathedral is the site of the tomb of Saint James (Santiago). The building is essentially Romanesque in design but also has also been influenced by the Gothic and Spanish baroque styles.

Sagrada Familia, Barcelona

Last but not least - while not technically classed as a cathedral, the Sagrada Familia is undoubtedly one of the most famous churches in Spain. Designed by Catalan architect Antoni Gaudi, the building is still being completed, despite the fact it was started 135 years ago. The Sagrada Familia is one of the city's most popular tourism attractions.

Socialists vote

THE Socialist party in Almería has renewed its executive with Juan Francisco Garrido Egea as its General

Secretary. Members stressed the need for greater diversity, particularly among young people. "Every militant of the province will be included and will be a participant," Mr Garrido-Egea said.

166

The total number of news and features which appeared in Issue 1697 of the Euro Weekly News Costa de Almería edition, including 65 local stories.

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Photo credit: Dronestagram

DRONE'S EYE VIEW: The shot was taken from the sky.

Eye in the sky

THIS incredible aerial image has bagged third prize in the 'People' section of the International Drone Photography Contest.

Taken from a drone, the shot shows revellers taking part in the La Vijanera festivities in Cantabria, northern Spain.

Originally celebrated in a number of nearby valleys, it is now observed only in the hamlet of Silió - population 620 - on the first Sunday of every year.

It is said to be Europe's first carnival of the year and has been declared a fiesta of National Touristic Interest due to its pre-Roman roots in pagan rituals practised by ancient tribes.

During the festivities, 60 Vijaneros, colourful male characters, among them a dame, a young man, the trappers (with

suits covered in plants and mosses), a bear and its owner, a gentleman, a doctor and a farmer parade through the village in colourful costumes.

Each symbolises an aspect of life, including the passage of time, fertility, man's conquest of nature, good and evil.

But it is the zarramacos - the messy ones - who are the real stars of the show.

Dressed in sheepskins and pointed hats, with their faces painted black and jingling bells attached to their bodies, they are responsible for warding off evil spirits from the year ahead.

At noon an animal horn is blown and a small group of Vijaneros heads to the woods to 'capture' the bear, after which the entire group marches to the edge of town, drawing a line in

the ground to warn neighbours not to mess with them.

Celebrations continue with Las Coplas, humorous rhymes recounting the previous year's news from local to international level. Events reach their climax with la Preñá, a comedic scene depicting the 'birth' of the new year, followed by the killing of the bear, symbolising the triumph of good or evil.

And the latter scene is that pictured above by a snapper identified only as 'feeling-movie.'

Overseen by Paris-based photo sharing community Dronestagram, with sponsors including National Geographic, Kodak and Lowepro, it is the fourth time that the contest announcing the 20 best drone pictures of the year has been held.

POLL OF THE WEEK
Have you taken up the Dry January challenge?

LAST WEEK'S POLL:
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Yes 19% **No** 81%

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 In pictures: Spain's Costa del Snow

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 Body of woman washed up on Costa del Sol beach

2,635 views
 Beat the January blues with new flights between UK and Spain

2,424 views
 Spain slides to a halt as snow grips country

**For week 8-15 January*

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OUR VIEW

Truth will out

THE family of tragic holidaymaker Kirsty Maxwell, who died while on a hen party in Benidorm, are to be applauded.

Not content with what they viewed as an insufficient police response to the death of the 27-year-old, husband Adam and parents Brian and Denise have successfully won their fight for answers.

After months of battling the authorities, their tenacity and persistence has paid off, and it is to be hoped that a new probe will reveal what really happened that night last April.

Spare a thought for these brave souls who have remained dignified throughout what must have been an incredibly traumatic few months.

Hotel death probe - page 20

Time to count the cost?

SPAIN is expected to be crowned the world's second most popular tourist destination behind France. The number of visitors last year rose to 82 million, 8.9 per cent up on 2016, while spending now accounts for 11 per cent of the Spanish economy. But there is a flipside.

Charities and activists have lamented the lack of affordable housing in holiday hotspots as rents skyrocket, while some cities have seen protests over uncontrolled mass tourism.

On the Costas, the road network is unable to cope, and natural sites including Mar Menor have become lifeless and polluted.

Perhaps it is time to regulate the number of people entering the country so it remains an attractive holiday destination for decades to come.

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NEWS EXTRA

Fantastic year

ALMERIA'S fish market enjoyed its best year for a decade in 2017. A total of 3.5 million kilos was brought in by the capital's fleet, equating to an estimated value of €10.016 million.

Got him!

POLICE in Almeria have arrested a man wanted under a European arrest warrant issued by authorities in Romania for committing several armed robberies and faces up to four years in prison.

Bus crash

A DRIVER has died after crashing into a bus on the N-340 road in Balanegra. The bus' passengers and the driver were injured and taken to hospital.

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Back with a banger

POP megastar Lady Gaga kicked off the European leg of her Joanne World Tour in Barcelona.

The 31-year-old was greeted by 15,600 screaming fans as she belted out a string of hits including Poker Face, Alejandro and Just Dance.

Among those cheering on at the Palau Sant Jordi arena was Colombian songstress Shakira.

The Hips Don't Lie siren, 40, lives in the Catalan capital with footballer boyfriend Gerard Pique, 30.

But it was the headline act - real name Stefani Germanotta - who stole the show in spectacular fashion after appearing in a series of racy outfits.

It comes after the Grammy award-winning singer last September cancelled the European gigs due to 'trauma and chronic pain' which she said were preventing her from living a 'normal life.'

She is known to suffer from fibromyalgia, a long-term condition that causes pain all over the body.



Photo credit Shutterstock/Twitter

WOWING THE CROWD: Lady Gaga.



Photo credit Edurne Garcia/Instagram

KNEE BOTHER: Edurne Garcia.

HOT MAMA: Jennifer Metcalfe.



Photo credit LowLoaderKing/Twitter

Fun in the sun

IT is cold and snowy in her native Bradford.

But Hollyoaks star Jennifer Metcalfe, 35, dodged the winter chill by jetting to Tenerife with Geordie Shore boyfriend Greg Lake, 33, and their seven-month-old son, Daye.

The bombshell flaunted her incredible post-baby figure in a mismatched bikini before slipping into tight gym gear as the family took a stroll in the sun.

De Gea's stunning WAG bedridden

SHE'S the long-term girlfriend of Manchester United shot stopper David de Gea, 27. And Spanish pop singer Edurne Garcia, 32, is set for her own injury lay off after undergoing knee surgery.

The stunner shared pictures of herself in hospital with her left leg wrapped in bandages on social media.

Although she didn't tell her 900,000 followers why the procedure was needed, she did confirm it had been planned as she

wrote: "I begin the year with an operation on my knee that was pending!!"

"It went very well and will be just like new in no time!! Thank you all for the messages of love!"

Edurne represented her country at Eurovision 2015 and once described Manchester as "uglier than the back of a fridge," but that is unlikely to stop her squeeze penning a new contract which will reportedly see him become the club's best-paid player.

Tonsil tennis!



Photo credit Twitter

LOVED-UP: Sandra and Feliciano.

HE'S currently ranked number 38 in the world.

And after winning at Queen's Club last year Spanish tennis star Feliciano Lopez, 36, showed he's on a roll after jetting off to Dubai for a sun-soaked luxury break with new love and model Sandra Gago, 22.

The pair have been rumoured to be dating for months and have now spent their first holiday together.

French bliss

SHE'S the singer and model who became First Lady of France.

And fans turned out in their droves to greet Carla Bruni Sarkozy as the 50-year-old arrived to perform a concert in Spanish capital Madrid.

The French-Italian performed at a number of venues in Spain to promote her fifth studio album French touch.



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NEWS EXTRA

Wrapped up

A 46-YEAR-OLD man has been arrested in Almeria after allegedly carrying more than 140 wraps of hashish inside him. A total of 146 wraps were reportedly removed from the man.

Tennis open

ALMERIA Tennis club will be one of 16 venues to host the Mutua Madrid Open sub 16 tournament. The club will host the tournament from January 26 to 28, with the final taking place in May.

New look

ALMERIAN television station InterAlmeria TV has changed its logo to promote the region's bid for gastronomy capital 2019. The channel has changed its schedule to also include a new section on events.

City bids for food title

FOOD, religion and music were front and centre in Almeria's bid at Madrid's International Tourism Fair which took place yesterday.

The bid includes having the city declared the Spanish Capital of Gastronomy in 2019, which is supported by the local hotel and tourism industry.

Almeria's bid, which has the backing of local authorities and businesses, aims to pitch the city as a must-visit for tourists.

The city is the first in Spain to make the bid for the 2019 title. A decision on which city will become the gastronomic capital is expected on October 17.

Almeria's presentation in Madrid featured leading figures in hospitality and cooking, including Michelin star chefs Yolanda Garcia and Jose Alvarez de La Costa.

Enrique Sanchez, from Canal Sur, Jose Luque, from the Palace Hotel, and Luis Arevalo were also part of the delegation. Jesus Almagro, from the Bocuse d'Or, who is dubbed the ninth-best chef in the world, also took part.



Photo by Diputación de Almería

TITLE BID: Almerian representatives at the International Tourism Festival (FITUR) in Madrid.

They were joined by the president of the Hotel and Catering Association of Almeria, Diego Garcia and president of the Association of Chefs, Pepe Torrente.

A presentation of the city's cuisine accompanied a video which showcases support from cultural and television personalities expressing support for Almeria's bid.

The bid also stressed Almeria's religious offering, with the city's Holy Week part of the bid

to attract tourists.

Carlos Sanchez, councillor for Culture, said the week is a traditional celebration of the city which helped to boost tourism, culture and jobs in Almeria.

"Almeria becomes living, solemn and participatory which is a tourist asset because of its enormous appeal," he said.

This year's first annual Cultural Fest also formed part of the bid. It has already sold 1,700 tickets in Spain and Europe.

Winter protocol activated

THE winter protocol has been kept active in Almeria on the province's roads, with personnel on alert to clear any snow.

Fifty-one officials are on alert to cover 1,200km of roads across the province, with extra reinforcements on standby as part of the Winter

Road Plan 2017-18.

It comes as the AL-5402 road between Bayacal and the station of Puerto de La Ragua was closed to clear snow. It is the only road to be closed so

far and provincial authorities said no settlement is isolated.

Oscar Liria, the member for development, unveiled the plan in order to prevent disruption to Almeria's roads

and to limit the effects of snow, rain and ice.

The officials include heads of the Provincial Road and Conservation Services and drivers operating machinery.

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Photo by Guardia Civil

Arrest after police witness drugs drop

WEEDED OUT: The blocks of drugs found in the car.

GUARDIA CIVIL officers say they have arrested a 40-year-old man who threw a 100 gram block of weed into a passing car in Almería.

Police say they also found and seized two other blocks of the same size in the vehicle.

The Sunday morning incident unfolded when a person was seen throwing a package through a car window on the A-7.

Police allege that they saw the drop and approached the vehicle, where they discovered two similar blocks hidden inside a toilet bag.

They say they then arrested the 40-year-old man, reportedly from Malaga and known as 'DLL,' on suspicion of a crime against public health.

Police did not specify whether the two other occupants of the car were arrested.

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Museum delay 'unjustified'

A FOUR YEAR delay in work on a museum in Seron has been criticised by the local Socialist (PSOE) party, who said it was "unjustified."

The Seron al Consistorio, a history museum in the town, first underwent work to complete it in 2014. A contract worth over €206,000 was finalised with the company doing the work in February of that year, with a lead time of four months.

Local PSOE council members have said responsibility for the delay lay with provincial council president Gabriel Amat, who signed the contract on behalf of local authorities. They said his management of the work had been "terrible."

Socialists added there was no protocol to control the meeting of contractual obligations and local authorities depended on the goodwill of companies to carry out the work.

Juan Antonio Lorenzo, the socialist mayor of Seron, said: "There is no cause or justification for this legal term of four months to have become four years."

He added the delays were causing the council financial problems as well as problems for the town's economy.

"This delay is undermining the tourist interests of the municipality of Seron," he said.

NEWS EXTRA

Maternal ward

WORKS on the brand new Mother and Child Hospital of Almería are going according to schedule according to Delegate of Equality, Health and Social Policies, Jose Maria Martin. The hospital is expected to provide health care by the start of 2019.

Council work

ALMANZORA Council has recognised workers with certificates handed out in the town hall. Mayor Antonio Fernandez and Maria Isabel Alarcon, economic development, handed out the certificates that detail the qualifications and abilities of those recognised.

Chasing stars

ALMERIA'S mayor has been criticised for not raising the move of the Geophysical Observatory with Madrid. Juan Carlos Perez Navas agreed to take up the issue after a motion supporting it passed unanimously last April.

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NEWS EXTRA

PM
meeting

MEMBERS of the Popular Party (PP) of Almería met Prime Minister Mario Rajoy at a national party meeting in Madrid. They were joined by Gabriel Amat, the provincial president, at their headquarters.

Great help

CARITAS KOOPERA Almería collected nearly 10 tons of clothes and shoes from containers in Berja. The charity, which employs the disadvantaged and helps people with clothing needs, will resell the clothes.

Big turnout

OVER 100 athletes took part in the Adapted Sports Project basketball match for people with special needs in the Albox Municipal Pavilion. Ten teams took part from Macael, Albox, Tijola, Velez Rubio and El Ejido.

An explosive piece of history

PALOMARES, Almería seems on the face of it to be an unlikely place to drop one of the most destructive weapons in history.

But yesterday (Wednesday) marks the day that just that happened. On January 17, 1966, an American B-52 bomber dropped its payload of hydrogen bombs over the town.

However, the bombs were not dropped in anger. But the incident, although accidental, would earn the Almerian town its place in the pages of Cold War history.

Captain Charles Wendorf, a B-52 captain in the US Air Force, was flying his plane laden with nuclear bombs on the morning of January 17 over the southern coast of Spain.

He was there for a mid-air refuel on a routine flight that took him from North Carolina via the Turkish-Soviet border.



Photo Credit: U.S. Naval Undersea Museum/ Facebook

NUKE: The H-bomb recovered from the sea after the crash.

The refuelling ended in catastrophe. The B-52 collided with the KC-135 refuelling plane and the two planes exploded after fuel leaked and ignited.

elling plane and the two planes exploded after fuel leaked and ignited.

Captain Wendorf and two of his crew managed to parachute to safety but the

crew of the KC-135 were killed.

Soon wreckage began to rain down over Palomares, then a small fishing town. No one on the ground was killed but the wreckage was soon joined by four hydrogen bombs, each with 70 times the destructive power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

One fell in the sea and the rest on land. While none of them detonated, two of the bombs released radioactive plutonium over the area on impact.

A search for the bombs by the US government quickly followed. The search for the bomb that fell in the sea is one of the largest underwater searches in history.

The effects of the incident can still be seen today. Areas of the town remain fenced off and radiation is in its soil. Locals still receive annual check-ups for radiation.

MEMBERS of the Andalusian authorities have called for an extra €6 million in funding for pre-school, school places, covering children under three years old.

It comes as data showed the number of such places in Almería had risen by over 13 per cent since last year.

Call for pre-school funding

The data also showed there were nearly 2,000 vacant places available in Almería. The total number of places rose from 10,250 in 2016/17 to 11,589 this academic year, an increase of nearly 1,400.

The funding also provides families with discounts of up to 100 per cent depending on their circumstances. The maximum price for an eight-hour day at a nursery is currently €278.88.

Current discounts were launched in March last year and start at 10 per cent, rising progressively to 100 per cent.

The places are free for circumstances including the child having

been taken into state care, children requiring extra care and families whose income is below €3,727.57 a year per head. In the case of single parent families the amount is €5,591.35.

There are also free places offered to the children of women who are victims of gender violence, as well as victims of terrorism or their children.

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NEWS EXTRA

Healthy eating

UNICA group presented the 'Healthy Menu' to a conference at the Scientific-Technological Park in Almería on Tuesday. The menu is designed to contain the necessary nutrients for a healthy and balanced diet.

Pilgrim visit

THOUSANDS of pilgrims visited the beach of Torregarcía for the traditional Blessed Virgin of the Sea celebration last Sunday. It marks the appearance of a carving of the Virgin Mary over 500 years ago.

Food centre

LA UNION, Spain's leading fruit and vegetable marketer, has opened a new centre in La Canada. The firm now has over 25 centres spread between Almería and Granada.

Rio Aguas cleaned up

Local mayor pays a visit

MOJACAR'S mayor and the regional environment minister visited works being carried out to clean up a 1.5km stretch of the Rio Aguas in the Laguna de Mojacar.

Work includes clearing the protected area, forestry treatment and replacing the river bank's waterway sediments.

Work began at the start of October last year and has been done in four phases with nearly €300,000 invested in the project. They are set to continue until February.

Rosmari Cano, the mayor of Mojacar, said she was pleased the work was finally being carried out.

The town requested the work be carried out because of the danger posed by the bad state of the waterway. Works are set to be followed by a study to look at extending the cleaning of the riverbed.

Local species of trees are



CLEAN UP: Rosmari Cano (third from right) with Jose Fiscal (centre) visited the site.

currently being planted in the affected area, including white poplars, tarays and oleander, which are said to be good for dealing with CO2 emissions.

Jose Fiscal, the environment minister, said work on the area's ecosystem would

protect riverbanks against floods and help to combat climate change.

He added the work has already greatly improved drainage issues with more than 80 per cent of it treated.

Long-standing problems with the Hydraulic Public

Domain, the guarantee to protect water and its ecosystem, are now resolved he said.

The area has been protected for the last 30 years under Almería's Provincial Plan for the Protection of the Physical Environment.

Fall leaves man stuck for a day

AN elderly man who fell in his home and was stuck for a day was rescued by a Guardia Civil officer in Zurgena, Almería on Friday.

The 80-year-old, who lives alone and struggles with mobility issues, fell in his dining room the day before he was found by the off-duty officer.

Concerns were first raised to the officer on Friday afternoon, after neighbours told him the man had not been seen since Thursday.

They said his car was parked by his house but he had not answered the door or phone calls.

The officer then went to the house where he found one of the doors open. He found the man lying on his dining room floor, conscious and covered in towels and sheets.

The man told the officer he had suffered from severe back pain before he fell. He was taken by ambulance to Hospital of the Immaculate in Huerca-Overa.

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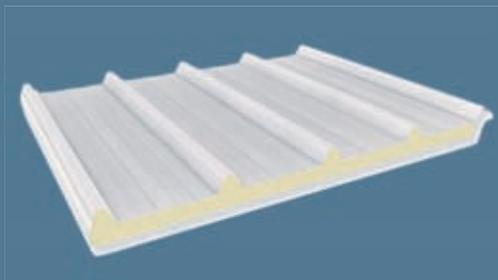
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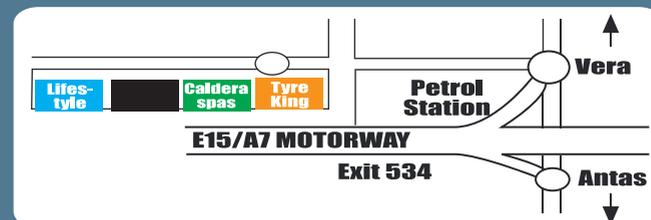
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San Anton comes to town

THIS Monday saw the start of the San Anton festival, which was opened by the president of the Almeria Press Association and Canal Sur Almeria editor Covadonga Porrua.

Mr Porrua declared the ceremony open at the hermitage of San Anton.

The festival has been held annually since the 17th century. Events have been taking place across the province to mark the festival.

Sunday marks the end of the festival with a mass in honour of San Anton at the San Juan church.

There will also be a performance from the Harmony Chorus and the traditional blessing of animals.

Another procession of the San Anton image will pass through the streets around the Plaza de Pavia.

Newly paved road 'could cause damage'



'NOT LOGICAL': Locals next to the paved over part of the Sierra Alhamilla.

By Joe Gerrard

WORK on a street in Almeria could damage cars and injure pedestrians, the local Socialist party have claimed.

The Sierra Alhamilla, in the Piedras Rondas area of the city, was recently dug up for workers to access gas pipes beneath it.

The street, which has since been paved over, is one of the city's main connecting

roads. There are concerns the new paving is uneven, which could damage cars and injure pedestrians.

Indalecio Gutierrez, a Socialist councillor in Almeria, said the governing People's Party was responsible for making sure new paving is suitable.

"The least that can be asked of the City Council is to leave any street that has been opened by any company or the City Council

itself how it was," Mr Gutierrez said.

"That is common sense and this is not in any way logical."

He added the mayor and local authorities needed to be vigilant in making sure companies restored roads properly after work was finished.

"The road has remained rough and bumpy which could cause damage to vehicles and pedestrians to fall," he said.

NEWS EXTRA

Cantoria works

WORK on the Almanzora picnic park will enter a new phase with plans to build two platforms and restore the Plaza del Convento in Cantoria. The works are set to cost €160,000 and take 10 months.

Tourism bid

ALMERIA sent a delegation to the International Tourism Fair of Madrid 2018 to promote the region's tourism offering. They presented the 'Costa de Almeria' film to a roundtable of Spanish actors and actresses.

