

Holiday traffic bedlam

DRIVERS have been warned to take care as millions hit Spain's roads during this week's pair of national holidays.

Spain's traffic directorate DGT are preparing for an estimated 6.7 million vehicles to hit the roads over the five-day weekend and have warned drivers to exercise caution especially on roads heading out from city centres since Tuesday.

The most intense traffic is expected on the Costa Blanca, Costa del Sol and in central Spain.

Extra speed cameras and more patrols carrying out drug and alcohol tests on drivers will be deployed as well as a halt to all road works over the period.

Six thousand Guardia Civil officers will be operating on the roads over the holidays as well as 800 other emergency service members and more than 13,000 road maintenance employees.

The DGT has also warned of adverse weather conditions affecting the roads.

Drivers have also been advised to return earlier on Sunday to avoid the night time rush back home.

Caught sock handed

By Harrison Jones

A dawn police raid on a farm in La Cañada ended with the arrest of two feisty burglars wearing socks on their hands.

The routine police response, to a call from a security company notified of a burglar alarm sounding, escalated into a dramatic chase and altercation, according to police.

Once inside the building, police briefly chased the two men, who they say

seemed startled by the National Police's appearance and became very aggressive.

One allegedly assaulted an officer before being arrested and the second was later found crouching behind bushes, carrying 30 pieces of jewellery, according to police.

Both men were found with socks covering their hands - presumably to avoid leaving fingerprints - and stand accused of four burglaries.

The three other burglaries - all in the La Cañada area - were linked to the men

because of the similarities in their methodology.

The other incidents also occurred at night and involved stealing goods which can be sold easily on the black market.

The pair, aged 18 and 34, had allegedly forced a window to enter the building last week.

Police say they found a pile of valuables next to where the pair entered the building.

Police investigations continue.



DAWN RAID: La Cañada and (inset) police snoop in.

AN inmate at Almeria's El Acebuche prison was convicted of intentionally punching a guard in the eye. The jailbird has had another 21 months added to his sentence for the assault.

The guard took five days to recover from the injury and was awarded €200 compensation. The judge believed his testimony that the attack was entirely unprovoked. The court heard that the inmate had waited patiently for a vulnerable moment before launching the assault.

Defence lawyers argued that the prisoner was suffering from drug addiction and not fully ac-

Jailhouse blues

countable for his actions. The defence was dismissed, with the judge ruling there was no evidence to suggest he was in a state of acute psychological tur-

moil. The attack was heavily criticised by the prison guard union at El Acebuche, which claims attacks on staff have doubled recently due to insufficient numbers.

Prison officials dispute that claim and say the incident was an unfortunate but rare event.

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NEWS EXTRA

Unfair trade

ONLY five companies sell 40 per cent of the vegetables grown in Almeria, according to a Spanish bank's research department, with more than 76 per cent of the total produce exported abroad.

Rich list

AN Almeria Province rich list has revealed the average net incomes for residents of the region's towns. Albox is the poorest (€15,294), whilst Almeria (€19,298), followed by Carboneras (€18,521) and Huercal de Almeria (€17,697), are the richest.

Rink sink

THERE will be no ice rink in Almeria for this year's Christmas celebrations. However, 120 other activities are being run. The Christmas lights were turned on last Friday in three stages.



By Karl Smallman and Matt Ford

BRAVE brain cancer fighter, Leo the Lion may have gone, but he will never be forgotten.

Hundreds of friends, family and supporters of the inspirational four-year-old gathered on Palomares beach in Almeria to pay tribute in a moving ceremony which saw 250 helium-filled balloons - many carrying hand-written messages - released into the sky.

The Euro Weekly News team performed a simultaneous release of balloons outside their head office on the Costa del Sol, as did campaign support groups and individuals in other parts of Spain, the UK and beyond.

An invitation-only funeral and cremation saw family and close friends pay their own re-

A loving farewell



EMOTIONAL: Family, friends and supporters gather on Palomares beach.



SOLIDARITY: The EWN team release balloons.

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spects on Tuesday, after many sent flowers or paid a visit to Leo as he lay in the chapel of rest over the weekend.

A hearse carried him around Palomares prior to the service, allowing people to pay their respects and friends to wave goodbye.