Farm fires

ANDALUCIAN authorities have deployed a monitoring device to detect illegal farm fires during the San Anton bonfire festival on Tuesday. It will operate in Nijar, Almeria and Carboneras throughout the week.

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NEWS EXTRA

River abandoned

THE Rambla de las Hortichuelas has being totally abandoned since the local council took over responsibility for it in 2008, the local branch of the Socialist-Workers party (PSOE) has said.

Nijar works

THE mayor of Nijar and the town's development councillor visited Pueblo blanco last Friday morning to see work being carried out to connect public spaces such as the town's plaza and schools.

Tour of Spain

THE town of Huerca-Overa will feature in this year's Tour of Spain cycling race route. It will be a first for the town, with the race also visiting Roquetas de Mar in the region.



GETTING HEATED: Chefs at the Degustho Awards in 2016.

All fired up for food festival

ANTICIPATION is already simmering for this year's Almería Gastronomic Festival, set to take place from Friday April 13 to Sunday April 15.

The festival, known as the Degustho and in its fourth year, showcases highlights of the region's cuisine and features some of the best-known chefs from the region and beyond.

Huerca-Overa is set to host to the festival, which will see Michelin star and avant-garde chefs join food lovers for a series of events and activities.

So far the schedule includes showcases from some of the chefs, as well as tastings, meet and greets with some of Spain's best-known chefs and cooking contests. There will also be

workshops for both adults and children.

Monica Navarro, the councillor for Tourism in Huerca-Overa, said the town was well-known nationally for its gastronomic heritage and the festival was part of the Almería region's brand.

"For another year great chefs will come to our town with their nationally-recognised prestige, many of them from the region. "Mark April 13, 14 and 15 in your calendars as a must-visit to Huerca-Overa to the Gastronomic Festival Degustho Almería where you can enjoy gastronomy and take advice and secrets from great chefs," she said.

Some of the workshops

aimed at children are set to focus on the importance of healthy eating and nutrition. Others will seek to give children new skills in cooking more generally.

"Our children continue to be great protagonists in Degustho where, in addition to children's workshops this year, there will be a programme designed to give them new knowledge in cooking," Cllr Navarro said.

The festival is also set to feature the annual Degustho awards which recognise culinary personalities and their work. It is sponsored by the Provincial Delegation of Almería and the Sabores de Almería, which funds cultural events in the region.

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Youths behaving badly

TWO youths have been arrested for threatening a waiter and refusing to pay for drinks at a bar in a leisure facility in Almería City. They are also accused of assaulting two people with a knife, who came to the waiter's aid.

According to local media reports, the police were called to the Virgen del Mar square when a woman claimed two individuals were threatening her partner with a knife. The assailants allegedly fled as soon as officers arrived on the scene, but were then later intercepted on the

Antonio Gonzalez Egea street.

Police later discovered the attackers refused to pay for the drinks they had ordered in a bar and threatened the waiter. Upon leaving the bar, two men who were passing by and witnessed the incident tried to hold them, but the assailants threatened and intimidated them with a knife, as well as punching and kicking them.

The accused face charges of theft and assault and await trial, with one set to be tried before the juvenile court as he was underage.

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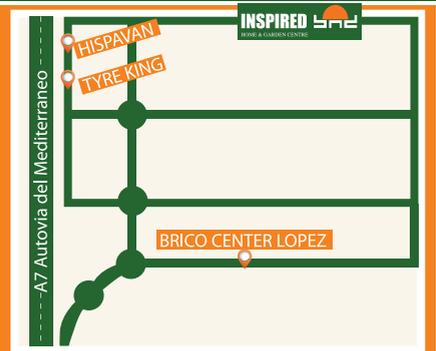
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Hotel death probe

Progress for family as case goes on

By Matt Ford

FIVE British men questioned in the wake of a tragic hotel accident may be ordered to return to Spain.

Kirsty Maxwell, 27, from Livingston, West Lothian, last year plunged to her death from a Benidorm hotel balcony.

She fell from a 10th-floor room in which the men were staying after apparently entering by mistake.

The incident came after the Scot flew to Spain for a hen party alongside 19 friends.

And the legal team working on behalf of the newlywed's family have now requested the investigating judge to order a full reconstruction of events leading up to her death.

It comes after lawyer Luis Miguel Zumaquero managed to overturn an earlier decision which blocked husband Adam and parents Brian and Denise from knowing what DNA tests had been carried out on the clothes she was wearing when she died.

He claimed in a written document submitted in court that Mrs Maxwell was fleeing "a sexual attack," and demanded to know if DNA belonging to any of the five men who were in the room was



MYSTERY: Police have so far failed to reveal where Kirsty's clothes are being kept.

found on the clothes.

The appeal was accepted and the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Alicante, where the post-mortem examination took place, must now provide full details including the location of the clothes, which the family have been battling to

find for months.

Police must also reveal what was done to find and interview potential witnesses, after a report concluded that many hotel guests were not spoken to.

A source close to the family told UK media: "The family and her lawyers are concerned that the five men under investigation will not come back to Spain if they are ordered to stand trial and feel they should be remanded in prison. "All the weight of the investigation has fallen on her family and those assisting them because of the passive attitude of the police and state prosecutors, who have not requested any tests or examinations which could clarify what happened."

Kirsty, who married Adam in September 2016, had been out partying before going to bed in her ninth-floor room around 4am on April 29, 2017.

She later woke up and left the room fully-dressed before being let into the mens' room one floor above after knocking on the door.



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On the run

A BRITISH conman suspected of cheating a woman out of her life savings worth nearly €1 million may be using a false name and Swiss passport to cover his tracks.

According to UK media sources, Mark Acklom may be on the run using the alias Marc Long. He is believed to have taken on the name while in Switzerland back in 2014, where he was able to obtain an official passport and Swiss residency permit.

Both the passport and residency permit are believed to be still valid.

Acklom, aged 44, is currently in hiding with his Spanish wife, Maria Yolanda Ros Rodriguez, aged 47, and their two daughters, aged six and eight.

He is accused of scamming Brit Carolyn Woods out of her life savings worth more than €953,000 after promising to marry her.

According to Ms Woods,



Rebecca Williams/twitter

WANTED: Mark Acklom was accused of cheating a woman out of her life savings.

Acklom told her he was an MI6 agent and Swiss banker and tricked her into lending him her life savings, before fleeing with the money.

It is also believed he is being investigated over other allegations, including failing to pay an architect more than €5,600 for work he had commissioned in Bath.

The conman is wanted under a European arrest warrant - which is not valid in Switzerland - and has also been arrested three times in Spain in separate charges.

Acklom was last seen in May sitting in a cafe in Geneva, Switzerland, talking to a fellow fugitive, Spaniard Jose Manuel Costas Estevez.

‘Kamikaze’ crash Newly-weds killed in accident

A NEWLY-WED couple was among three people who died after a car sped the wrong way down a major road in Spain crashing into their vehicle.

The accident happened near Valdaliza (Cantabria) on the A-8 at kilometre 252 in the Asturias in the north of Spain.

The 48-year-old driver of the car, Rafael Quevedo Argumosa, which was on the wrong side of the carriageway died as well as the two occupants of the vehicle he smashed into head on.

They were the 26-year-old male driver, David Duque Alario and his 24-year-old passenger and wife Ana Capellin Gonzalez.



Photo by Facebook

CUT SHORT: David Duque Alario and his wife Ana Capellin Gonzalez.

lez.

Police are investigating how the ‘kamikaze’ car came to be on the wrong side of the carriageway and are studying evidence from roadside cameras for clues.

Nightclub horror

EMERGENCY services in Madrid have confirmed at least 26 people were injured when the second-storey floor of a nightclub gave way on Saturday night.

At least 11 people were

later taken to hospital to be treated for their injuries following the incident in the city’s Carabanchel neighbourhood.

Police have now opened an investigation to find out the details of the accident and find out what caused the floor to collapse.



MADRID: At least 26 people were injured.

Portuguese earthquake felt in Spain

AN earthquake in Portugal has been felt in parts of Andalusia according to emergency services.

With a magnitude of 5.2 on the Richter scale, the quake - which hit the Evora region - was felt in Huelva, Sevilla and Cordoba according to 112 emergency phone line, who received calls from distressed residents in those areas.

No injuries or damages were reported when the tremors were felt at around 12.50pm last Monday.

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Brit seriously injured

A BRITISH man is believed to be seriously injured after falling around 20 feet while staying at an apartment complex in Gran Canaria. The 21-year-old reportedly fell while staying at the La Villa Santa Ana holiday complex in Playa del Ingles, a popular resort among tourists.

Local media sources revealed that the emergency services were called in the early hours of last Saturday morning. The man was rushed to the hos-



GRAN CANARIA: Man fell from apartment complex.

pital suffering from serious head injuries. Police are reported to be investigating whether the man had been drinking at the time of the incident.



HIGH PRICES: Passengers who want their bags in the hold now have to pay.

Passengers frustrated

New Ryanair hand luggage restrictions brought in

THE new changes to Ryanair's hand luggage restrictions started from Monday and already have some passengers feeling frustrated.

Travellers will still be allowed two free bags, one large (55 x 40 x 20cm) weighing no more than 10kg and a smaller bag (no larger than 35 x 20 x 20cm). However, from now on, unless the passenger pays extra for priority boarding, which usually costs €5 per person, the bag will instantly be tagged at the departure gate and put in the hold.

The bag will then appear on the baggage carousel with the rest of the luggage once the plane has arrived at its destination. The new policy was announced last summer, and was initially scheduled to be enforced on November 1, but was pushed back until mid-January.

Meanwhile, the airline has cut the cost of some checked-in bags and increased the weight limit to 20kg, up from the previous allowance of 15kg.

Although the budget airline says the changes will cost it around €50 million, some fre-

quent flyers have complained that the new rules will cost them more money and cause them to waste time in the arrivals hall waiting for their bags.

Frances Whitmore said "I fly frequently, and it's a pain that I now have to pay either more money or waste at least 30 minutes waiting for the bag to arrive."

Other passengers have complained that these changes will apply to existing bookings without their permission, according to UK media sources.

Tragedy strikes

A THREE-YEAR-OLD boy has died from meningitis in the town of Archidona in the Malaga province of Andalusia, southern Spain.

Meningitis is an acute inflammation of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord.

The swelling from meningitis typically triggers symptoms such as a headache, fever and a stiff neck. Early meningitis symptoms may mimic the flu and may develop over several

hours or over a few days.

Possible signs and symptoms in anyone older than the age of two include:

- Sudden high fever
- Stiff neck
- Severe headache that seems different than normal
- Headache with nausea or vomiting
- Confusion or difficulty concentrating

- Seizures
- Sleepiness or difficulty waking
- Sensitivity to light
- No appetite or thirst
- Skin rash (sometimes, such as in meningococcal meningitis)
- Viral infections are the most common cause of meningitis, followed by bacterial infections.

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A holiday to remember

MEMBERS and guests of Dames in Turre enjoyed a wonderful four-day Christmas holiday at the La Zenia Spa hotel.

On the morning of Christ-

mas Day, a spectacle was seen with hundreds of local people on the adjoining beach, dressed in Santa outfits, having family barbecues, games and listening to live music.

Christmas Day lunch was served in a private room with another party of guests. The food, service and presentation of tables and the room were all excellent. After the meal, Mrs

Santa came to visit bringing gifts.

There was entertainment, music and dancing and on Christmas Night a really enjoyable Flamenco Show.

On Boxing Day many of them managed to find a bargain in the La Zenia Boulevard.

On the way home they even diverted to Cartagena for lunch.



FESTIVE FUN: Dames in Turre enjoying Christmas at La Zenia.



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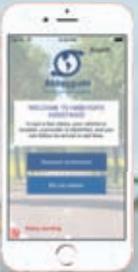
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47 People died in road traffic accidents in Spain over the Christmas and New Year holiday period according to the National Traffic Directorate, a 34 per cent increase from 2016.

Running into success

PEOPLE turned out in droves to take part in the Almanzora Half Marathon and raised more than

€2,200 for the Spanish Cancer Association (AECC).

The race started in Huerca-Overa, and the participants followed the 20km circuit before crossing the finish line in the el Recreo Park in Cuevas del Almanzora.

There was also a walking version of the race which set off at 8.30am, while the runners started at 10.30am.

A race for children was also held on Avenida de Barcelona, prior to the arrival of the participants.

The mayor of Cuevas del Almanzora, Antonio Fernandez and the councillor for Sport Miriam Quintana were in charge of firing the starting pistol and presenting the trophies to the winners.

The civil servants highlighted how well received the event had been this year by the local community, with more than 200 people

taking part, double the number of last year.

The money raised by the participants who took part, has been donated to the town's AECC branch, whose members cheered on the participants at both the start and the finish line.

The winners were as follows:

- Men**
1. Pedro Gonzalez Martinez
 2. Manuel Najas De La Cruz
 3. Alberto Fernandez Martinez

- Women**
1. Maria Del Carmen Ortega Ruiz
 2. Esther Galvez Jiménez
 3. Maria Segura Losilla

- Local participants**
1. Jose Francisco Gonzalez Cervellera
 2. Elias Manchon Lopez
 3. Antonio Jimenez Perez

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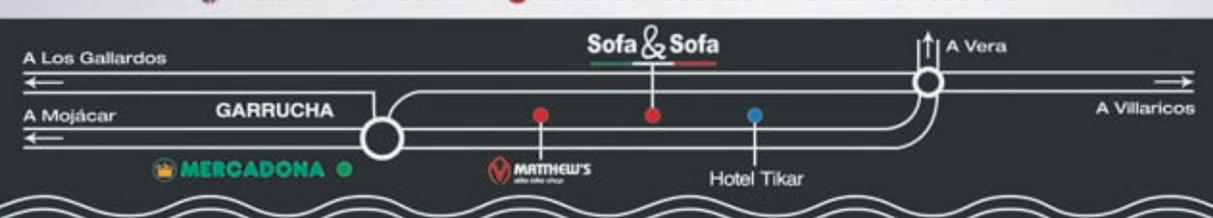
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*Pamela (Secretary),
La Protectora de Ani-
males de El Campello,
Costa Blanca*

We would sincerely like to thank you for giving us a FRONT page, we were all absolutely delighted.

Thank you so much and thank you for all your support over the years.

*Bobby Griffiths,
Age Care Association,
Costa del Sol*

Thank you so much. Great article! Health and Happiness for 2018.

*Lorraine, John and family
plus all the team at El
Oceano,
Costa del Sol*

Well done to you all and really you have made such a difference. We wish you and yours a truly happy 2018.

*John and Gray,
Benidorm,
Costa Blanca*



GOOD FUN: The Indalo Players.

Stage door open to all

THE Indalo Players production of 'The Speakeasy Murder' finished on a high note in Kuki's Bar where they played to yet another enthusiastic full house.

The year 2018 looks to be even better for the group, as on tomorrow (Friday) they are appearing in the Rose and Crown which has already sold out. Don't worry if you have missed out so far with 'The Speakeasy Murder' as they hope to be back soon and have other venues lined up for February and March from here to Huerca-Overa.

As it has proved to be so popular, they have another Murder Mystery set on a Mississippi river boat in the mid 1800's and they have one planned which will be set in a desert hotel. Sort of 'Follow

That Camel' but with guns. As usual there will be music, dancers, high stakes gambling and a dastardly crime to solve.

As a proper drama group they also want to take advantage of the facilities available to them and stage some full productions in the Cine Teatro Regio in Vera.

This year is going to be a great time for them, so if you want to be part of the exciting group ring: 671 810 819 or email: williamwhite9553@aol.com.

They welcome new members with open arms, especially if you are young or just want to have a go. Between them they have many, many years of experience and are more than willing to pass it on. They definitely have a job or part for you.

Fab February for the RBL

THE Mojacar branch of the Royal British Legion have started the year in full swing.

And there are a number of exciting events planned for February, kicking off with the regular branch meeting at the Centro de Multi Usos (Artisan Centre) on Thursday February 1 from 11.15am. The guest speaker will be Kevin Boorman.

This is followed by a fish 'n' chips quiz night from 7.30pm at Oasis Bar in Palomares the following evening (Friday

2), with entry for the quiz - which starts at 8.30pm - costing €2 per person.

On Thursday February 15 there is a branch coffee morning from 11.30am at a to-be-confirmed venue in Mojacar.

And on Wednesday February 28 the branch celebrates Andalucia Day with lunch at the San Bernabe restaurant in Mojacar at 1pm for a 1.30pm start.

The branch is also seeking a poppy coordinator and would appreciate applicants.

Further information on all the above can be obtained by emailing Andrew Richardson on rblmojacar.socialevents@gmail.com.

20%

The drop in international tourists travelling to Cataluña since the illegal referendum in October last year, according to figures from the World Tourism Organisation.



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A1316 125,000 €

Mojácar Playa



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A1320 245,000 €

Mojácar Playa



South facing 3 bed, 2 bath, penthouse apartment of 98m2. Large terrace. Mountain & sea views. Community pool & parking. Excellent location.

A1313 170,000 €

Mojácar Playa



South facing 2 bed, 1 bath, penthouse golf apartment of 56m2. 13m2 terrace. Sea views. Community pools & underground parking.

A1325 84,995 €

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DV1447 380,000 €

Mojácar Playa



Independent 3 bed, 2 bath villa of 135m2 in need of some modernisation but in a great location. Sea & mountain views. Adjacent plot of 1,000m2 also available. POA.

DV1448 380,000 €

Mojácar Playa



3 bed, 2 bath detached villa + a 1 bed, 1 bath, annex of 135m2 on a plot of 400m2. Large garage. Ample terraces & solarium. Great location.

DV1449 360,000 €

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Trains on trial

TRIALS have been launched on what is claimed to be the first main line passenger train in Europe to be powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG).

The project is a joint venture between train operator Renfe, Gas Natural Fenosa, and Enogas, and reflects the government's drive to develop vehicles with alternative energy (VEA).

The trials began in Asturias on January 8.

London calling Spanish

A LEADING Spanish investment bank is looking to move its headquarters to London because it believes the capital will keep its place as the centre for European finance.

Madrid-based Alantra Partners SA oversees £3.3 billion (€3.7 billion) of assets and employs 350 staff across 21 countries.

Two insiders told Bloomberg that the company is considering how many employees to relocate to the UK if the move goes ahead.

However, any plans are unofficial at present and a spokeswoman for the

bank declined to comment.

A number of large banks have spoken of plans to leave London in the event of a no-deal Brexit, including Goldman Sachs Group Inc, Deutsche Bank AG and Bank of America Corp.

Last year Sam Woods, CEO of the Bank of England's Prudential Regulation Authority, warned up to 75,000 banking and insurance jobs could be lost if no agreement can be reached.

Alantra went public with its merger with Dinamia Capital in 2015, ignoring Brexit fears to take over London-based advisers Catalyst Corporate Fi-

nance last October.

Executive Chairman Santiago Eguidazu justified the move by labelling Britain the most important mergers and acquisitions market in Europe.

Currently financial institutions in the UK are granted 'passporting' rights which allow them to do business with any other firm in the European Economic Area without red tape.

The EU's chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, has previously insisted that British banks will no longer have those rights after Brexit.

Economy on the upswing

PRIME MINISTER Mariano Rajoy has announced that the Spanish economy grew by 3.1 per cent in 2017.

He added that the political crisis in the autonomous region of Cataluña was "the only shadow looming over the economy."

Speaking at an investment forum in Madrid, Rajoy added that 611,000 jobs had been created in the country last year.

Government forecasts predict that up to 2020, the annual growth for the economy will be at 2.5 per cent.

Quote of the Week

"SPAIN is growing in a strong, balanced and sustainable way, intensively generating employment, regaining competitiveness and showing good prospects for the future." Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy.



Photo by Wikimedia

ROBIN HOOD TAX: Sanchez's proposal has upset financiers.

Socialist Party plans to rob banks

THE Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) has proposed a radical new measure to rescue Spain's faltering pensions system that it would fund via an 8 per cent corporation tax increase on banks.

Speaking in Madrid on Tuesday, PSOE leader Pedro Sanchez announced the €1 billion policy which was swiftly dismissed by the banking sector.

Mr Sanchez said he would also like to see a financial transaction tax order to collect another several hundred mil-

lion euros in revenue.

The PSOE's economy and jobs spokesman, Manuel Escudero, said that the proposals were not about "class revenge" but about "social justice."

However, banking professionals have told Spanish media that the "extraordinary" measure would be counter-productive.

Economy Minister Luis de Guindos dismissed the proposal and said that growth, not higher taxes, were the solution to the pensions problem.

» BUSINESS EXTRA

Having a gas

SPANISH energy company Repsol is considering the sale of its 20 per cent stake in national utility Gas Natural to Luxembourg-based private equity firm CVC Capital, with the deal set to be worth around €4.1 billion should it go ahead.

Capital gain

THE International Air Transport Association (IATA) is to move its global hub to Spanish capital Madrid, with the expanded offices to handle the operations of 280 airlines and 50,000 travel agencies selling 315 million air tickets annually.

Blast off

ROCKET company PLD Space - headquartered in Elche, Alicante - has received a €2 million grant from the European Commission for development of two launchers designed for small satellites, boosting the total raised to more than €9 million.

E-money move for phone giant

TELEFONICA is to issue domestic bonds worth €200 million.

It comes as the Spanish broadband and telecommunications giant announced that part of the transaction will be handled using Blockchain technology, a 'digital wallet' used to process Bitcoin and other virtual currencies.

The operation, which will be performed by the

multinational's German subsidiary Telefonica Deutschland, has a maturity period of just over a year.

The company said in a statement that it would "demonstrate the capabilities of the Blockchain technology in combination with a traditional financing process and with a greater number of investors."

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LONDON - FTSE 100

CLOSING PRICES JANUARY 15

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Anglo American	1,772.00	3.80	0.21	24,836.38
Associated British Foods	2,843.50	18.50	0.65	22,364.80
Admiral Group	1,887.75	0.75	0.04	5,419.73
Ashtead Group	2,101.00	-4.00	-0.19	10,487.86
Antofagasta	1,045.00	13.00	1.26	10,174.04
Aviva	534.30	0.70	0.13	21,411.64
AstraZeneca	5,108.00	-24.00	-0.47	64,982.49
BAE Systems	593.50	3.90	0.66	18,785.88
Barclays	196.71	2.21	1.14	33,182.47
British American Tobacco	4,990.25	22.25	0.45	113,947.68
Barratt Developments	624.40	3.20	0.52	6,289.61
Berkeley Group Holdings	4,138.50	13.50	0.33	5,585.88
British Land Co	672.60	-0.40	-0.06	6,715.48
BHP Billiton	1,645.60	-1.80	-0.11	34,794.27
Bunzl	2,041.00	1.00	0.05	6,856.36
BP	532.55	-2.25	-0.42	106,200.68
Burberry Group	1,786.00	-5.00	-0.28	7,592.46
BT Group	274.45	-0.45	-0.16	27,275.10
Coca-Cola HBC	2,407.00	7.00	0.29	8,815.63
Carnival	5,050.00	10.00	0.20	10,558.48
Centrica	143.90	0.75	0.52	8,016.81
Compass Group	1,553.25	2.75	0.18	24,549.65
Croda International	4,397.50	-11.50	-0.26	5,793.11
CRH	2,695.00	-9.00	-0.33	22,683.98
DCC	7,725.00	25.00	0.32	6,868.47
Diageo	2,625.00	-16.00	-0.61	65,661.40
Direct Line Insurance Group	371.80	0.80	0.22	5,101.25
Evrax	375.85	0.85	0.23	5,370.20
Experian	1,673.25	-3.25	-0.19	15,420.52
easyJet	1,531.00	1.50	0.10	6,075.30
Ferguson	5,570.00	90.00	1.64	13,631.82
Fresnillo	1,455.25	18.75	1.31	10,585.48
G4S	289.80	2.90	1.01	4,451.52
GKN	428.50	8.50	2.02	7,213.41
Glencore	410.50	2.95	0.72	58,665.77
GlaxoSmithKline	1,342.50	-10.50	-0.78	67,081.04
Hargreaves Lansdown	1,822.50	9.00	0.50	8,601.77
Halma	1,288.50	1.50	0.12	4,885.98
Hammerson	518.30	2.10	0.41	4,099.80
HSBC Holdings	785.30	-6.40	-0.81	158,303.92
International Consolidated Airlines Group	668.20	-0.60	-0.09	13,697.35
InterContinental Hotels Group	4,782.00	2.00	0.04	9,081.53
3i Group	955.10	4.50	0.47	9,248.17
Imperial Brands	3,140.00	-20.00	-0.63	30,138.09
Informa	745.60	-0.60	-0.08	6,148.73
Intertek Group	5,202.00	-10.00	-0.19	8,411.68
ITV	171.30	3.30	1.96	6,762.69
Just Eat	798.00	-0.40	-0.05	5,428.75
Johnson Matthey	3,211.00	47.00	1.49	6,123.40
Kingfisher	349.50	1.40	0.40	7,528.17

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Land Securities Group	984.75	10.35	1.06	7,224.69
Legal & General Group	275.00	0.30	0.11	16,367.83
Lloyds Banking Group ORD	70.44	-0.06	-0.09	50,740.93
London Stock Exchange Grp	3,690.50	-9.50	-0.26	12,829.26
Micro Focus International	2,281.50	3.50	0.15	9,920.37
Mediclinic International	604.70	-0.30	-0.05	4,460.33
Marks & Spencer Group	310.40	1.20	0.39	5,023.71
Mondi	1,937.00	13.50	0.70	9,339.63
Morrison (Wm) Supermarkets	229.05	0.95	0.42	5,373.38
National Grid	843.65	1.35	0.16	28,496.63
NMC Health	3,076.00	-26.00	-0.84	6,341.23
Next	4,990.50	0.50	0.01	7,270.94
Old Mutual Group	230.15	1.35	0.59	11,286.05
Paddy Power Betfair	8,415.00	-45.00	-0.53	7,154.99
Prudential	1,976.50	3.00	0.15	51,057.91
Persimmon	2,654.00	7.00	0.26	8,175.43
Pearson	725.30	2.30	0.32	5,786.40
Reckitt Benckiser Group	6,812.00	10.00	0.15	47,872.79
Royal Bank of Scotland Group	300.70	-1.70	-0.56	36,180.84
Royal Dutch Shell	2,563.25	-10.25	-0.40	118,307.30
RELX	1,655.75	-3.25	-0.20	17,632.10
Rio Tinto	4,171.50	1.50	0.04	56,310.08
Rolls-Royce Group	856.80	-4.00	-0.46	15,926.61
Randgold Resources	7,380.00	78.00	1.07	6,869.47
RSA Insurance Group	627.00	0.00	0.00	6,413.18
Rentokil Initial	309.40	-1.60	-0.51	5,714.11
Sainsbury (J)	252.20	-0.50	-0.20	5,534.69
Schroders	3,633.50	8.50	0.23	8,193.31
Sage Group (The)	809.20	-2.20	-0.27	8,774.01
Segro	575.70	1.10	0.19	5,762.82
Shire	3,574.00	-7.00	-0.20	32,579.32
Smurfit Kappa Group	2,530.00	-4.00	-0.16	6,001.80
Sky	1,008.75	-1.25	-0.12	17,362.07
Standard Life Aberdeen	441.20	0.10	0.02	13,140.09
Smith (DS)	501.30	-1.70	-0.34	5,371.55
Smiths Group	1,652.75	0.75	0.05	6,537.58
Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust	468.60	0.60	0.13	6,573.85
Smith & Nephew	1,262.75	-3.75	-0.30	11,084.65
SSE	1,328.25	7.25	0.55	13,400.97
Standard Chartered	822.70	-10.30	-1.24	27,461.57
St James's Place	1,243.00	0.50	0.04	6,573.79
Severn Trent	2,046.00	31.00	1.54	4,760.80
Tesco	205.55	0.65	0.32	16,784.61
TUI AG	1,586.00	-1.00	-0.06	9,321.83
Taylor Wimpey	198.68	0.83	0.42	6,480.42
Unilever	3,995.50	11.50	0.29	49,073.60
United Utilities Group	771.10	5.30	0.69	5,221.90
Vodafone Group	227.93	-1.42	-0.62	61,177.58
WPP Group	1,359.75	5.25	0.39	17,201.24
Whitbread	3,935.00	34.00	0.87	7,155.49

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COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE%	CHANGE	VOLUME(M)
3M	244,470	+0.89%	2,160	145,435.59
AMERICAN EXPRESS	100,9700	+0.24%	0,2400	87,381.18
APPLE	177,090	+1.03%	1,810	900,816.89
BOEING CO	336,210	+2.47%	8,090	199,429.47
CATERPILLAR	170,300	+0.65%	1,100	101,162.51
CHEVRON	133,60	+0.78%	1,03	253,148.75
CISCO SYSTEMS	40,870	+1.92%	0,770	201,156.47
COCA-COLA	46,15	+0.24%	0,11	196,715.01
DOWDUPONT	75,41	+0.25%	0,19	175,772.81
EXXON MOBIL	87,52	+0.68%	0,59	370,153.59
GENERAL ELECTRIC	18,7600	-1.37%	-0,2600	162,506.20
GOLDMAN SACHS	257,03	+0.74%	1,90	96,578.70
HOME DEPOT	196,4200	+0.89%	1,7400	232,381.98
IBM	163,14	-0.65%	-1,06	151,604.63
INTEL CORP	43,2400	-0.39%	-0,1700	202,082.40
J.P.MORGAN CHASE	112,6700	+1.65%	1,8300	388,713.36
JOHNSON & JOHNSON	145,7600	+0.67%	0,9700	392,017.01
MC DONALD'S CORP	173,5700	+0.10%	0,1800	138,279.81
MERCK AND CO. NEW	58,66	+1.84%	1,06	159,883.58
MICROSOFT	89,600	+1.73%	1,520	690,031.50
NIKE	64,67	+0.59%	0,38	83,803.78
PFIZER	36,5400	-0.05%	-0,0200	218,012.87
PROCTER AND GAMBLE	89,610	-0.60%	-0,540	227,298.76
TRAVELERS CIES	134,73	+1.81%	2,39	36,773.78
UNITED TECHNOLOGIE	136,58	+1.18%	1,59	108,900.98
UNITEDHEALTH GROUP	228,64	+1.44%	3,25	220,676.04
VERIZON COMMS	51,86	-0.48%	-0,25	212,008.54
VISA	120,09	+0.21%	0,25	217,346.54
WAL-MART STORES	100,8700	+0.85%	0,8500	299,511.58
WALT DISNEY CO	112,4700	+1.33%	1,4800	169,019.06

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NASDAQ

CLOSING PRICES JANUARY 15

COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE NET / %
Most Advanced		
Atara Biotherapeutics, Inc.	\$ 28.25	6.10 ▲ 27.54%
Performant Financial Corporation	\$ 2.31	0.37 ▲ 19.07%
Tintri, Inc.	\$ 6.81	0.94 ▲ 16.01%
Astronics Corporation	\$ 47.35	6.38 ▲ 15.57%
Ocular Therapeutix, Inc.	\$ 5.60	0.69 ▲ 14.05%
Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 5.72	0.68 ▲ 13.49%
Synaptics Incorporated	\$ 49.76	5.86 ▲ 13.35%
argenx SE	\$ 70.52	8.13 ▲ 13.03%
Kala Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 15.60	1.75 ▲ 12.64%
Tuniu Corporation	\$ 8.54	0.93 ▲ 12.22%
Mid Penn Bancorp	\$ 37.50	3.645 ▲ 10.77%
Most Declined		
Xunlei Limited	\$ 16.63	6.27 ▼ 27.38%
Concert Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 20.15	7.53 ▼ 27.20%
Videocon d2h Limited	\$ 8.58	1.24 ▼ 12.63%
Famous Dave's of America, Inc.	\$ 5.90	0.70 ▼ 10.61%
TRACON Pharmaceuticals, Inc.	\$ 2.90	0.30 ▼ 9.38%
Pain Therapeutics, Inc.	\$ 7.80	0.71 ▼ 8.34%
Axovant Sciences Ltd.	\$ 2.09	0.18 ▼ 7.93%
Sientra, Inc.	\$ 11.65	0.87 ▼ 6.95%
ChemoCentryx, Inc.	\$ 8.38	0.62 ▼ 6.89%
Enphase Energy, Inc.	\$ 2.24	0.16 ▼ 6.67%
ChinaCache International Holdings Ltd.	\$ 2.70	0.19 ▼ 6.57%

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PRICE MOVEMENT

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£0.0062

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£0.0155

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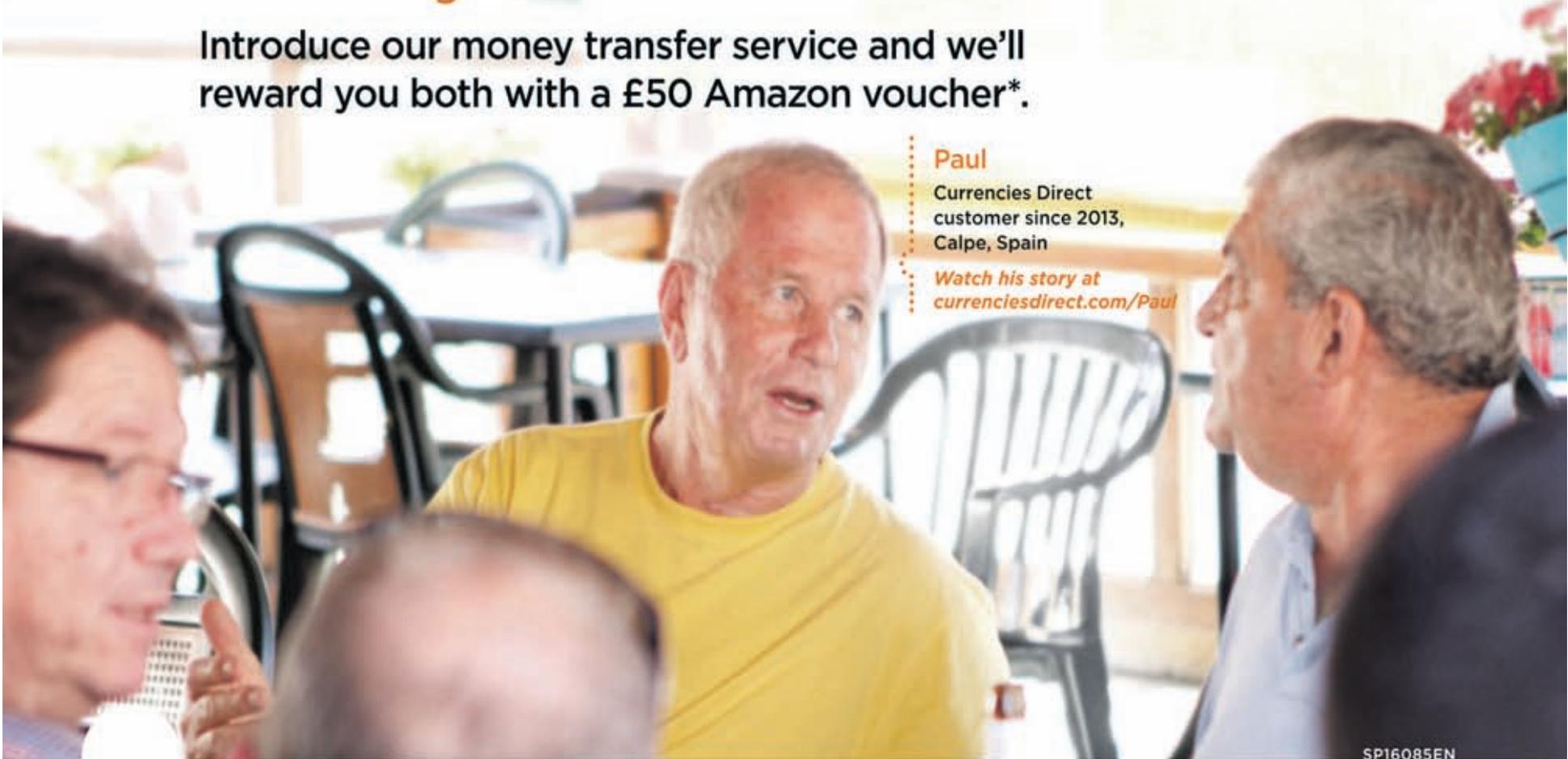
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Almería, 04638

+34 950 478 914

mojacar@currenciesdirect.com

Murcia

Avenida los Covachos,
Camposol B, Mazarrón,
Murcia, 30875

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Clean air spotlight

AUTO INDUSTRY GOING CLEAN AND GREEN

THE Spanish automotive industry has showcased the importance of technology to reduce CO2 emissions.

During a meeting in Brussels hosted by Pilar Ayuso MEP, several representatives from Spanish-based companies including Bosch, CIE Automotive and Valeo presented their ideas.

These included thermal management, engine efficiency and weight reduction of components.

Upcoming CO2 legislation for cars and vans was highlighted as an opportunity to take all technology options into account.

The European Parliament and Council of Member States are forming legislative plans to reduce car emissions in the 2020-2030 timeframe.

The reforms will have a significant impact on the European automotive industry, but Ayuso is optimistic about the future.

“Spain has a proud history as a prominent automotive country in Europe, with manufacturing plants rooted all across the country fostering innovation and providing high-skilled employment. It was very interesting to learn what technology can do, and how Europe can build on the strengths of its industry to tackle environmental issues.”

Sigrid de Vries, Secretary General of CLEPA (European Association of Automotive Suppliers) added: “CLEPA asks the legislator to maintain an open mind for all technology options and provide a policy framework that positively accelerates innovation in Europe. There is no ‘one-fits-all’ solution to achieve society’s energy-efficiency and CO2-emissions reduction targets: cars, vans, bikes, buses and trucks serve different mobility purposes, and customers must have the choice to pick the technology combination that fits their needs best.”

However, CLEPA does view the new CO2 proposals for cars as highly



EXHAUSTING ALL OPTIONS:
Companies are brainstorming to reduce car emissions.

challenging and emphasises that focus should turn to how the targets should be met while minimising disruption to economy and society.

It was acknowledged that electrification, hybrid technology, eco-innovations and alternative and synthetic fuels all have a role to play in increasing energy efficiency.

An integrated policy approach encompassing market incentives, energy mix and infrastructure is also essential.

Spanish Automobile Suppliers contributes significantly to the Spanish economy due to its size and interaction with other sectors and exports.

The automobile industry in 2016 generated revenues in Spain of more than €34 billion, totalling 343,500 direct and indirect jobs.

Due to its strong technological base, it invests 4 per cent of its turnover to R&D and innovation.

ONLINE FRESH FOOD SHOPPING LAUNCHED

Supermarket shakedown

AMAZON is aggressively expanding its fresh food sales in Spain.

It comes after a pioneering trial in Madrid, where the online giant last year agreed a deal with the La Paz market to sell fresh produce via its Prime Now platform.

And the move proved such a success that plans are now afoot to launch the scheme in other Spanish cities.

The first beneficiaries are set to be residents of Barcelona and Valencia - the country’s second and third biggest cities by population where Prime Now is already operational - with the Catalan political crisis reportedly leading the e-commerce company to launch in the latter first.

An Amazon official confirmed that the retailer aims to forge ties with tens of partner markets, and that it has already received proposals from across the country, but that it intends to take ‘small steps’ and will first concentrate on major cities.

When launching the agreement with La Paz market in 2016 the firm said that it aims to “offer its customers ultra-



ONLINE ORDERS: La Paz market, Madrid.

fast delivery of fresh products from local stores.”

The Prime Now platform used to order the groceries offers customers thousands of food, beauty, electronics, sports, toys and home products to Amazon Prime customers, and pledges to deliver orders free of charge within two hours, or one hour for an extra payment of €5.90.

A Prime subscription costs €19.95 per year with the Now service currently

available from 8am-midnight in the Spanish capital and 10am-10pm in Barcelona.

Orders from La Paz market must be a minimum of €19.

Amazon has also linked up with Spanish supermarket brand Dia, with customers already able to order from its La Plaza chain of fresh food specialist stores in Madrid, and this arrangement is also set to be rolled out in other cities.

The company in June 2017 paid an estimated €11.1 billion to acquire up-market US food retailer Whole Foods - which employs 87,000 people in 465 stores - in an all-cash surprise deal.

And industry experts have predicted an all-out assault on traditional supermarkets, with the first Amazon Go cashier-less supermarket already operational in US city Seattle.

The shop scans customer’s mobile phones as they enter and uses specialised sensing technology to keep track on what they remove from shelves, before charging them as they leave.

Baby milk outrage over food poisoning

A RECALL of baby milk products over a salmonella scare has been extended to 83 countries, including Spain.

Emmanuel Besnier, president of French dairy company Lactalis, said that more than 12 million boxes of infant milk will be recalled.

The order comes after salmonella was detected at the firm’s factory in Craon, northwest France, in December.

The firm’s brands include Picot and Milumel, and the crisis has seen angry parents launch legal action after dozens of children fell ill.

At least 35 cases have been reported in France with others in Spain and Germany.

Lactalis has annual sales of around €17 billion, with 246 sites in 47 countries producing well-known brands including President butter and Societe roquefort.

Carillion collapses

THE liquidation of British construction and support group Carillion has left tens of thousands of jobs at risk.

It comes after the firm - which handles a number of major government projects - issued three profit warnings since last July.

Rumours at the time suggested that Spanish infrastructure giant Ferrovial could step in with a takeover bid, but an offer never came.

Carillion is involved in the HS2 high speed train line and is the second-biggest supplier of maintenance services to Network Rail, as well as managing schools and prisons.

It has 43,000 staff worldwide, thousands of whom have money in company pension funds, which have run up a debt of almost €674 million.

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FUEL PRICES: Rose slower than expected.

Inflation hits record low

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THE cost of living may not rise as rapidly as previously thought after inflation decreased to 1.1 per cent last December.