In the UK, thousands of Manchester City supporters honoured Leo with a minute's applause during their home Premier League match against West Ham last Sunday.

Days short of his fifth birth-

day (December 6), the courageous four-year-old passed away peacefully in his mother Karen's arms last Friday as dad Jorge and sister Sofia stood by.

His last words were, to Sofia, a very clear "I love you."

On September 2, 2015 Leo was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer.

Since then he underwent surgery at Alder Hey Children's Hospital in the UK and, thanks to a fund launched late

last year, which the Euro Weekly News supported, travelled to Oklahoma in the United States for cutting-edge proton beam therapy.

But sadly, it was all in vain.

Karen recently told the Euro Weekly News: "I want people to remember Leo for the happy little boy that he once was, that cheeky little boy, the one who smiled no matter what..."

"I want to thank everyone for their continuous support during this journey to give Leo the best chance for a life."

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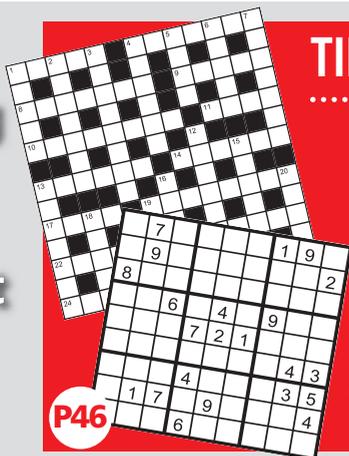
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CELEB FOCUS

Who is doing what and who with, often in front of the cameras!

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All the latest news and advice on pets and petcare

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SPAIN, UK EUROPE & GLOBAL SPORT SCENE



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'Baby killer' accused

A FATHER accused of beating his son to death should be given over 26 years in jail, according to the Prosecutor's Office of Almeria. The man allegedly battered the 45-day-old boy against the ground because his wife fed him instead of cleaning. He is accused of murder and a series of violent offences towards women.

Fire escape

TWELVE people have been evacuated following a house fire in Carboneras. No one was injured in the incident, but the two-storey house on Calle Murillo sustained significant damage, according to Spanish media reports. There was also partial damage to nearby properties - evacuated by neighbours - but the house was reportedly empty at the time of the fire.

Rainfall falls

THE Beninar reservoir has recorded rainfall of 20 per cent lower than average this year. According to reports submitted to water management committees in the province, only 282 litres have fallen per square metre. The 2015/16 period was the driest year on record.

Cave arrest

FORTY people have been arrested - 13 in Almerian caves - accused of sexual exploitation. The police operation took place across several Spanish regions, including the Almerian municipalities of Vera and Roquetas. Some victims, including children, were rescued from the caves.

Gang falls

POLICE say they have smashed a violent La Mojonera gang. Five members are accused of up to 22 crimes, including armed robberies, criminal damage and theft, in the Poniente Almeria region. The perpetrators are thought to be no more than 25-years-old.

SPANISH FACTS OF LIFE... 40

Despite having the world's fourth most widely-spoken language as its native tongue, Spain is home to a mind-boggling array of communication systems, from the Gomeran Whistle to Chinese, writes Harrison Jones.

Real twisters for the tongue

SPAIN is a mixing pot of major languages, especially as European, Arabic and Asian residents settle in their own communities.

The country's history is littered with discarded sub-languages and the politics of retaining dialects that are spoken by so few people.

Today, virtually all native Spaniards speak Castilian, the language foreigners somewhat simplistically refer to as 'Spanish.'

Under General Franco's fascist dictatorship, regional variations were marginalised and even banned in public, reinforcing Castilian dominance.

Yet variations remain and are still so numerous that it becomes a challenge to even list them all.

The most famous is Catalan, which has seen a resurgence in interest since the controversial referendum on Catalan independence. Also referred to as 'Valencian' or 'Balearic,' it is spoken by around 17 per cent of the population.

Aranese, or 'Occitan,' is also co-official in Cataluña and can be heard in the north west of the region.

Basque, or 'Euskara,' is thought to

be the only non-Romance language in Spain, which classifies it as an official language alongside Galician, Catalan and Castilian.

There are complications with other minority languages, like Aragonese, Asturian and Leonese. These are all recognised - but unofficial - variations of Castilian, and thought to be seriously endangered.