The figure, which was the lowest it had been all 2017, was 10 per cent less than forecast, although experts believe inflation will rise to 1.6 per cent this year.

Prices of gasoline, diesel and electricity rose less than expected while holiday package price hikes also slowed. However, despite the good news, overall inflation resulted in

0.85 per cent loss in purchasing power for retirees.

Spain's unions have now criticised the government, claiming more needs to be done to help struggling workers.

The Union General de Trabajadores (UGT) explained wage increases agreed in December 2017 only reached 1.43 per cent, lower than the average inflation rate of 2 per cent. The UGT is calling on the government to raise salaries to cover the increased cost of living.

Pensions income rises by 30%

WHILE Brexit may have done little to help the Pound against the Euro, there is some good news for retired expatriates.

According to a survey carried out by Prudential, those retiring this year expect to receive €2,027 (£1,800) more a year from their pensions, savings and investments than those finishing work last year.

That represents a 10 per cent rise in one year, and is a 30 per cent increase from five years ago.

Strong stock market performance and financial markets have contributed to the rise, according to Prudential, adding a new flat rate pension will see pay outs rise to €185.08 (£164.35) a month from April this year from a previous €179.67 (£159.55).

Average retirement incomes hit a low in 2013 at an average of €17,229 (£15,300) but are expected to rise to a 10-year high of €22,409 (£19,900) this year.

Vince Smith-Hughes, a retirement income expert at Prudential, explained, "the new record high for expected retirement incomes is good news for people planning to retire this year highlighting how saving for the future is paying off."

He added, "the 10 per cent rise from last year is more impressive given the economic and political uncertainty savers are having to cope with."

The expert revealed it was not all good news, explaining, "uncertainty is impacting the confidence of nearly half of the Class of 2018 who fear they aren't financially well equipped."

Indeed Prudential's survey revealed despite income growth, retirees were concerned about their futures with only 50 per cent believing they will have enough money to be comfortable.

Minister for pensions and financial inclusion, Guy Opperman, explained, "it's fantastic news that more and more people can look forward to a financially secure retirement," adding, "but there is still more to do to ensure that everyone is building up good private pension savings, which is why we are increasing automatic enrolment contributions in April 2018 and April 2019 and have just announced a package of measures to ensure even more people will benefit."

Financial experts say pension auto-enrolment schemes have also helped savers, with 0.8 per cent of pay automatically being diverted into a pension pot. This figure is set to rise to 2.4 per cent in April and to 4 per cent next year.

At the same time, employers will be asked to contribute more to their staff's pensions until the total minimum contribution between employer and employee reaches 5 per cent from April this year and 8 per cent from next April.

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How many pockets have been lined?

LEAPY LEE SAYS IT

OTHERS THINK IT



TO my mind, in theory, apart from his actual adjective use, last week's statements of Donald Trump were absolutely correct. I reiterate a previous example of mine.

If I manage to build a mansion in a town of cardboard houses, I don't invite all those that dwell in them up to my mansion. That would be tantamount to madness. What you in fact do, is try everything possible to assist those not so fortunate in building their own mansions.

Why should successful, functioning civilised societies be expected to take in large influxes of people from highly dysfunctional areas which are usually chaotic, often run by violent and uneducated despots and generally complete failures in democratic and economic affairs?

There is nothing racist about it. It's sheer common sense. In general, large numbers of immigrants from these places do nothing positive for the recipient country, they simply begin to demolish the mansion.

"Why can't we take in immigrants from places like Norway?" asked Mr Trump. Once again there is nothing racist in this remark. He



BAD BUSINESS?: The new American embassy and (inset) Donald Trump.

simply means that it is more beneficial and constructive for a country to import people from successful modern communities. Nothing wrong with that. The problem is that most people from these countries are quite happy where they are, so not much joy there. Unfortunately

Trump shouldn't have cited poor beleaguered Haiti, but then he often opens his mouth before he puts his brain in gear.

And so, to the American Embassy furor. One again Mr Trump is absolutely right. Despite the righteous indignation of Battersea's

local council and the reversed racism of Mayor Khan, the site of the new American embassy is not in the same prestigious area as its predecessor. A Grosvenor Square property in the middle of London's Mayfair is far more desirable and worth a great deal more bucks than a similar construction south of the Thames.

Whether the new Embassy building is safer or more easily accessible is a different matter altogether; from a business point of view the deal has been a bad one. Lord only knows how many pockets have been lined, or palms greased in the whole 'hand rubbing' billion dollar operation.

Trump is above all a business man and whatever one thinks of him, he is CEO of one of the world's largest corporations. Keeping his eye on the finances and business dealings of his 'firm' is both necessary, intelligent and indeed his duty. One thing that has certainly emerged from Trump's statement is that it has given thousands of 'talking heads' the opportunity to state quite categorically and publicly, what many of them have been babbling for years! - I know, I know; me too. Ah well.

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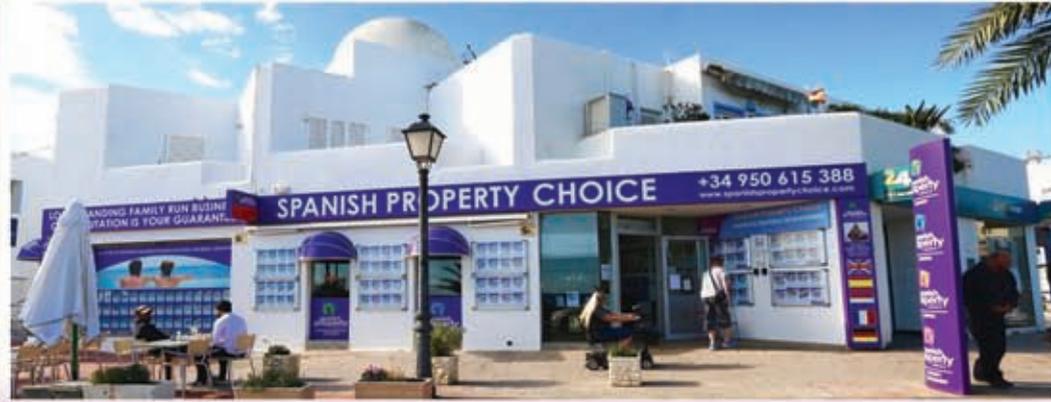


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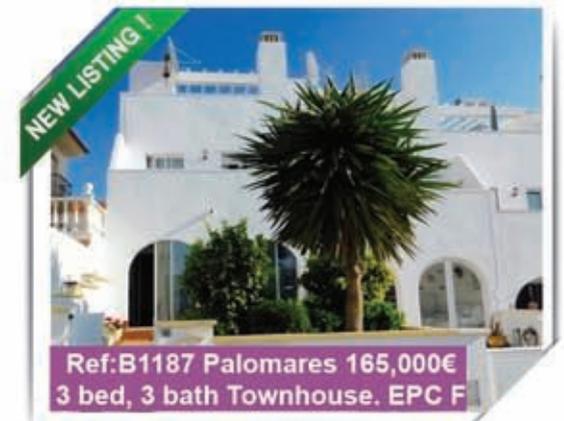


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TECH FOR
THE TIMID

APPARENTLY it's only those of us with a diminished shelf-life who still make actual telephone calls. Millennials in particular think calls are too intrusive, when a text will do nicely instead.

Today more than 35 per cent of our interactions are digital. Last year, for the first time, texting, tweeting and other social media, chat and other 'indirect' contacts overtook the traditional voice call.

Given what happens to us when calling, I'm not too surprised we're finally backing away from a technology which was, after all, invented in an era when an instant message was one which reached its destination by Morse code in less than a week.

Actually call a company and there are receptionists who tell you to hold, then go away forever. There's piped music which sounds as though it's being played through an electric razor and will put you off Vivaldi forever.

There are voicemail boxes because people don't want to take your call, and people pretending to be voicemail boxes because they don't want to take your call. Telephones did make enormous inroads into our traditional communications. One

ET tweet home?

Is 150 years of traditional telephone calling heading for disconnection, Terence Kennedy wonders



LORD OF THE RINGS: phone inventor Alexander Graham Bell

prominent businessman I knew sat tall and proud behind a desk rampant with telephones, six in all, each in a different colour. The idea, I assumed, was to lend dignity and importance.

But the effect was instead comic whenever a phone rang, as he scrambled to pick up each one in turn to

discover which of the six it was.

A friend once dialled a wrong number and was told so by the voice at the other end of the line.

"Are you sure?" asked my friend.

Quick as a flash came the reply: "Have I ever lied to you before?"

Another example of wrong-num-

ber repartee had a lady asking the answering voice: "Has June arrived yet?"

A pause, and then the droll reply: "No lady. I don't know where you're phoning from, but here it's still May."

If this purported telephone dialogue is true I'll eat my non-existent directory:

"Hello, is that two-two-two-two?"

"No, this is double-two double-two."

"Oh ... sorry to have troubled you with a wrong number."

"That's okay, the phone was ringing anyway."

Ah yes, happy days, now heading for history. Today the telephone call is the new handwritten letter: an antediluvian remnant of a disappearing past as text becomes king, in whatever form.

And I love the contemporary cartoon of a helpful little lad taking the hand of an elderly lady on the street-corner as he says: "Would you like help texting while crossing the street?"

Phonophobia

PHONING will soon be the one thing we don't actually do with our phones, if the statistics are correct.

One survey shows millennials check their phones 150 times a day. But there is a social downside: four in 10 admit they interact more with their smartphones than they do with their significant others, parents, friends, children or co-workers.

Most troubling of all is the enormous spike in loneliness among teenagers. Young people go out with their friends less than they did 10 years ago; they interact less face-to-face, and they get less sleep.

And when you really know things have changed? When you get an automatic call response like this one from my nephew: "You've reached [.....]. No one answers phone calls anymore, send me a text."

Coffee guaranteed not to give you the hump in 2018

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

HEARD about the latest coffee trends for 2018? Lattes souped-up with everything from chia seeds to coconut oil, and 'bulletproof' coffee that replaces milk with butter and coconut oil, then blitzes the whole thing into a froth. This allegedly suppresses your hunger and makes you energetic. Phew!

But have you tried a camelccino? If not, dairy doubters, you're in luck because Asda's reportedly stocking camel's milk in selected stores. Though hard to come by in the West, camel-

cininos, topped with a swirl of date syrup instead of the usual chocolate sprinkling, are a fixture of cafe culture in the UAE, along with camelattes, camel milkshakes...

And not to be confused with iced coffee (in which espresso-based coffees are served over ice, usually with milk and syrup), we'll also have cold brew coffee which is simply... coffee brewed cold. Which sounds as sensible as a pint of hot real ale. I'll give it less than a year before it goes the way of so many other hipster fads (eg. This coffee tastes like mud! Well, sir, it was only ground this morning).

Your typical hipster? Someone who drinks his coffee with mountain dew from Tibet, the beans having been crushed between the thighs of



Photo Credit: balsemain / Instagram

a virgin on a certain slope in Guatemala, found by chance trekking through the country, to reawaken his chakras and reconnect with nature. And using a machine-like device purchased from an old lady in rural India that enables the perfect temperature to be reached in optimum time for the best coffee ever.

Speaking of coffee machines, I judge these not on the quality of coffee, but on the noise they make. And when I encountered one in a hotel recently I was frankly disappointed. It's not proper coffee unless it sounds like

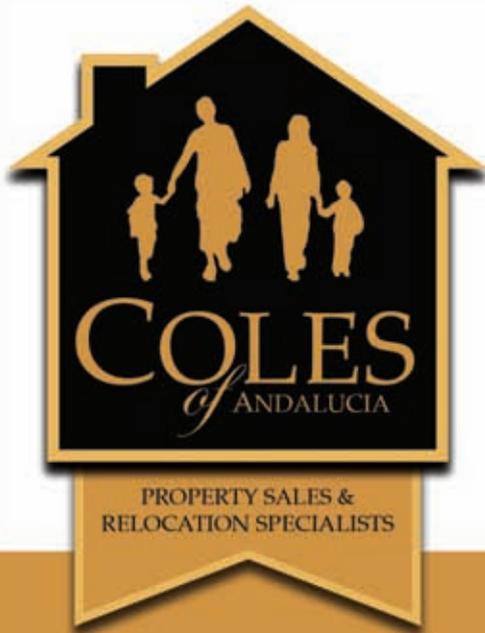
PERK ME UP: What will be the year's most bizarre coffee trends?

Jason Bourne throttling an asset with a tea towel...

Finally, best avoid the coffee enemas promoted on Gwyneth Paltrow's website Goop - not just unnecessary but potentially dangerous. Keep the coffee out of your, err, rear and in your cup. It's only meant to access your colon from the top!

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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Wedding Day Winners, I don't think so!

WHAT on earth are Lorraine Kelly and Rob Beckett doing accepting BBC1's offer to host *Wedding Day Winners* on Saturday evenings? If you haven't caught this weekend horror show, well done, I wish I hadn't stumbled upon it.

The concept, format and execution are truly terrible. Apparently, we all want Lorraine as our Boss, but even she looks alarmed at some of what she is asked to do and at other times she looked bemused by what Rob is doing.

The format pits couples and their families against each other to win (some pretty uninspired - a food mixer, really) presents and ultimately a wedding live on TV and a honeymoon. Thankfully the honeymoon isn't live on our screens.

The show is a cross between *It's a Knockout*, *The Generation Game* and *Take me Out*. The couples, bridesmaids and guests are made to humiliate themselves on primetime TV, with Rob and Lorraine constantly trying to convince everyone that they are all having a wonderful time. They might be, I didn't.

In a completely different space to *Wedding Day Winners*, I hope that you are following *Hard Sun* on BBC1. This is a thriller set against the backdrop of a solar storm set to destroy the world in five years' time and naturally the government wants to keep it all secret.

Agyness Deyn and Jim Sturgess star as DI



Photo by BBC

'WEEKEND HORROR SHOW': Lorraine Kelly and Rob Beckett host *Wedding Day Winners*.

Renko and DCI Hicks - just a thought, but couldn't Agyness have been the senior rank? This week our hero duo persuaded a journalist to publish the solar storm story and the government is forced to deny anything is wrong, turning the story into a joke.

Separately, Hicks tried to catch a multi killer. Given the amount of blood spilled I hope that this storyline doesn't continue much longer and given that the clock is ticking for everyone, fin-

gers crossed it doesn't. Don't take this one too seriously and it makes a solid round off to your Saturday night.

ITV1 are showing *Transformation Street* on Thursday evenings. Hats off to them for this one. The programme doesn't patronise or shock and is all the better for it.

There are some surgical scenes but these are correctly dealt with as day to day elements of individual Transformation Journeys. There is a

positive approach to sometimes painful stories, without any apology for the refreshing way this programme educates and shows us the highs and lows of a diverse range of journeys. I will continue to watch.

EastEnders, BBC1 weekdays, is leading the Soaps New Year Charge. Tamzin Outhwaite has returned to The Square, bringing Mel Owen back to the East End after an absence of 16 years. Mel's return was via a 'nice to be back' to Ben Mitchell, who probably had no idea who Mel was, 16 years is a long time to your average young man.

Mel looked shocked at just how much weight ex-husband Ian has accumulated, throw away anything with a horizontal stripe Ian, but Mel really only had eyes for the diamond necklace around Kathy's neck. Mel's return looks set to be slow burn rather than explosion, but it will build as the days slowly get longer I'm sure.

Channel 4 and Penelope Keith are currently guiding us through the search for village of the year. The team gallop us through four villages each day and we get to know which will make the semi-finals from the Western Zone (where did Regions go I wonder...) on Friday January 19. Sadly we can't nominate Spanish villages, or I would be putting mine forward immediately.

Critique - AWL, Casares, Costa del Sol

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Nation's water crisis set to deepen unless action is taken

The rain in Spain is proving a real pain

As southern Spain faces a sandy future, David Noon delves deeper into the water crisis that is threatening to make certain areas inhospitable and asks what can be done to stem the depleting supplies.

IT is hard to believe that just over 12 months ago, thousands of people were returning to their sodden homes and businesses to clean up the mess left behind by almost a month of relentless rainfall.

Homes were flooded, roads were completely cut off and buildings were damaged beyond repair as vast swathes of southern Spain were left submerged beneath the worst flooding in 25 years.

Two lives were claimed in the storms during the final few weeks of 2016, as southern Spain was pelted by 300 litres of rain in

600 leaks identified in Malaga over eight months

just 72 hours.

Chiringuitos were left strewn across the sands of Andalucia and cars were carelessly abandoned as roads were transformed into rivers in the blink of an eye.

But in reality it was just a snapshot downpour in what is becoming an increasingly drier country.

In fact, reservoir levels have hit such extreme lows that some 70 per cent of Spain is at risk of becoming desert land.

According to a government report, the whole of Andalucia is in danger of facing an unwanted sandy future with the average global temperature predicted to rise by 3.2 degrees over the next

90 years.

Reservoir levels are already at their lowest level since the 1990s - and this is in spite of recent rains - with yet another drought warning issued throughout the country, the second in the space of five years.

According to the latest available figures, the reservoirs are around 38 per cent of their total capacity, 10 per cent less than at the same time last year.

These levels don't look set to improve any time soon as Aemet, the State Meteorological Agency, does not predict a high amount of rainfall in the coming weeks and months.

The current drought comes quick on the heels of Spain's worst drought in

150 years, which took place in 2014.

That year saw less than 100 litres of rain per square-metre in Alicante (the average is 336), with more than 180,000 almond trees perishing under the staggering heat.

And barring the odd flash storm the nation's dreary often brown countryside hasn't had a good drink since.

Since 2014, production of olive oil, courgettes and avocados has been hit by back-to-back dry years.

In 2017 it is estimated that some 1.4 million hectares of crops were impacted by lack of rainfall, while 40 per cent of vineyards were affected by a barren 2017.

Last year also saw an increasing number of wildfires rip through the Spanish countryside.

In 2017, some 105,000 hectares of land were razed; making it the third most destructive year in Spanish history.

It came after Spain suffered one of the longest heatwaves, called Lucifer, in history with temperatures well into the 40s along the Costa del Sol, the Balearics and inland.

A total of 40 per cent of the fires took place in northwest Spain with 30 per cent ripping along the Mediterranean coast.

It is the same story every year, with thousands of gallons of water used to tackle the blazes.

10 days, the average time to repair a leak

Spain told to get serious on Paris pledge

SPAIN has been told to buck its ideas up over its pledge to the Paris Agreement, created to tackle global warming. Director of the European Climate Foundation Laurence Tubiana insists there needs to be a joint debate about which carbon emissions scenario Europe wants to be in by the mid-century and has urged Spain to get on board.

Tubiana the French diplomat that led the Paris Agreement talks, said that Spain 'needs a plan in hand how to decarbonise the economy, like most other world powers have.'

Decarbonisation strategies for 2050 were a part of the Paris Agreement and the European Commission has asked the EU member states for the same by

2018, so that it can determine whether short and medium-term investments are in line with emission reduction targets.

The ECF director added that the Spanish government 'should clarify when it will make its decarbonisation strategy and open it up to wider debate than just a simple inter-ministerial discussion.' 'It is necessary because we are talking about a way forward that doesn't just encompass public investments, it's about private investment and collaboration with regional and local government', she explained.

'It is imperative that Spain promotes a joint national exercise with all the actors involved in decarbonisation, so what has been agreed will happen.'

| STERN WORDS: From Tubiana.



Doñana disaster

THE situation at the Doñana National Park is nothing short of a tragedy.

Home to the largest nature reserve for migratory birds in Europe, the UNESCO world heritage site is under threat. The aquifer that feeds the park's marshes is drying up at an alarming rate.

It is so worrying that the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said that the aquifer would need between 30 and 60 years to recover. And the effects are clear to see.

The number of wintering ducks that rely on a healthy marsh - such as the endangered marbled teal - are in decline.

Temporary lagoons, one of the natural features that makes Doñana unique in Europe, are drying up and as a result, 40 per cent of the species of



DRYING OUT: Spain's countryside could soon be desert.

8% of total reservoir capacity is full

70% of Spain at risk of becoming desert



TRAGEDY: Doñana National Park.

dragonflies that lived in Doñana have been lost. And this is not a natural occurrence due to soaring temperatures.

The real tragedy is that Doñana is drying up is because of the current over-exploitation from illegal farming.

According to the WWF report more than 1,000 illegal wells drilled by farmers are accelerating the park's destruction. Eva Hernandez, a spokesperson for WWF, said: "Doñana's biodiversity has eroded over the past 40 years and we are reaching a point of no return. We could do things to recover the park -

and some things are being done - but the pressures from private and public companies are becoming unbearable."

Spain must quickly decide whether it wants to protect its long term ecosystems or continue down its current path of ecological destruction in return for short-term gains.

105,000 hectares of land hit by wildfires in 2017

And with temperatures set to steadily soar for the foreseeable future, so too will sea levels leaving coastal cities including Malaga, Cadiz and Alicante at risk of flooding.

The Islands off Spain's mainland are also set to be hit by rising tides, with many of the largest cities such as Palma enjoying a close proximity to the coast.

But it is not just a warming climate and a lack of rainfall that is threatening the Spanish countryside.

More worryingly - and easier to fix - is the amount of water lost to burst pipes, poor water systems and a lack of foresight to save and store supplies for a not-so-rainy day.

In Malaga alone, 600 leaks in the city's water pipes were detected between April and December by smart meters.

That is around 75 leaks each month. The exact amount of water lost in the leaks has not been disclosed, but if each city in Spain is experiencing a similar amount of monthly leaks, then you can bet your mortgage that a fair few litres of water are literally going down the drain every single day.

Installed to reduce Malagenos' water bills, the 41,663 meters should also go some way to saving the region's ever-depleting supply of water.

But that is just one measure taken in one city. A lot more must

IT is an inevitable sight witnessed year-on-year: firefighters by the dozen pointing their hoses at wildfires in the Spanish countryside as helicopters and fire planes dump thousands of gallons of water on the burning brush from above.

Drive along any motorway in Spain during the late summer for long enough and you will eventually come across a plume of ominous smoke rising from the shrub lands.

Last year alone, 105,000 hectares of land were hit by wildfires.

A large majority of it is rural countryside but a fair proportion is vineyards, courgette plantations and olive groves.

And yet, while the loss of vegetation is a tragedy, the amount

115 water measures drawn up in Andalusia

be done and the first thing must be introducing smart meters across all cities and towns in Spain.

In Malaga, the council explained most of the leaks identified were small and would have been hard to find if not for the meters.

Water supplier Emasa said most clients fixed their leaks within 10 days of being told about them, proving how quick and easy it can be to plug the cracks.

And the Junta de Andalusia is

Fire, Fire!



HEATING UP: Firefighters tackle a wildfire.

of water used to tackle these blazes is another catastrophe.

In total, it is estimated that around 500 gallons of water needs to be poured on to a wildfire every minute for an average time of two hours to sufficiently tackle the blaze and stop it from spreading.

If it is particularly windy then this number can easily be doubled, as can the length of time it takes to extinguish.

Calculating exactly how much water is used to put out fires each year is almost impossible, but certainly millions of gallons.

taking more action to try to stem the flow of its leaky pipes.

In fact, the local authority has drawn up 115 measures to restore water to the region.

New water plans include recommencing plans for a pipeline from the Iznajar reservoir in Cordoba to the Antequera area, which was supposed to have been built two years ago.

Marbella's La Con-

ception reservoir will nearly triple in size and a pipeline running along the Costa del Sol to the Axarquia region will allow water to flow from the wetter western region to the drier east of Malaga.

Similar measures will need to be taken around the country to avoid a total wipe-out in the south of Spain.

If action is not taken quickly, then the sands in Spain will not be reserved for the beaches.

3.2 degree temperature rise by 2100

YOUR PAPER - YOUR VOICE - YOUR OPINION

Letters should be emailed to yoursay@euroweeklynews.com or make your comments on our website: www.euroweeklynews.com

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Prexit: Our pets may be affected by Brexit

WITH all of this talk backwards and forwards about Brexit, it seems to me that we are overlooking some of the more relevant questions that we should be asking.

Will quarantine for pets and animals in general, return to the UK after Brexit? If they will no longer permit the free passage of people and goods into the UK, presumably pets will not be allowed to travel with their owners either.

I personally couldn't care if my passport is lime green with pink polka dots but I do care to know if I can take my pets with me when I go on holiday.

Lynn Hopkins, Fuengirola

Hello Leapy

AFTER meeting you for the first time recently in London and having my first Christmas in Spain, I picked up my first ever copy of *Euro Weekly News* in Marbella.

It was a wonderful surprise to come across your column and an unexpected delight to read it.

Horrific accident

A defining moment?

A CAR leaving a remote mountain road to crash down the mountainside with potentially tragic consequences is sadly a well-known possibility, particularly when the weather is very bad and if there are no safety measures on the road.

However, one might be horrified to learn, the same event could happen on an urbanisation; but that is exactly what happened recently on the Urb Monte Pego, situated between Denia and Pego in the Alicante Province on October 18 last year.

The history of this urbanisation is key to the understanding of this event. Pego Town Hall gave permission in 1974 to a private com-



LUCKY ESCAPE: The next crash could be fatal.

pany to begin the project. It expanded into Rafol and Denia areas and over the years has grown now to some 1,300 dwellings.

But when the time came for the urbanisation to become public there began a legal dispute between the town halls involved and the developer over whether the urbanisation had been completed to the correct standard.

Accidents are just waiting to

happen. Residents have even documented the safety concerns and shared them with local and regional mayors, but nothing changes.

The driver miraculously escaped with minor injuries only. The suspicion amongst residents is that if history is a pointer nothing will change, lives will still be at risk and this will not be a defining moment.

Mr Rae, Pro Monte Pego Association, Pego

I remember how Christmas used to be in my youth. As you said the Sally Army on the streets and Carol singers knocking on your door. Making paper chains to decorate your home and silver tinsel strung over your Christmas tree, with lights that never worked very well...

Happy Days, we shall not see their like again.

Reg Starkey, UK

Salvation Army

READING Leapy's comments re the Salvation Army in the UK was very sad to hear, BUT the good news is that here in Denia the 'Sally Army' is still going strong. If your readers look up Camp Saron in Denia on Google they will find info on services for all expats, be they Brits, Dutch, German, even American! Look us up; be glad to see you.

Ray Ward, Alcalali

Flu outbreak

IT has become apparent that this year the outbreak of flu in Spain and the UK is particularly dangerous and has been identified as 'Aussie Flu' which is considered to be the most virulent outbreak in the past 50 years.

Those who suffer from breathing difficulties and the elderly are particularly at risk, so whether you are registered with a Spanish clinic or have to pay for your treatment, it is so important to consider being vaccinated, even now.

Brian, Estepona

Crash witness

I WITNESSED the air crash last week at the aero club Alicante.

I was travelling on the AP7 towards Benidorm and saw the helicopter coming in low across the motorway and the red bi-plane was behind and above the helicopter travelling in the same direction towards the landing strip.

I can only assume the pilot of the bi-plane had not seen the helicopter due to a blind spot of the plane whilst looking down. As the helicopter was coming in to land the plane which was travelling faster suddenly dipped lower and flew into the helicopter's tail rotor thus breaking the wing off the plane.

In no way was the pilot of the helicopter to blame as it was the pilot of the plane who came in too close, as he obviously didn't see the helicopter!

John Rook, UK

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.

Plane skids off runway

You'd think they'd have plane proof crash barriers?
Susan Poole

How did he manage to turn left instead of right?
Bill Newall

Understatement of the year? Pegasus Airlines said the plane "had a Runway Excursion Incident during landing"
Euro Weekly News

Surprise tornadoes rip through Almeria

That is quite amazing.
Pauline Mitchell

It also caused a lot of damage when it hit Fort Bravo near Tabernas.
Sheila Fearon

Three-year-old dies from meningitis

The main message is to act fast. Meningitis can kill in hours. If a child seems a little more poorly than you would expect for flu, get it checked immediately. Also if the pupils of their eyes are different sizes, rush them to hospital as the disease is already progressing.
Mary Bolger

Comments from EWN online

So glad they tell you on here that there isn't always a rash, and if there is it's the last thing to come up.
June and Maurice Johnson

Flight diverts due to 'drunk' passengers

Personal accountability is the way to go here, not banning and nanny-stating. What happens when someone causes problems after having drinks before they board the craft? Alcohol-free airports too? Breathalyser tests for anyone wishing to board? Would you ban hungover people from flying? Those who have had a small sherry after lunch etc etc?

Personally, I think that those who have caused problems with their fighting should be responsible for reimbursing all the other passengers for the delay. That would be a lesson they 'forget in a hurry.'
Jace T Adams

Why divert flights for drunks! Chain them into their chairs until landing and hand them over to the police to be arrested and fined! (And a bloody big fine too!)
Julie Jones Peel

Why do people feel it is necessary to get so drunk? They are selfish and put others at risk with their behaviour.
Christine Booth

I blame the staff, why were they allowed to board the plane?
Mo E Dalton

Ryanair explain new cabin baggage policy

Still free, take literally five minutes to get your bag from the carousel. No mad panic trying to get on the plane first. When you get on just go straight to your seat. When you get off just get off. Best idea they ever had in my opinion.
Darren Briddon

This isn't about making boarding quicker. It would be far more logical to board in row order instead of the current free-for-all, but there's no money in that.

And if it was about speeding up boarding, why not check in the bags at the desk instead of at the gate so that we could take toothpaste and other useful items? Because that would cost money.
Andy Funnell

LEGALLY SPEAKING

Welcome to a new you?

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



NO RISKS: Stay safe while exercising.

AS the festive season comes to an end, many people feel the pinch around the waistline and decide to embark on a 'new you' in January, with a health kick to work off those extra added kilos.

Joining a gym, a support group, online diet plan all see boosts at this time of year, but so does an increase in the number of people taking to the streets in their own fitness routines, perhaps walking, running or cycling off that extra baggage.

Remember, if you are on foot, walking or running, you are a pedestrian. Always wear bright, high visible clothing, stop at pedestrian crossings, keep an eye for hidden junctions such as garage exits or side roads, and avoid distractions such as using headphones which may prevent you being aware of your surroundings.

If you have to use the road remember to

always face oncoming traffic.

If you take to two wheels, remember that you are a vehicle, governed by the same laws as other cars, vans, etc, and you must never wear headphones or use a mobile phone, always respect traffic lights, signs, signals and one-way streets, if using pedestrian crossings remember that you must dismount and walk, as with running always wear high visibility clothing.

At night and in times of poor visibility lights must be used on bikes (a bell is mandatory), and are advisable for running or walking. If you are running or walking in a group it is mandatory.

Vigilance and visibility is vital as a vulnerable road user. Be seen, be observant and be careful. If you are hoping to improve, good luck, but be careful.

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

Are the water bills too high?

Q. Our building does not have individual water meters, only the central meter for the whole Community of Property Owners, so each apartment pays a fixed fee to the Community. However, in the past few years, the Administrator has begun to charge us for 'extra' water, with ridiculously high fees. She sends letters threatening action for non-payment. The President himself has admitted that there are many who do not pay at all, and I think the administration is trying to extract extra payment from the rest of us.

P W (Costa del Sol)

A. Well, the water bill has to be paid. We suggest that you put on the official Agenda for the next AGM a proposal that individual water meters must be installed. This involves some

David Searl
You and the Law
in Spain

extra expense in the beginning, but it will save money

and problems later. Only the non-payers will have their water cut off. The central metering system has caused many problems for communities and only a few buildings still use it.

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

Why is he still President?

Mike Senker

In my opinion

Views of a Grumpy Old Man



ONCE again, Donald J Trump has managed to come out with some of the most outrageous racist comments I've ever heard from a POTUS.

He asked, "Why are we having all these people from s*****e countries coming here?"

The countries he was referring to are mostly populated by black and Latino people. Countries like El Salvador, Africa and Haiti. The White House hasn't denied he said it and some people that were there have, in fact, confirmed it.

So how does he get away with it? Well, I think the problem is that he doesn't care and he has a base of followers that don't care either about what he says or does because basically they agree with him. This to me is pretty unbelievable.

It means that there are an incredible amount of Americans that are so fed up with the alternative they would rather see this piece of scum run the most powerful nation in the world. He's always been racist from when he accused Obama of not being born in the USA to claiming Mexicans are rapists and murder-

ers. You know you are doing something wrong when the head of the Klu Klux Klan starts endorsing your tweets.

Sure there is fake news out there but surely this can't continue? Night after night I see most news stations, with the exception of Fox News, call him out over something and experts giving similar opinions. Are they all wrong and Fox News right?

The man claims to be a genius, but to me he is ignorant of practically everything. This week he cancelled a trip to the UK because of Obama not selling the American Embassy for enough and moving it. Well, firstly it wasn't Obama who decided to move it - it was Bush - and secondly, it's not theirs to sell. The property is owned by the Duke of Westminster!

I'm sorry he's not going because I'd love to see the people turn out and give him the reception he deserves. And yet another woman - this time an actress from the world of adult entertainment - has said she was paid \$130,000 to keep quiet about stuff that went on with Trump back in 2006.

I've lost count of his accusers but surely they can't all be liars. So why is he still President? The answer to that actually scares me and makes me sad and angry too and very, very grumpy!

columnists@euroweeklynews.com

Email: mikesenker@gmail.com.

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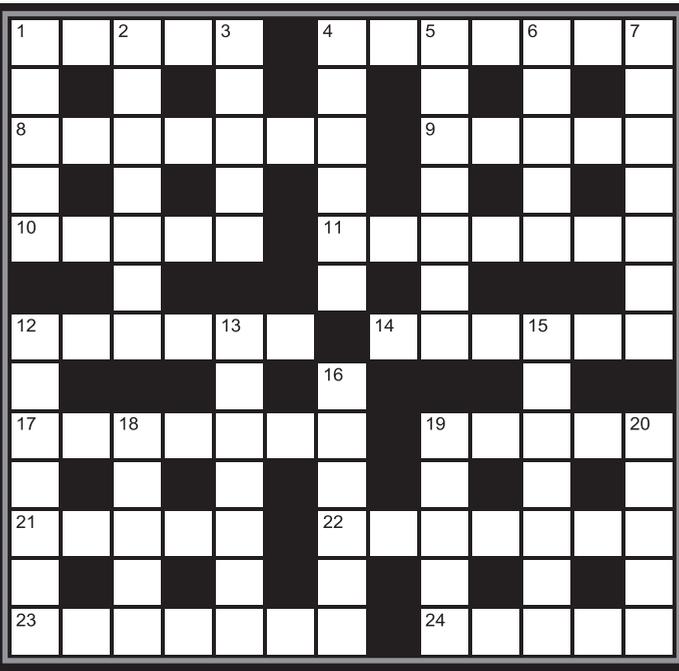
Cryptic

Across

- 1 Juicy fruit, penny apiece (5)
- 4 Our entering the animal enclosure requires nerve (7)
- 8 Charlton Heston and George Raft's imaginary nonsense started the embarrassment (7)
- 9 Draws back the turf (5)
- 10 Material needed by witness at inquest (5)
- 11 Nasty communist returned to wander about (7)
- 12 Lied terribly about direct debit cheat (6)
- 14 Insubstantial silver found in lake (6)
- 17 Reverse, but not on the road (7)
- 19 Loses one's temper when shown photographs (5)
- 21 Declare Namibia is hosting sports venue (5)
- 22 First I nail it by mistake (7)
- 23 Red brings Smee back and reclaims ownership (7)
- 24 Second vehicle learner abandoned, it's regretful (5)

Down

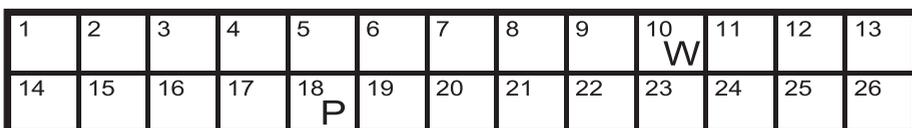
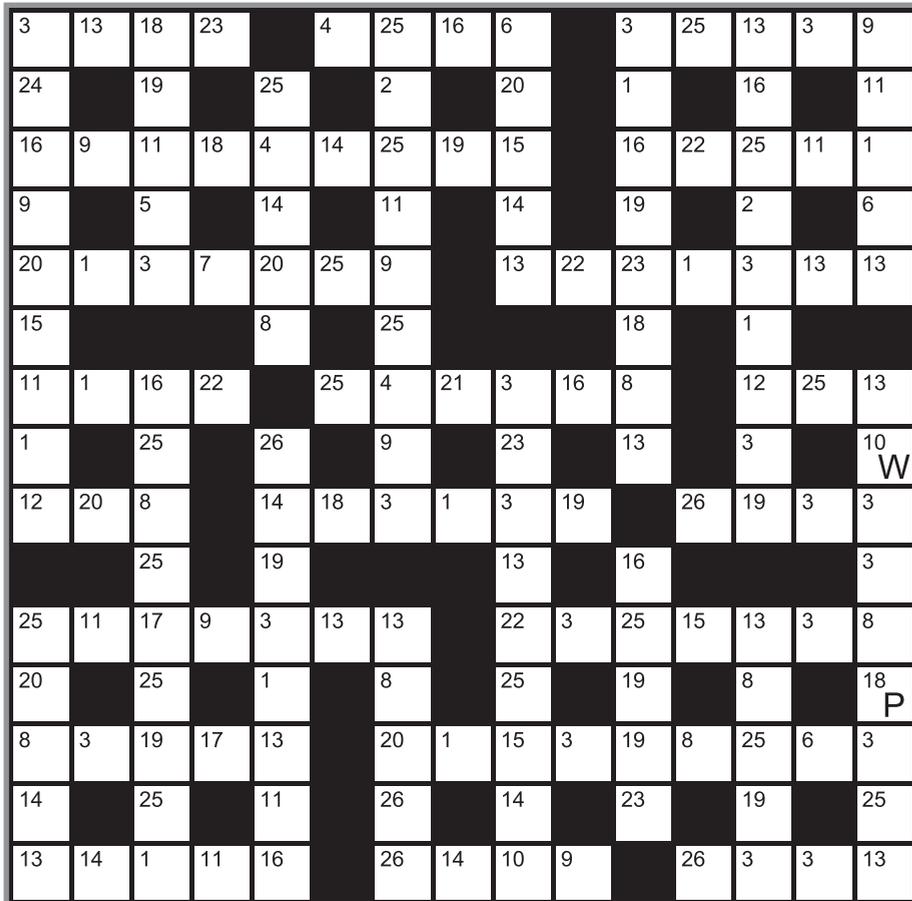
- 1 Chooses heavy tools (5)
- 2 Tape Dad modified (7)
- 3 Bird swimming in Rhone (5)
- 4 Entertainment that's a nice change with mother (6)
- 5 Steal the show from the back of the theatre (7)
- 6 A hospital room success symbol



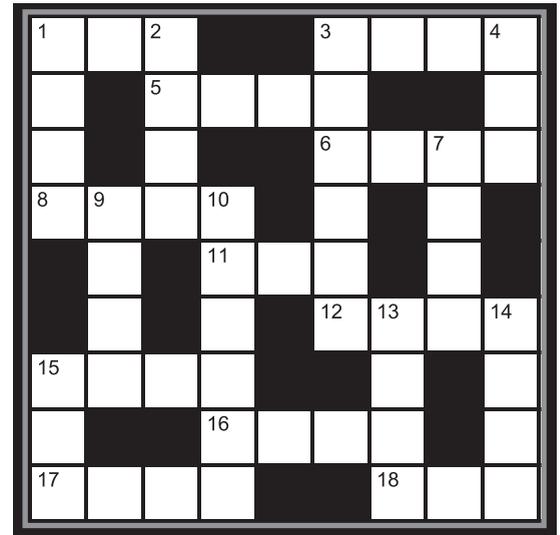
- (5)
- 7 Having red nose, turned back (7)
- 12 There's no hope of being praised, anyhow (7)
- 13 Water lost, lake restored over time (7)
- 15 Iced liquid? Could be great eclair (7)
- 16 Ask Einstein to include Hanks (6)
- 18 Starting tax returns every night, daft craze (5)
- 19 Mistakes made on the cricket field (5)
- 20 Spread out and point before drama (5)

Code Breaker

Each number in the Code Breaker grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In this week's puzzle, 10 represents W and 18 represents P, so fill in W every time the figure 10 appears and P every time the figure 18 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.



Quick



Across

- 1/11 Solidified carbon dioxide (3,3)
- 3 Formal agreement (4)
- 5 Measure of land equivalent to 4,840 square yards (4)
- 6 Exchange (4)
- 8 Pompous or pretentious talk or writing (4)
- 11 See 1
- 12 Move fast (4)
- 15 Settee (4)
- 16 Pull, as against a resistance (4)
- 17 Voracious freshwater fish (4)
- 18 Take in solid food (3)

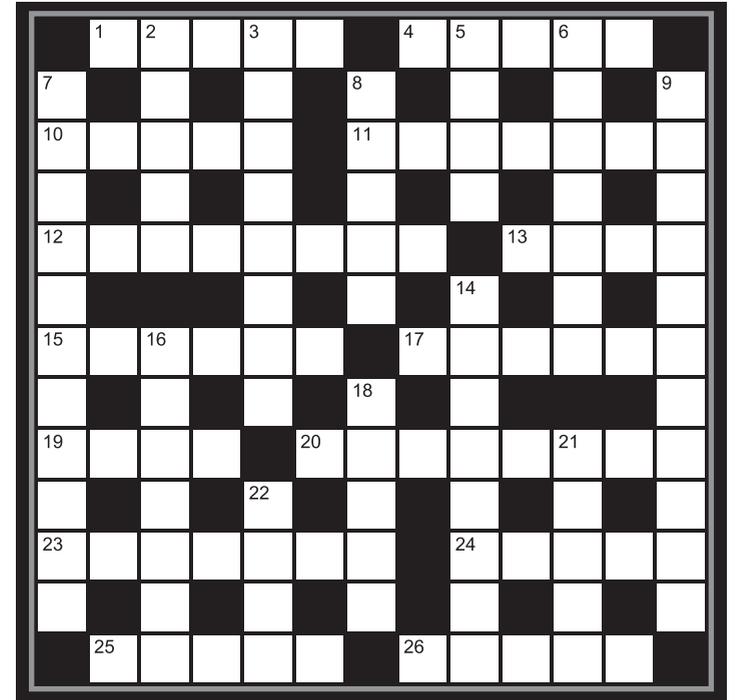
Down

- 1 Expensive (4)
- 2 Spun thread (4)
- 3 Annoy persistently (6)

- 4 Extreme end of something (3)
- 7 Totals (4)
- 9 Lowest female voice (4)
- 10 Speech of violent denunciation (6)
- 13 Strong restless desire (4)
- 14 Indirect suggestion (4)
- 15 Drink by taking small mouthfuls (3)

English - Spanish

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



Across

- 1 Hablar (5)
- 4 Seals (animal) (5)
- 10 Entrar (5)
- 11 Playa (7)
- 12 Younger (person, animal, wine, country) (3,5)
- 13 Húmedo (clima) (4)
- 15 Noventa (6)
- 17 Color (6)
- 19 Salvia (4)
- 20 Chemist's (shop) (8)
- 23 Recibir (7)
- 24 Nidos (5)
- 25 To cough (5)
- 26 Wall (interior) (5)

Down

- 2 Ducks (birds) (5)
- 3 Aeropuertos (8)
- 5 Buttonhole (4)
- 6 Godson (7)
- 7 Stepbrother (11)
- 8 Cenizas (5)
- 9 To wake up (11)
- 14 Storm (8)
- 16 Business (7)
- 18 Walk (stroll) (5)
- 21 Swan (5)
- 22 Sabio (acción, decisión) (4)

CROSSWORD PAGE

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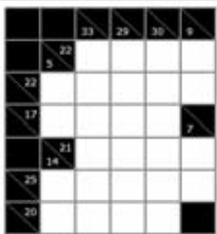
MADDOCKS' VIEW ON LIFE



' IF THE WIND IS THIS BAD ON BURNS NIGHT, KEEP THE PIPERS INDOORS. '

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.



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 R) and there must be **AT LEAST ONE NINE LETTER WORD**. Plurals, vulgarities or proper nouns are not allowed.



TARGET:

- Average: 12
- Very good: 25
- Good: 17
- Excellent: 32

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

alar aria aril barn birr bran lair liar lira rail rain rani
rial bairn brail brain briar naira **LIBRARIAN**

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.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

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

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

LOTTERY

UK NATIONAL LOTTERY

Saturday January 13



IRISH LOTTO

Saturday January 13



EURO MILLIONS

Tuesday January 09



Friday January 12



EL MILLON: VZT29699

LA PRIMITIVA

Thursday January 11



JOKER: 4 807 239

Saturday January 13



JOKER: 5 053

Sunday January 14



YOUR STARS FOR NEXT 7 DAYS

AQUARIUS
(January 21 - February 19)

A feeling that you should totally commit yourself to something or someone this week should be avoided. You will come up against a brick wall if a situation is forced. Time is all that is required to see things change for the better.

LEO
(July 24 - August 23)

A situation could become complicated if you do not plan ahead. With a little thought and planning, matters can be kept simple which is always desirable. Be choosy about the company you keep because a bad character could taint by association.

PISCES
(February 20 - March 20)

There may not be enough time to do everything you want, so why can't you just reorganise your life so there is? Not as easy as it sounds, Pisces, unless you learn the magic word: no. Know your limits and stick to them.

VIRGO
(August 24 - September 23)

A lost cause tries to demand your attention, but you must try to see the situation for what it is. Sentimentality should not come into business or be allowed to upset your home life. What is past should remain so, do not torture yourself. Bring your mind and spirits up by looking forward to summer holidays.

ARIES
(March 21 - April 20)

Extra pressures at work leave you feeling less than energetic. Check on your health and don't go overboard with the physical activities. Set out to become more active, socially, and maximise on relaxation. With an eye to the summer and holidays, start planning a getaway. Who will you take with you?

LIBRA
(September 24 - October 23)

Ruts are awful things to get into but even more difficult to get out of. Being cosy is one thing, but getting bogged down, mentally and physically, is another. All you need is to keep your optimism alive and use your imagination. Perhaps you are spending too much time with an older person or someone who has a dim outlook on life.

TAURUS
(April 21 - May 21)

Social activities are likely to change at the last minute. If energy levels are not as high as normal, use this week for planning.

SCORPIO
(October 24 - November 22)

Are you suffering from winter blues? Although it is a common feeling at this time of the year, keep optimistic. There is so much to look forward to, in fact, that you are spoiled for choice. Although your social life may be in a bit of a rut, some sparkling moves from you will get things moving. Bring people together for a little party with music and good wine.

GEMINI
(May 22 - June 21)

Although health should be good, energy may be a little low. A bit of a mystery surrounds a close friend and your opinion may be sought.

SAGITTARIUS
(November 23 - December 21)

Recent events have perhaps left a gap in your social life that is hard to fill. Patience is needed because it would be foolish to rush into something new if your heart is involved. Concentrating on work and other people will alleviate any loneliness.

CANCER
(June 22 - July 23)

The temptation to run round like a headless chicken is strong this week. There seem to be so many demands on your time that things become confusing. Be sure you are getting enough rest because this time of the year can be fraught for you.

CAPRICORN
(December 22 - January 20)

A loss of patience with a situation shows this week but is not to your advantage. Whatever you feel, be subtle in your approach. Try to see your position clearly and the result will be that you realise you have more control than you thought. Seeking advice while being honest and telling the full story serves best.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

ENGLISH-SPANISH

Across:

- 1 East, 3 Preacher, 9 Tecnico, 10 Carro, 11 Ahora, 12 Easier, 14 Clavos, 16 Statue, 19 Wallet, 21 Beers, 24 Arrow, 25 Enemygo, 26 Handsome, 27 Noon.

Down:

- 1 Entrance, 2 Sacro, 4 Reopen, 5 Arcos, 6 Harvest, 7 Roof, 8 Higado, 13 Teaspoon, 15 Azafran, 17 Tables, 18 Stream, 20 Lawns, 22 Erizo, 23 Bath.

CRYPTIC

Across:

- 1 Core, 3 Calypsos, 8 Message, 9 China, 10 Trite, 11 Descent, 12 Regret, 13 Waster, 16 Vestige, 18 Tyrol, 20 Rolls, 21 Inexact, 22 Elevated, 23 Beds.

Down:

- 1 Comet, 2 Risking, 4 Agenda, 5 Swine, 6 Scatter, 7 Daredevils, 9 Casualties, 12 Reverse, 14 Terrace, 15 Recite, 17 Solve, 19 Lotus.

QUICK

Across:

- 2/18 Rip off, 5 Dace, 6 Lead, 7 Ale, 8 Dell, 10 Asia, 13 Pail, 16 Aids, 19 Bars, 20 Apex, 21 Ear.

Down:

- 1 Bare, 2 Real, 3 Plea, 4 Sari, 8 Dip, 9 Lei, 11 Ski, 12 Ass, 14 Ajar, 15 Lose, 16 Afar, 17 Deep.

CODE BREAKER

1	N	Y	X	G	M	W	F	C	U	E	H	D	Q
14	P	O	J	S	R	V	B	Z	K	T	A	I	L

KAKURO

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

QUIZ: ENDS IN X

1. According to Greek mythology, what was the name of the river in Hades across which Charon carried dead souls?
2. Also called varicella, which infectious disease is caused by the herpes zoster virus and mainly affects children?
3. Are You Experienced (1967), Axis: Bold as Love (1967) and Electric Ladyland (1968) were all UK Top Five hit albums by which iconic American rock guitarist/ singer?
4. Born on July 31, 1974, which English actress is best known for her role as Dr. Nikki Alexander on BBC crime drama Silent Witness?
5. Derived from the French for 'sweet note', what two word name is often given to a personal letter to a loved one expressing affection?
6. In humans and some other mammals, what is the name of the tube-shaped sac attached to and opening into the

- lower end of the large intestine?
7. What is the trade name of the neurotoxin prepared from botulin that is used medically to treat certain muscular conditions and cosmetically to remove wrinkles by temporarily paralyzing facial muscles?
8. What was the name of the Belgian instrument maker who invented the saxophone in 1840?
9. Which Dutch football team won the European Cup (Champions League) in 1970-71, 1971-72, 1972-73 and 1994-95?
10. Which is the northernmost of the five boroughs of New York City?
Not a lot of people know that... Ceefax was the world's first teletext information service. It was started by the BBC in 1974 and ended on October 23, 2012, in line with the digital switchover being completed in Northern Ireland.

Answers:

- Answers:**
1. STYX, 2. CHICKEN POX, 3. JIMI HENDRIX, 4. EMILIA FOX, 5. BILLET DOUX, 6. APPENDIX, 7. BOTOX, 8. ADOLPHE SAX, 9. AJAX (Amsterdamsche Football Club Ajax), 10. THE BRONX

Advertising feature

Neater Heater stops cold winters spoiling your dream

NINE years ago two British expats, Richard and Tony, were looking for affordable heating when they stumbled, accidentally, on a brand of Norwegian convector heater that couldn't be bought in Spain. Not only were these wall-mounted heaters discreet and stylish, but they were also packed with 'Es': Efficient; effective; economical.

Recognising a huge gap in the market that these attractive affordable heaters would fill, Richard and Tony established Neater Heater and have been heating the casas and apartments of shivering expats ever since then.

"We all come out to Spain for the good weather and lifestyle," says Tony "yet everyone is caught out by the cold winter nights in their spectacularly non-insulated Spanish homes. We all come from the UK where we had radiators and fires, and that is what most British expats still want.

"A decent oil or gas central heating system is going to set you back thousands of euros just to install it, so most people opt for unhealthy gas estufas, or electric heaters.

"The problem with most electric heaters, is that the cheap ones are always expensive to run, and ugly, whereas any decent ones always cost a fortune to install. We can have most homes up and running with affordable, stylish, economic Neater Heaters, for less than €1,000. The cost obviously depends on the size of house and the size of heaters. Or they can be bought individually according to your requirements"

Starting out in their home region of the Costa Blanca, Richard and Tony searched for, and found, businesses that were happy to become agents for Neater Heater.

"We hope to cater for all types of customer," explains Richard "Some people are comfort-

able with computers, and are quite happy to buy from our on-line shop, with free delivery. But many want to shop in the traditional way, look at the heaters and talk to someone about their requirements.

"These customers can go to one of our numerous outlets from Moraira, Calpe, Altea to several around Torrevieja, Murcia, Antas and now, we are happy to say, our latest outlets in the Costa Del Sol, and in Portugal. If you live in certain parts of the Marina Alta, Torrevieja, or Murcia, we even have agents who can visit your home and offer advice, sales and an installation service.

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Advertising feature

The BIG MAC is back

IT'S that time of year again! Time to get your dancing shoes on and shop until you drop at the most anticipated event of the year.

'The BIG MAC 4' music and fun festival, takes place on Sunday February 4 at an exciting new venue. This year's packed day will be staged at the Hostal Rural in Turre.

This fabulous venue offers great space for all the planned activities and MACS fully intends to make the most of it.

Music will be all around, with acoustic and electronic stages, along with entertainment for all the family.

This is the fourth edition of the charity extravaganza and year on year it has grown and become one of the key events in the Almeria social calendar.

Money raised from the day goes to help MACS volunteers in their incredible work supporting cancer patients and their families throughout the province.

Each of the previous two BIG MACS raised more than €6,000 thanks to the tireless work of volunteers, the generosity of visitors and the kindness of the artists who



BIG MAC 4: Last year's event raised more than €6,000.

gave up their time to support the event.

This year more than 20 bands, artists and acts will participate free of charge during the afternoon and evening with something for everyone.

Fans of music from all genres will enjoy the sound of some of the best local bands and singers in the area. Whether it's modern favourites, pop, blues, soul, swing or good old rock 'n' roll, there will be something to

get every toe tapping.

Dance fans can sit back and watch two energetic Zumba displays along with a performance by pupils from the children's dance school.

The bar will be open all day and nobody will go hungry, with plenty of cakes and pastries available as well as a fantastic hog roast.

Shopaholics can browse the numerous stalls and have a go at the popular Tombola, which always raises the most money during the day.

Due to the extra space this year, stalls are still available and can be booked for just €10.

This is set to be an epic event and one not to be missed. Put the date in your diary and come along to enjoy a fun-packed day and evening while helping this excellent local charity.

For stall bookings contact Julie Justice on 697 462 746 and for general MACS information call 634 328 334 or email macscancersupport@live.co.uk. Visit macscancersupport.com or see the Facebook page.

IF you find you are reaching for the toothbrush or chewing gum throughout the day, you might be surprised to know it could be mints that are to blame for bad breath.

Dentist James Buchanan has told one publication that far from solving breath issues, sugary mints

could actually be causing the problem.

He explained, "mints are a popular way to expel bad breath,"

adding, "however, mouth bacteria turns the sugar in mints to acid, which wears down teeth and causes bad breath. It is best to use a sugar-

free gum."

The professional advises yoghurt, celery and apples are a more effective way to freshen breath.

Buchanan also recommends using a soft bristled toothbrush, rather than a hard one, as this can damage the enamel of our teeth. He explained, "while trapped food particles can contribute to bad breath, the most common cause is plaque build-up on teeth."

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TURMERIC: May have surprising health benefits.

WE all know we should eat a balanced diet, but between work, children and other responsibilities we sometimes fall short.

And while some of us may turn to vitamin supplements to fill in the blanks, scientists are conflicted about whether they are doing much beyond giving us 'expensive pee.' One publication has spoken to several experts to get their opinion on which are really worth bothering with.

Simon Bishop, a lecturer in primary care and public health at the University of Bangor,

From a to z

Wales, thinks turmeric could provide impressive health benefits.

He said it is, "used as a traditional remedy in many parts of Asia, to reduce inflammation and help wounds heal." Now, mounting evidence suggests that curcumin, a substance in turmeric, may also help to protect against several diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis, cardiovascular disease, dementia and some cancers."

Meanwhile, professor of physiology at Liverpool's John Moores University, Graeme Close, believes Vitamin D could be more important than previously thought and may be worth taking separately. He said, "We believe vitamin D deficiencies can result in a less efficient immune system, impaired muscle function and regeneration, and even depression. Vitamin D is one of the cheapest supplements available."

Tired all the time?

LOW energy levels are becoming so much of an epidemic that British GPs have reduced the condition to the acronym TATT (tired all the time).

And according to one nutritional therapist, Jackie Lynch, there are several culprits to blame for our fatigue.

Ms Lynch spoke to publication Get the Gloss, listing the most common mistakes people make in trying to boost their energy.

The expert, who has written a book on energy levels says, while stimulants like caffeine may seem a good idea, they can actually be counter-productive, disrupting sleep and blood sugar levels and leaving us feeling "tired but wired." She also claimed alcohol, which is good at getting us to sleep, then keeps us up during the night and sluggish next day. Ms Lynch also claimed lack of exercise can cause poor circulation, in turn manifesting in a lack of energy.

In her book *VaVaVoom: the 10-Day Energy Diet*, the nutritionist explains another common cause of fatigue is

lack of protein, leading to sugar cravings, lack of muscle tone and brittle nails. She explained, "It simply is not enough to have a chicken breast or salmon steak in the evening," adding, "we need protein for lots of crucial functions in the body, but it is particularly important to fill you up, and to keep you going during a busy day." She says, "Protein plays an essential role in maintaining blood sugar balance, because it helps to slow down the release of carbohydrates in the body, ensuring more sustained energy."

Finally, Ms Lynch explained dehydration can also affect our physical performance, with headaches, dry eyes and confusion being other symptoms. She says, "Your water intake should be enough to stop you feeling thirsty over long periods, and to ensure your urine is a pale straw colour."



FEELING TIRED: Could be down to a number of factors.

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Cassandra Nash

A weekly look

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

THREE THOUSAND people were trapped in a blizzard for 18 hours on Spain's A-6 motorway between Segovia and Madrid.

That's nothing compared to the 13,000 recently snowed-in in Zermatt, although being benighted in a car in Spain bears no comparison to being stranded in comfy, fur-lined Switzerland.

But the near-disaster questioned the competence of Juan Ignacio Zoido, Interior minister, together with Gregorio Serrano, the expert in Financial and Taxation Law who heads the General Directorate of Traffic, and the A-6 concessionary Abertis. Predictably each blamed the other for the near-disaster.

Zoido - who tried to prevent the October 1 referendum in Cataluña by ordering police charges - was in Sevilla at the time. He was there to present medals to his former bodyguards, a vital aspect of his duties that overrode the lives and safety of 3,000 people.

Not to worry: to paraphrase Dick Cheney, "snow happens."



Photo Credit: Patydearie's Blog/Twitter

SNOW JOKE: 3,000 people were trapped by blizzards in Segovia.

An independent air

IT'S a social media joke, of course. Tabarnia does not exist, but if it did this fictional area uniting part of Tarragona and Barcelona provinces would declare independence from an independent Cataluña.

The pro-independence parties - never a laugh a minute - failed to see the joke, and Ciudadanos leader Ines Arrimadas took the opportunity of pointing out that the secessionists had

to use unionist arguments to explain why Tabarnia is a no-no.

Brings Napoleon the Pig to mind because the Independentistas obviously believe that all UDIs are equal, but some are more equal than others.

Getting priorities straight

A RECENT headline proclaimed that Mariano Rajoy will turn his undivided attention from Cataluña and occupy Spain's government with the concerns

of the country's 16 other autonomous regions. He has more than enough issues to deal with including agreements on pensions and education, but days later another headline proclaimed that Rajoy and the Partido Popular will concentrate on halting Ciudadanos' onward and upward trajectory as a priority.

No prizes for guessing which issue will take precedence because Rajoy's go-to solution of 'wait and see' won't work this time. If he waits too long, the PP won't see Ciudadanos for dust.

In denial

BONNIE PRINCE CARLES, self-exiled in Brussels, headed JxC, the second most-voted party in the December elections and secured two more seats than the other pro-independence party, ERC.

Puigdemont, democratically installed as Catalan president in 2015, refuses to accept that he is now its ex-president. The job's still his, he reckons.

On the ball

IN a world where consensus is more of a concept than a reality, it's generally accepted that Lionel Messi is one of the world's best footballers, if not the best.

He and his people were also sufficiently canny to consider Catalan independence when renewing his contract with Barça last November.

This included a clause stating that if Cataluña were separated from Spain and Barcelona FC left the La Liga, the player 'would automatically be free.'

It's incomprehensible that the constitutionalist parties didn't make more of this during the regional elections last month.

They would have got in with a landslide if they had.

columnists@euroweeklynews.com

"Easily smiles the don!"

Ric Polansky



Ric Polansky moved to Mojacar in 1969 as a pioneer developer. He reads extensively and has travelled in South America panning gold and looking for El Dorado.

I DIDN'T know what a 'Don' was. I had to ask my Spanish friends. I was told it was someone important, respected, liked and admired by all. "Like who?" I had to enquire.

Well, a bank director I was told. How could that be? They took your money, never gave loans and went absolutely ballistic if you were behind on your account.

No, I needed another image. A wealthy man that owns lots of property could be a 'Don.' But, that didn't impress me much since almost all property in Spain was inherited. No, I was missing something. My 'Don' would need more.

Late that night my brother and I drove to Almeria to meet a man about buying land from him. He wasn't home at the agreed time but we were treated most graciously by his wife. She sent us to a nearby bar but he wasn't there either. We decided to wait having made the long drive. About an hour later, the door swung open and in strolled a

diminutive man with a large smile wrapped across his face. The entire bar erupted, stood and some applauded. Now that was a Don for me. He noticed us quickly, but like a good politician went to each table, shook hands, exchanged pleasantries with all therein seated and slowly approached us, but not before he acknowledged all others present.

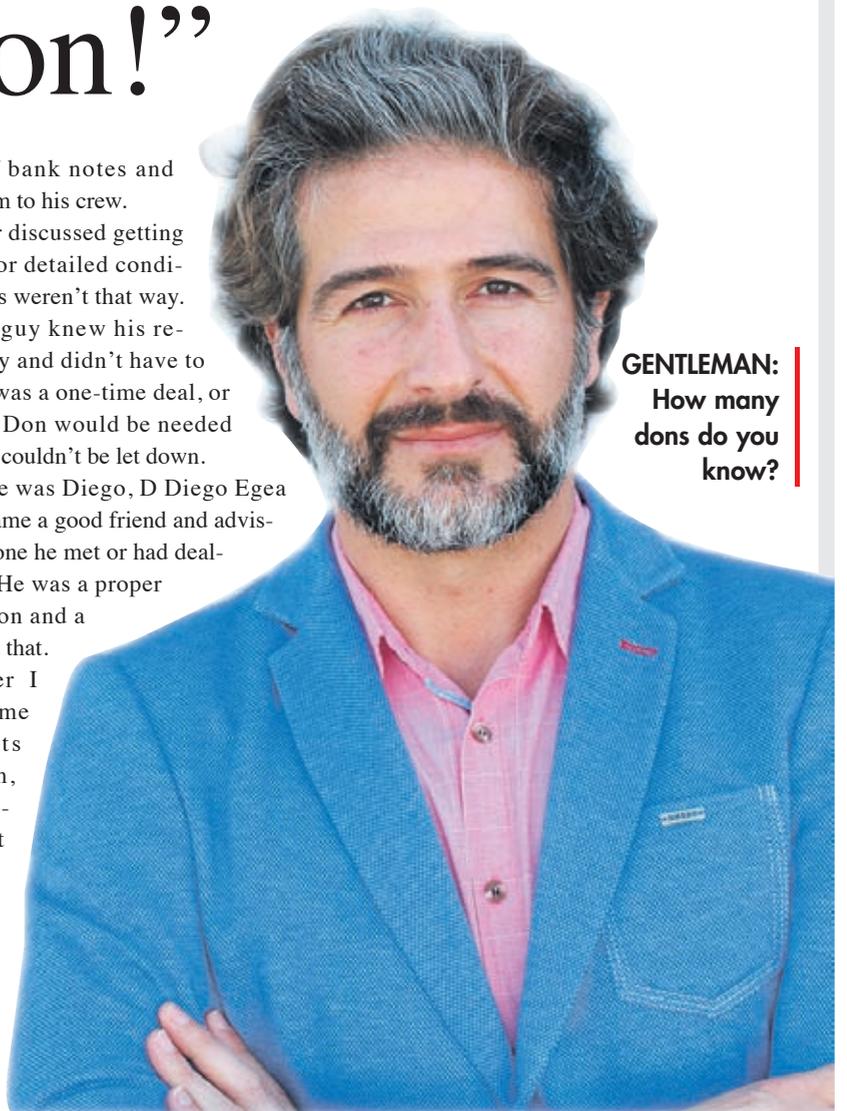
He was an obvious personage and we were to wait in line, even if two hours late. My brother gestured toward me, 'mi hermano' and we sat. I extended my hand but he just nodded and smiled easily toward me. While we ordered beers and started to discuss the business at hand a minor queue formed at the table to speak with the great man. He dealt with us softly and with decorum but fulfilling his obligation to one and all. We talked price, bottom line and time to pay. Others enquired about small loans or personal advice about marriage troubles or family difficulties. All were attended to in a quiet and soft manner.

"Who is this guy?" I enquired of my brother. "He is a Don to all these workers. Their Godfather and built-in best friend for those that don't have family or close friends." It was slowly becoming clear and understood of what a real Don was all about. Even while he spoke with us about a price and stood and

peeled off bank notes and handed them to his crew.

He never discussed getting paid back or detailed conditions. Don's weren't that way. The other guy knew his responsibility and didn't have to be told. It was a one-time deal, or maybe the Don would be needed again so he couldn't be let down.

His name was Diego, D Diego Egea and he became a good friend and adviser to everyone he met or had dealings with. He was a proper Spanish Don and a good one at that. Years later I named some apartments after him, but that really wasn't enough considering all he had done for everyone he ever met.



GENTLEMAN:
How many
dons do you
know?

Trumpet voluntary

THE First International Trumpet Seminar will take place in Adra this weekend, under the eye of Fernando Ciancio, trumpet soloist of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Buenos Aires

The event has been organised by the Banda de Cornetas y Tambores of the Sacred Heart, in the collaboration of the town's culture department and the Blacky pub.

A dozen children from the area will benefit from this exciting opportunity which takes place at the local cultural centre and Vicente Ramón Ocaña Marín, trumpet teacher of the Municipal Band of Almería will be explaining a number of important matters which need to be con-



Photo by Ayuntamiento de Adra

FIRST SEMINAR: The students are ready to learn.

sidered when playing the trumpet.

The seminar will explain the basic aspects of the instrumental technique including breathing, vibration of the lips,

development of loudness and registration; acquisition of muscular resistance; fingering technique, scales and arpeggios.

Bringing opera to the people

OPERA comes to Almería City this Friday (tomorrow) at 9pm with free tickets for those attending the university.

The concert in the Padilla

de Almería Auditorium features Mariola Cantarero (soprano), Michael Thomas (director) and the Almería City Orchestra presenting a number of pieces from some

of the greatest operas of all time with music composed by Mozart, Rossini, Bellini, Bizet and many others.

Tickets to the general public cost €15 from the

box office, but those attending the university will have been able to obtain up to two free tickets to help them to enjoy the music of opera.



Photo by Clasijazz Facebook

MAKING THEMSELVES HEARD: The Big Band Clasijazz Swing and Funk.

Big Band music rolls into town

THE Maestro Padilla Auditorium in Almería City will host a concert by the Big Band Clasijazz Swing and Funk this Saturday which pays homage to the great Woody Herman.

Directed by Mike Fletcher, it features the recently re-established Gospel Choir Clasijazz, who will perform gospel classics like *Oh, Happy Day!* and *Amazing Grace* among others. The Brass Band of Clasijazz will give a touch of funk to this fantastic concert.

Woody Herman is one of the great big band composers of all time and at one part of the performance, hundreds of young people will share the stage to join the Big Band Provincial Macro. Clasijazz have been performing for more than 10 years, with pianist Pablo Mazuecos at its head.

Tickets are €5 each with a free guest ticket.

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Supercalifragilistico musical in Almeria



Photo by YouTube

SING ALONG: Mary and cast on stage.

WHILST Mary Poppins may have lived in London, she and all of her friends will be transported to Almeria on Sunday February 4 at 6pm.

A huge success in Madrid, Supercalifragilistico, El Musical produced by the Company On Beat is a spectacular presentation which brings the Super Nanny into the 21st century with a mixture of the songs so well remembered from the movie, mixed with some of today's favourites.

Mix a Spoonful of Sugar with the latest offerings of such diverse talents as Shakira and Cristina Aguilera and many more and you will end up with a superb musical entertainment ideal for all of the family.

As she looks after the children, she discovers that new technology has made even some of her magic obsolete, but in the end she manages to make everything turn out right.

Advance tickets cost €10 or will be €12 on the night.



BREATHTAKING: Maria Jose Perez.

Award winning Flamenco from the heart

AWARD-WINNING Flamenco singer Maria Jose Perez will be showcasing her second album Trazos at the Teatro Apolo de Almeria.

It has been nine years since her last album and she feels that she has grown sufficiently to allow her to move forward with the 10-track Trazos which takes her back through her life in Almeria where she grew up.

For this work she has been helped and guided by the guitar of Jose Quevedo 'Bolita de Jerez' who has helped her craft the

words and lyrics and who has supplied the music for her.

Her musical backing will be provided by the guitar of her mentor Jose Quevedo Bolita, the percussion of Paquito Gonzalez, the bass of Jose Manuel Posada, the piano of Jose Carra, the percussion of Víctor Carrasco and Laura Marchena, as well as a string quintet.

Tickets for the performance which takes place on Saturday February 3 at 10.30pm cost €12 or €25 to include a copy of the new CD.

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Avda del Mediterraneo - Local 12 - Mojacar 04638

EL EJIDO is gearing up for its Winter-Spring Cultural festival, with a variety of acts from Spain and beyond set to take the stage from tomorrow (Friday).

The programme for the festival features writers, musicians and actors, including Sergio Dalma, Lola Herrera, Ray Loriga, and the Black Theatre of Prague. The festival opens this Friday with a performance from the Korean Academy Orchestra from 9.30pm in the auditorium. The show com-

What a line up!

bines performances of European music and traditional Korean music and dance.

The following Thursday January 25 sees Madrid-born writer Ray Loriga present his latest award-winning novel 'Rendicion,' again in the auditorium as part of the festival's 'Literary Encounter Cycle.'

The festival also features a screening of

the animated musical 'Tadeo Jones,' a light-hearted take on the 'Indiana Jones' franchise, on Saturday February 3 at the auditorium.

Theatrical performances include a staging of 'La Velocidad del Otoño' starring Lola Herrera and Juanjo Artero on Friday February 23, as well as Manu Sanchez's play 'El buen dictador' on Saturday March 3.

'A contratiempo,' a flamenco performance from the 'La confluencia' dance company is set for Saturday April 7.

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Globe-trotting singer comes home

PABLO LOPEZ started his musical career with his friends in the pop band Nino Raro, with Latin and rock influences.

In 2008 Lopez became more famous after taking part in 2008 in Operacion Triunfo, the Spanish version of Star Academy where he finished as runner-up.

His debut album was certified gold in Spain and his second went double platinum.

Lopez's vocals have featured on the soundtrack of the Spanish TV series El Principe and the title track *El Mundo* peaked at number 12 in the singles chart.

He was nominated for Best Contemporary Pop Vocal Album at the 17th Latin Grammy Awards in 2016.

The venues Lopez performs at become sold out across Spain, and he has collaborated with artists such as Jamie Cullum and Dani Martin.

His new album *The World and Innocent Lovers* looks set to launch him to true international stardom.

Pablo Lopez will be performing at the Auditorium of Roquetas de Mar on Saturday February 10.



A FLAIR FOR THE ABSURD: Performers in *The Bald Singer*

A play on words

THE premiere of the play 'La Cantante Calva,' (The Bald Soprano), the work of a young and unknown author who professed to not liking theatre took place 67 years ago.

Eugène Ionesco produced what would instantly be revered as a defining work of 20th-century theatre, and one of the most identifiable expressions of the so-called the-

atre of the absurd.

It manages to be a great comedy that is in itself a great tragedy. That is how Ionesco describes it, and he is still perplexed to hear the laughter of the audience.

It is a work that was born from the pages of a manual to learn English that Ionesco found very sober and strange.

He decided to write an absurd

play called 'L'anglais sans peine (English without toil). The current title came about only after a verbal slip up by one of the actors in rehearsal.

Through the nonsense is a satire of modern society that reveals the absurdity of the actions that fill our day-to-day lives.

In Ionesco one can see the surprised view of a child, a

child who looks around and who does not understand the normal ways of living.

The work of Ionesco, of the absurd, challenges our preconceptions and represents a means of social warning and satire that will inform every person who experiences it.

The play will be presented on February 17 at the Auditorium of Roquetas de Mar.

Under the Tuscan sun

BACCHUS CELLAR

by Lorenzo Barbareschi



CLASSIC: Chianti collage, Italy.

THERE is more to Chianti than the now rarely used classic bottle in a straw basket - known as a 'fiasco' - that was made famous by Italian restaurants in the '70s.

An Italian red wine, Chianti derives its name from the Tuscany area known for its landscapes, art and food where different types of soil and micro-climates result from rolling hills with altitudes of 250 - 610 metres.

To retain its name it must be produced in the Chianti region and made from at least 80 per cent of Sangiovese grapes, with possible blends of Cabernet, Merlot or Syrah to soften the finished wine.

Following the Second World War, with an emphasis on quantity over quality, the reputation of Chianti plummeted. But over the last 30 years it has been revived with the introduction of modern and innovative wine-making techniques.

Today, most Chianti falls under two major designations: basic level and the Chianti Classico DOCG which produces the largest vol-

ume of DOCG wines in Italy.

Basic level Chianti has medium-high acidity and tannins with minimum alcohol level of 11.5 per cent and juicy fruit notes of cherry, plum and raspberry. This wine reaches peak drinking quality between three and five years after vintage.

Chianti Classico can age from six to 20 years with a predominant floral and cinnamon spicy bouquet and aromas of tobacco with minimum 12 per cent alcohol and seven months ageing in oak.

Other higher end versions are: Chianti Classico Gran Selezione, Riserva and Superiore.

Chianti's acidity makes it flexible with food pairing, particularly with Italian cuisine that features red sauces as well as beef, lamb and game.

It can range in price from €3 to upwards of €30 for high-end versions.

Happy tasting.

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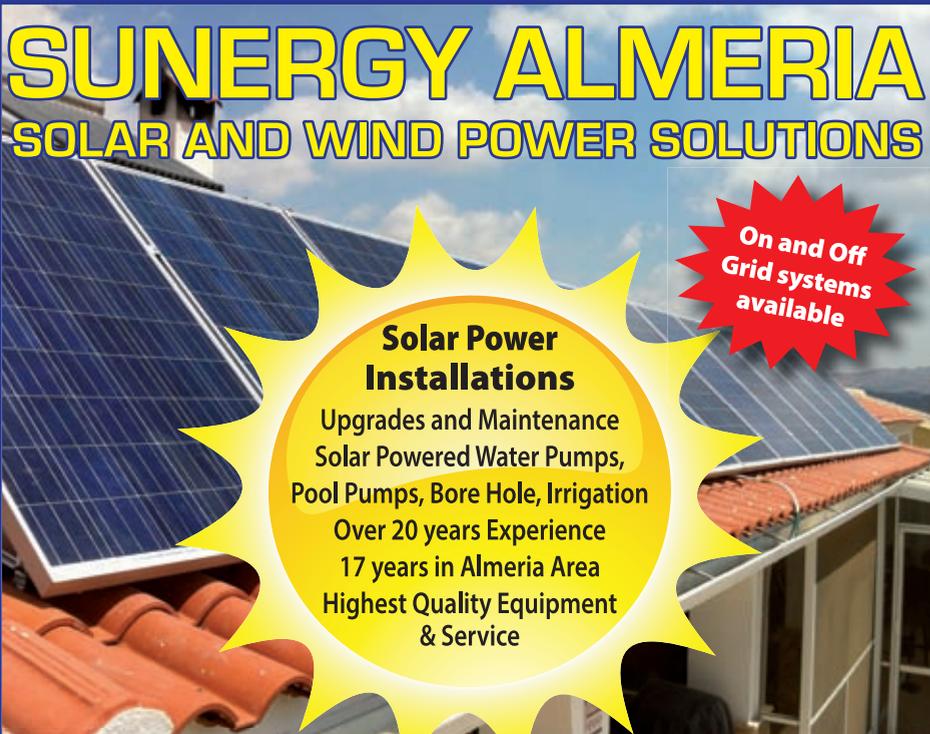
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NEWS EXTRA

Business boost

THE Albox Popular Party (PP) has proposed a new plan to the town hall to help promote local companies and bring more business to the area, which will in turn boost jobs in the area.

Sweet music

THE Albox 'Del Soto' choral musical group will take part in the semi-final of the Almeria Carnival contest, performing 'Que viene, que viene' ('What will be, will be') at the Almeria Auditorium on January 26.

In hot water

THE former mayor of Albox, Rogelio Mena Segura, who is currently serving time in prison, could face further charges for the misuse of public funds for allegedly allowing a councillor to pay for travel expenses with public funds.

Swish streets

THE Albox Town Council has finished paving and asphaltting the streets in the historic centre, including the Rosario, Ramon y Cajal, Brígida Pardo streets, in order to improve their safety for pedestrians.

Race hosts

ALBOX has been chosen to host the fourth round of the Hyundai 'I Duatlon Cross Villa' (cross duathlon) that began last November in Uleila del Campo and will see participants competing in running and cycling events.

WITH the threat of drought increasingly on the horizon, the mayor of Albox has assured locals that plans are in place in case water supplies run dry.

Water used to be transported to the town from the Negratín reservoir, but in September Aguas del Almanzora - the company responsible for transporting the water from the basin - announced that the reservoir had to be closed as water levels are so low.



RUN DRY: The Negratín reservoir in

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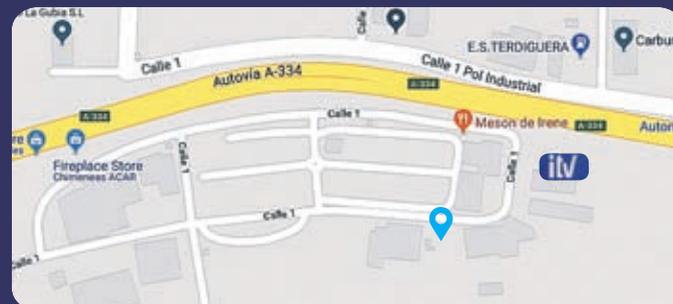
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FOLLOW SIGNS FOR itv CENTRE

Drought danger

Mayor assures residents that plans are in place

Since then, the town's authorities have scrambled to find an alternative. Albox mayor Francisco Torrecillas confirmed that since September, Aguas del Almanzo-

ra "has been supplying us with water purchased from other sites."

This plan was supposed to be in place 'until February,' when it was hoped water

levels in the Negratin reservoir would have improved.

However, Aguas del Almanzo informed the council that one of the wells supplying the water had broken, putting Albox's water supply under threat, as well as that of other towns in the region dependant on the source, and could result in a return to the days when the tap water was not suitable for drinking.

Torrecillas announced that

plans are in place to fix an old well that would guarantee the supply of running water - although it would not be suitable for consumption - and also criticised the regional authorities for their poor management of the situation, saying it is "regrettable" they have said "absolutely nothing" about the problem despite being informed of it more than a week ago.



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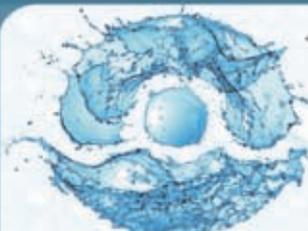
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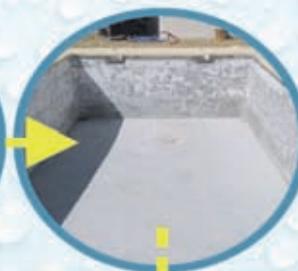
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Time to play



Ayuntamiento de Albox/Facebook

CHEERS: Mayor Francisco Torrecillas with Albox locals in Plaza del Carmen.

THE renovations to the Plaza del Carmen square in Albox have been completed, and the area now features a new children's area and exercise park.

The new space was opened by Albox mayor Francisco Torrecillas and Jose Campoy, the councillor for Public Works while many locals attended.

The work was made possible by the city council's investment of approximately

€50,000, which made it possible to double the size of the original playground and install new attractions for children, as well as a new rubber floor to make it safer for them to play there.

The new square also has an exercise park with several pieces of equipment that allow locals to exercise, regardless of physique or age, without costing them anything.

Security cameras have also

been installed in order to prevent acts of vandalism that have caused serious damage to the square in recent years.

The mayor announced after the ceremony that the council "will continue their work towards the maintenance and creation of other public areas and parks that the town is desperately in need of."

This includes a new green space for the Avenida de America road.

Look out for

Kevin Lewis

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Hotel Coffeefornia

Grupo Cappuccino to open first hotel in Spain

PREMIUM restaurant and café chain Grupo Cappuccino is to open its first hotel this spring at the heart of Palma's historic quarter, Plaza De Cort.

Hotel Mama has been designed by renowned Parisian interior designer Jacques Grange, whose credits include the beautiful Palazzo Margarita in Italy and The Mark Hotel in New York. The 19th century building will be a palatial and elegant setting of five star luxury.

All of the furniture has Grange's stamp and the 32 exclusive rooms have five bespoke styles: Marella, Celadon, Garden, Oriental and Roman. The four-storey property will also contain a Cappuccino cinema, rooftop pool, gym, and restaurant, while a spa is scheduled to open later this year.

A formidable art collection will be displayed around the hotel, including works from David Rochline, Eva Jospin, Wendy Artin and Sean Scully - all favourites of Grupo Cappuccino owner Juan Picornell.

The hotel will also house a stunning Café Mama, offering a traditional brunch menu and classic cocktails.

The Japanese restaurant, Inu Japanese will serve popular dishes including Halibut and Saikyo Miso.

Grupo Cappuccino had previously made its name with a string of stellar restaurants and cafés in exotic locations such as Mallorca, Madrid, Ibiza, Marbella and Jeddah. Room prices start from €219 per night and bookings are available from March.

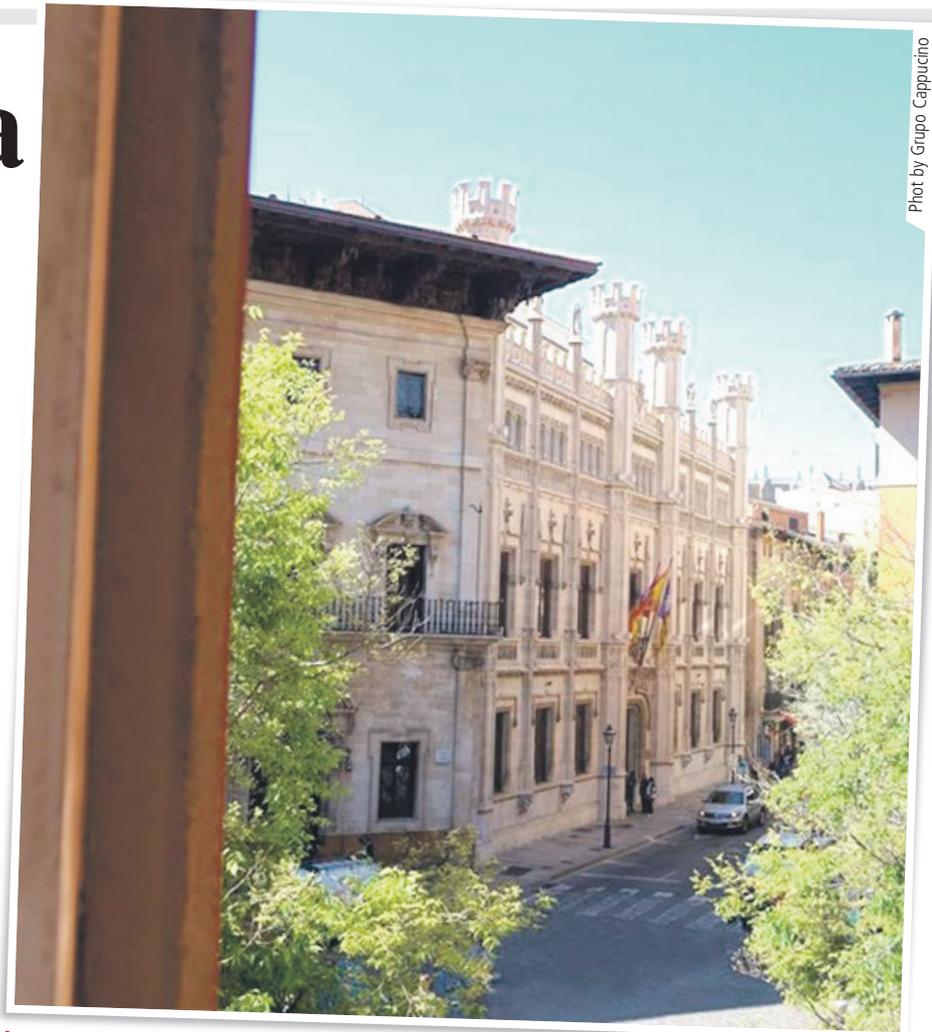


Photo by Grupo Cappuccino

MAMA MIA: The luxurious new hotel to be opened by Grupo Cappuccino.



Photo by Taylor Wimpey

SITTING PRETTY: Taylor Wimpey is opening a new development in the Costa Blanca.

Swift work for Taylor

LEADING housebuilder Taylor Wimpey has announced that 2017 has been an excellent year, and that the Spanish market is in robust health. In their trading statement the company reported continued growth, with a total order book of 329 homes.

In fact December 2017 saw the sixth consecutive month of growth in sales, despite Brexit uncertainty.

Spain has been a favoured second home destination for international buyers for many years, and 32 nationalities bought with Taylor Wimpey Espana last year, with German buyers leading the way.

The housebuilder, which celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2018, has seen a 12 per cent increase in sales on 2016, with the operating profit significantly improved as a result.

"The order book increase shows that even in challenging environments, the right property

in Spain is still very much in demand," says Marc Pritchard, Sales and Managing Director.

"Spain really does offer everything that a second homeowner wishes for: sunshine, spacious properties in traditional Mediterranean styles, affordable flights, beautiful beaches - it's all here. With record levels of tourists coming to Spain last year, we expect even greater demand for our homes in 2018."

The holiday hotspot of Costa Blanca has been a particular favourite, with reservations for houses in the area increasing by 50 per cent. Indeed Taylor Wimpey is ready to provide a range of new homes across the 'White Coast,' beginning with new development Arenal Dream.

For more information contact Taylor Wimpey on 0800 012 1020 or visit www.taylorwimpey.spain.com. Residents outside of the UK will need to call +34 971 706 972.

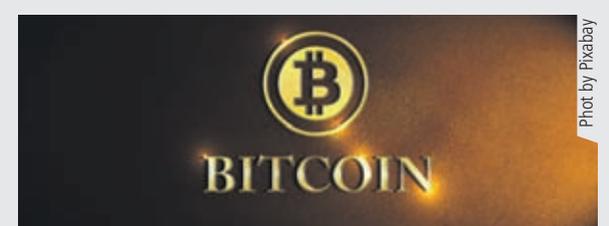


Photo by Pixabay

BIT OF ALRIGHT: Bitcoin is venturing into property.

Bitcoin hits home

IN a sign of the times, for the first time ever a Spanish real estate property has been put on the market priced only in Bitcoins.

Bitcoin, a decentralised global cryptocurrency, is not financed by a central bank or individual administrator.

Despite this, the peer-to-peer electronic cash system has seen a huge increase in its value in a short space of time.

The residence has been put on the market by the Barcelona based real-estate company Mister Piso. Victor Monreal, its Executive Director, explains that Bitcoin enables "a much speedier and effective transaction than the traditional payment method."

He believes that normal payment "is managed by banks engaged in financial intermediation and subject to excessive and unnecessary regulation," reported EFE.

The apartment is located in Tarragona's central Plaza Imperial, and it was its owner who decided that payment would be exclusively in Bitcoins.

The property has gone on the market for 40 Bitcoins, the equivalent of €487,775 according to Wednesday's BTC virtual exchange rate. If a potential buyer does not have Bitcoins, he/she will be directed to one of the many exchanges on the internet.

Bitcoin transactions take place between users directly, are verified by the use of cryptography, and are recorded in a publicly distributed ledger called a 'blockchain.'



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It was one of the first plants of the Mediterranean to have its oils extracted for perfume in ancient times and was exported as a valuable commodity to other regions of the world. Its qualities as a herb are culinary, medicinal and therapeutic. The fragrance induces relaxation and has been known as the love inducing herb.

Growing lavender is easy if you have the right soil type and climate so, being a native to the Mediterranean, it is ideal for the Spanish climate. If you have the characteristic stony native soil prevalent to the Mediterranean it is almost certain that they can thrive in your garden. It may just take a few amendments to ensure their success.

Usually gardens are made from

disturbed soil that may be subsoils or have other additions that can affect the quality of the natural top soil. Too heavy a soil will not permit lavender to grow well. If you have tried and failed it may be that you need to add plenty of compost and sand to mix into the soil if the soil is very heavy.

The main failure of lavender is from wet feet or root rot due to lack of drainage and/or overwatering. Once established lavender needs very little watering except during prolonged dry periods or when in pots and containers.

They tolerate full summer sun but can have partial shade so long as they have at least around six hours of sunlight. Planting lavender close to buildings that give prolonged shade can make them lanky and weak, so it is best to grow them in the open on their own or amongst other shrubs of a similar size, but not under trees that



PURPLE POWER: Lavender is a beautiful plant with a superb scent.

prohibit direct sunlight.

The traditional long time companion of lavender is rosemary. Rosemary has the same growing requirements and colour contrasts and complements wonderfully with lavender.

Autumn to early spring is the best

time to plant so they can establish, without the need for too much care during their first summer. They live for many years and the main maintenance they require once established is just some pruning after they finish flowering in autumn.

The flowers and stems for use as

decoration or herbal uses can be taken all summer long, as the plant can rejuvenate from this light extraction. Pruning however means removing about a third of the growth and removing any damaged branches so that the plant can recover with a thicker form rather than become scraggly.

For hedges or groups the plants can be placed about 50cm apart, although dwarf varieties can be closer to 30cm apart and larger varieties about 60cm. There is a lot of different varieties so check with your local nursery and neighbours' gardens to find what is the best for your area.

Growing your own lavender will enable the fresh scent of lavender to grace your home simply by harvesting a bunch of flowers and leaves, tying with a ribbon or string and hanging them upside down wherever you wish the fragrance to permeate and provide its relaxing properties.

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Growing in pots

IF you have limited space in your garden, or want to protect some of your plants when temperatures drop, it's worth investing in some stylish pots.

Potted plants really brighten up a space and allow you to

have a garden that blooms all year round.

You can use them to grow anything from climbing and flowering plants to vegetables and herbs.

They also allow you to have a portable garden, as they allow you to bring plants which are susceptible to frost inside during colder months.

Generally speaking, the bigger the plant, the bigger the pot but you need to make sure that it drains well and won't over-heat your plant.

You can also get creative, by using anything from old teapots and welly boots to wooden barrels.

Make sure you keep in mind what the downsides might be of using pots made from certain containers. Although ceramic pots drain well, they also dry out quickly, especially under the hot sun, and require constant watering.

The soil you use in pots is also very important. You should avoid using soil from your garden as it is often too heavy and could contain diseases or pests.



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STUART:

- I have a female mongrel that can jump over any wall, is there a way to stop her?

To stop a dog jumping any wall of any height build the wall a few feet higher but at 45 degrees at the top.

Take a look at any prison, police kennel, etc you will find from 45 degrees to 90 which means the dog must jump to the bend and then crawl upside down which they cannot do.

I met Stuart a few days ago he had a lovely nine year old sweet, but very

overweight - really would not be able to jump up on a chair!

Leslie:

- My dog likes to eat cat faeces and in fact most faeces, why does she do this?

Faeces is not a dirty thing to a dog, they smell each other in the anal area to identify, however the subject of eating is quite simple.

A dog is a scavenger, will eat any faeces they consider has not been digested, so in fact it is food to them and very yummy! Sheep, cow, horse faeces... they will go after it to see if that has not been digested.

Here comes the problem: one does not know what an animal has eaten and not digested, so its food could also be contaminated and the result - you could have a sick dog.

Any questions send to me

davidthedogman@gmx.co.uk and if the editor has space these will be answered.

Happy New Year!



JUMPING BEAN: Build your wall high if your dog is prone to jumping.

Much ado about purring

IF you've ever wondered why your cat purrs, you might be in for a surprise.

Research carried out by pet nutritionists Purina has revealed that cats purr when they're distressed or afraid, not just when they're happy.

While purring is a method of communication among cats, especially needed by kittens to communicate with their mother and littermates because they are born blind and deaf, it's also shown to be a defence mechanism and a way to keep calm in stressful or painful situations.

A cat's purr has a low frequency which causes a series of vibrations inside the body; that can act as a form of pain relief and heal

injuries, ease breathing and build muscle.

However, it is believed that humans could also benefit from these good vibrations, as studies have shown spending time with cats and hearing their purrs lowers blood pressure.

Therefore, those who own cats have a 40 per cent lower risk of having a heart attack.

The researchers also identified a new kind of purr called the 'solicitation purr,' which sounds more urgent - not dissimilar to a crying baby - so owners instinctively come to their aid.

So the next time you take your purring cat to the vet, it may be more stressed than you realised.

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Clarkson
Quote of the Week



On the Mercedes CLS55: "Braking in this car is so brutal, it would be less painful to actually hit the tree you were trying to miss."

Some might say...



KIA has revealed concept images of the brand's brand new Niro, a zero-emission SUV with futuristic technology.

The Niro EV concept is a battery-electric small SUV with a 150kW (201bhp) electric motor powered by a 64kWh lithium polymer battery pack.

One of the most eye-catching features of the Niro EV concept is its range.

It is predicted to have a 238-mile range, with the ability to charge up to 115 miles in just 30 minutes.

While no performance figures are currently available, it is expected to be close to the Chevy Bolt's 0-60 time of 6.5 seconds.

Another interesting feature is the concept's Active Pedestrian Warning System (APWS).

Due to the almost silent running of the car's engine, the APWS combines front view cameras, front speakers and object recognition technology to provide an alert to pedestrians or cyclists, crossing in front of the Niro, to the car's presence.

A futuristic interior has a digital display in front of the driver, and another in the central dash, which seems to wrap around both the driver and the passenger sides.

The brand new interface allows passengers to adjust audio and heating controls by touch or just gesturing at the screen, while

Introducing the future



Credit: Twitter



FUTURISTIC: Images of the Kia Niro EV Concept were released at Las Vegas' Consumer Electronics show.

the driver can also swipe parts of the steering wheel to make adjustments to the same settings.

The Korean car giants have also announced plans to launch a staggering 16 electric vehicles globally by 2025.

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Worth a Fordtune

A CLASSIC Ford Escort, once used by British Racing teams, is up for sale and is expected to reach up to €50,000 (£45,000) when it goes under the hammer.

The 1972 Ford Escort RS 1600 Mk1 FIA is the rally ready version of Ford's Mk1 and is reportedly one of the most desirable cars for Ford collectors. Spending the majority of its life in New Zealand, the Ford returned to Britain in 2009.

It has Team BROADSPEED brazened across the side after being part of the British team's racing department, who were known to work with Ford after a very successful period in the 1960s.

The much loved race car remains in good condition and also raced as part of British team Mass Racing, who gave the RS 1600 a new fuel injection that increased the car's horsepower to over 270bhp.

Its interior oozes racing history, with just the driver's seat remaining and of course the custom roll cage. A spokesperson for the auctioneers told British media: "This superb, period correct, 1600 Escort is potentially eligible to compete in some of the finest historic events in the race calendar."

"With this level of preparation, it surely represents exceptional value and is potentially one of the most rewarding historic saloon car racers on the market today. In the hands of



Photo by Silverstone Auctions

BORN RACER: The Ford has a long racing history.

our vendor, this well-prepared car has enjoyed outings at the Algarve, Donnington, and Masters Historic Festivals so definitely has proven pedigree."

The car is expected to do well at auction but is still far off last year's world record for an Mk1 Ford Escort of €228,410 (£203,100).

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Confidence in Newcastle - Benitez

NEWCASTLE UNITED travel to Premier League leaders Manchester City at the weekend with Magpies gaffer Rafa Benitez having confidence in his squad.

"The Premier League is very tough, quite difficult, but I still have a lot of confidence in the team," said Benitez.

Newcastle lost 1-0 against City in December and Benitez said: "We knew it was going to be a difficult game, but we were in it to the end."

City's win at St James' Park saw Blues boss Pep Guardiola criticise Benitez: "We deserved to win - by far - it's not easy when the opponent doesn't want to play," rapped Guardiola.

Benitez expects only to be able to sign loan players in the January transfer window, in the wake of Newcastle takeover talks stalling.

"I don't know what our budget is exactly in the window. I will keep working to try and get our targets," said Benitez.

"I'm happy with the squad, but looking for more players. It is difficult to sign players, but



UKSPORTSCENE

with Andrew Atkinson

remain realistic," said Benitez, linked with ex-Manchester United striker Javier Hernandez who joined West Ham from Bayer Leverkusen last summer.

Premier League fixtures: Saturday: Brighton v Chelsea; WHU v Bournemouth; Everton v WBA; Burnley v Manchester United; Leicester City v Watford; Stoke City v Huddersfield; Arsenal v Crystal Palace; Manchester City v Newcastle.

Sunday: Southampton v Spurs. Monday: Swansea v Liverpool.

CONFIDENCE: Benitez is confident in his side.



MANCHESTER City boss Pep Guardiola has been warned they're not yet in the Carabao Cup final as their second leg against Bristol City looms.

"It's not over," booted Bristol gaffer Lee Johnson, after losing the first leg 2-1 against City in a dramatic tie at the Etihad Stadium. "It's only half time, we're still in this tie," said Johnson, after City gained a win with Sergio Aguero's stoppage time winner.

Championship club Bristol have knocked out four Premier League clubs in Manchester United, Watford, Stoke and

Guardiola gives Pep talk to underdogs

Crystal Palace on the road to the semi-finals.

"Pep Guardiola said we played better than the majority of the Premier League teams that come to Man City," said Johnson, ahead of the second leg on January 23.

Along with the Carabao Cup and the

Premier League, City are eyeing other silverware: "Without spirit you can't win trophies - in any competition - including the Champions League," said Guardiola.

Arsenal and Chelsea meet in the second leg of the Carabao Cup semi-final on January 24 after a goalless first leg: "It was a good draw and we have to finish the job," said Gunners boss Arsene Wenger.

"Not to concede a goal at home could be very important for the second leg - to play at the Emirates Stadium is not easy - but we are ready," said Chelsea boss Antonio Conte.

Swans in a flap

LIVERPOOL travel to relegation threatened Swansea in the Premier League with Swans' new boss Carlos Carvalhal hoping he can turn the tide.

"Nobody has many expectations of Swansea, but we can change things and improve the players," said Carvalhal, who replaced Paul Clement at the Liberty Stadium.

Ex-Sheffield Wednesday boss Carvalhal, who unexpectedly left The Owls on Christmas Eve, said: "I like difficult challenges.

"People say Swansea need a miracle to stay in the Premier League, but I don't agree."

Liverpool's new £75m signing Virgil van Dijk, and fit-again Adam Lallana are set to line-up against Swansea on Monday.

Anfield boss Jurgen Klopp is linked with signing Real Madrid midfielder Dani Ceballos, 21, in the transfer window.

SPORTSCENE SPAIN

with Andrew Atkinson

JACK HARPER joined Malaga CF a year ago this month in a move from Brighton, missing out on the Seagulls promotion to the Premier League last season.

"I had a complicated injury when I joined Brighton and I wasn't sure how long I was going to be out at the time," said Harper.

Harper, 21, a former Scottish youth international who signed a two-year contract deal with Malaga CF, was promoted to the first-team ahead of the 2017-18 La Liga season.

Harper has been absent in under fire Michel's struggling first team squad, with La Liga relegation worries, after a poor campaign, being in Malaguista coach, Manel Ruan reserves.

Harper made history last February - when becoming the first Scot to score a hat-trick in Spanish football for 107 years - in Atletico Malagueno's game against Alhaurin de la Torre.

Harper became the first Scot to net a hat-trick in Spanish football since Glaswegian George Pattullo netted 41 goals in 20 games for Barcelona in 1910.

Harper, a prodigy of Real Madrid's youth as a teenager, prior to their C team being disbanded, said: "I grew up as a Spanish boy, and played at Fuengirola.

Jack awaits Scottish dream



AMBITIONS: Harper in action for the Malaga academy.

"Madrid then showed an interest. I was close to a move to Sevilla - Madrid intercepted - I couldn't say no."

Hit with injury during his spell at the Bernabeu, Harper's woes continued at Brighton, with injury keeping him on the sidelines.

Brighton play Chelsea at the weekend and Seagulls boss Chris Hughton said: "Jack arrived at Brighton with an injury - which initially didn't help - it took him a while to get over that."

Having returned to his hometown club Malaga CF last January, Harper starred in the Atletico Malagueno team with eye-catching displays in the Spanish fourth tier.

Harper's progress was kept on radar in Scotland, with the national side selecting him in Scotland's under-21 squad.

Scotland under 21 manager Scott Gemmill said: "Since going back to Malaga in January, he has been in such good form."

Malaga-born Harper, whose parents are Scottish, called up to the Scotland U21 squad in March, said: "Everyone was really kind to me at Brighton."

Harper was called up to the U21 squad 11 months ago having been left out in the cold after featuring in the qualifying stage for the U19 squad in Lithuania.

"It's great to represent Scotland - to be called up was a dream come true - it's still my dream to play for Scotland seniors," said Harper.

REAL MADRID and Spain captain Sergio Ramos has been the subject of social media 'trolling' after posting an image of himself in a bright blue outfit to his Instagram page. The 31-year-old was watching Madrid lose to Villarreal in La Liga after missing out through injury.

Costa de Almería's best guide to local sport

Credit: @SergioRamos/Instagram

TO READ MORE

More late drama sees Almeria miss out on second consecutive victory

By Benjamin Park

UD ALMERIA were denied their second consecutive victory of 2018 with more late drama unfolding as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Segunda division rivals Gimnastic.

Just a week after their dramatic late victory over Lugo, Almeria found themselves in for more very late drama against Nastic on Saturday.

Fidel had put the Los Rojiblancos ahead with a close range finish in the second half following a fantastic cross from Jose Angel Pozo, but 20 minutes later, Nastic were level as pinball in the Almeria defence saw the ricochet off of Verza and finally Joaquin past Rene into his own net.

However in another late dramatic twist, Fidel went down under pressure in the box in the 90th minute, with the referee pointing to the spot despite Almeria midfielder Verza heading the ball into the back of the net seconds after the foul.

Verza was given the responsibility of taking the spot kick, but couldn't convert past the outstanding



Credit: UD_Almeria/Twitter

GOALSCORER: Fidel (right) opened the scoring for the hosts.

Dimitrievski in the Nastic net as Almeria had to settle for just a point.

In truth, neither team deserved to lose what was a well fought affair and the result leaves Almeria in

14th position, five points clear of the drop zone.

Almeria struggled to break Nastic down in the first half as they handled the threat of Pozo very well, but good chances did fall to

both the former Manchester City man and Ruben Alcaraz but neither could convert.

The breakthrough eventually came in the 59th minute, as Pozo used his trickery and skill before delivering the ball on a plate for Fidel to score from a few yards out.

Further chances fell to the home side to kill the game off and make it 2-0 but Almeria failed to clear their lines after a ball into the bottom corner.

And the home side were given a golden opportunity to wrap up all three points in the final minutes of the game after Fidel was bundled over in the box, but

Almeria will feel aggrieved after Verza scored after continuing with play.

Despite Almeria's arguments to the referee, The spot kick had already been given and the 31-year-old midfielder stepped up to take the penalty, but was stopped by a fantastic save from Nastic 'keeper Dimitrievski down to his right hand side to deny Almeria their second win in 2018.

Almeria will be buoyed by the return of Fran Rodriguez, who returned to action in the second half after five weeks out injured.

Los Rojiblancos face a tough task in their next match as they travel to third placed Oviedo, who have not lost in the league since November.

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