CHEER OF UNITY: Nearly all Spaniards speak Castilian.

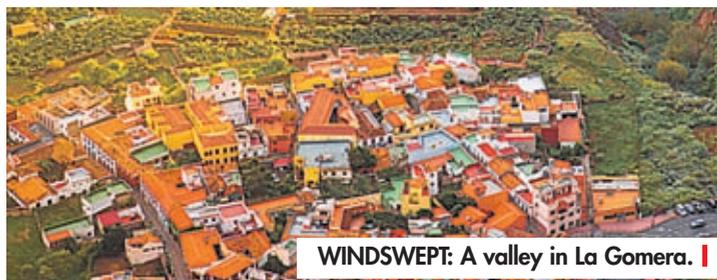


ONE of the quirkier languages is known as the Gomeran Whistle and practised by inhabitants of La Gomera in the Canary Islands.

As the name suggests, it is perhaps more song than language, but Unesco recognised the communication as the 'only whistled language in the world that is fully developed and practised by a large community.' As many as 22,000 people 'speak' it and schools teach how distinct whistles replace each Spanish consonant or vowel when communicating across wind-swept valleys.

The confusion does not stop there, though, as numerous dialects remain.

Andalucian and Canarian are common, though sub-vari-



WINDSWEPT: A valley in La Gomera. |

eties add to the difficulty of classification.

Amongst others, Fala, Cantabrian, Extremaduran, Eonavian and Ribagorca, Mirandese, Benasquese, Asturian and Leonese are believed to still be in use in continually shrinking numbers.

Aside from Basque, native Spanish tongues are all thought to be Indo-European in provenance.

There are even sign language dialects. The closely related Catalan and Valencian sign languages are remarkably different to the traditional Spanish version.

Minority sign language dialects are also still in use in the Canary Islands, Basque Country, Galicia and eastern Andalusia, but are much closer to the national version, which boasts an estimated 100,000 users.

Cheesy world win

A SERON-BASED cheese company has taken bronze in a global competition. Serones Artesano's

gourmet goat's cheese beat over 3,000 entrants.

The company which was launched in 2015 has achieved national recognition and now exports to Europe.

145

The total number of news and features which appeared in Issue 1691 of the Euro Weekly News Costa de Almería edition, including 61 local stories.

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Let it snow!

Spain shivers as arctic air rolls in



Photo by Spanish Highways/Twitter

WINTER IS HERE: The view from the 3,011 metre Cerro Caballo in the Sierra Nevada, Granada.

THE first flakes of winter have fallen across large swathes of Spain.

It comes after the mercury plunged below zero in the wake of an arctic cold snap gripping the country.

Amateur snappers flocked to social media to share photos of the wintry scenes, with

some stunning results.

The bitter conditions follow a mild autumn and one of the driest Novembers on record.

But the freezing weather is set to last, as a fresh cold front sweeps northern Spain over the weekend, with the icy blast to send temperatures plummeting for a second time.

Drivers behaving badly

ALMOST 10,000 drivers have lost points on their licence so far this year in Almería Province. Four out of every 10 penalised drivers are aged under 34 and the vast majority among that group are men.

Of the 9,811 motorists with points docked between January and November, 1,669 were punished for using a mobile phone behind the wheel. The infraction

can cost a driver three points and a €200 fine.

Despite awareness campaigns launched by the Directorate General of Traffic (DGT), a total of 1,457 people had points deducted for not wearing a seatbelt. Speeding remains by far the most frequent offence, with young men collecting a hugely disproportionate number of tickets.

Driving under the influence of

drugs is an emerging problem. More than 500 drivers were found to have illegal drugs in their bloodstream when tested by police. Officers who suspected a driver was on drugs were proved correct in six out of every 10 cases. Just under 100 drivers ran out of points this year and had their licence suspended. Driving without a licence is a criminal offence that can result in jail time.

Charter flights from UK airports to Gibraltar trialled next July
 By John Smith | Monday, 27 November 2017 10:12
 THE demise of Monarch airline meant that Gibraltar lost a number of flights to regional airports but this is in part to be resolved.

GIBRALTAR: Flights to be trialled.

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- 6,688** views Charter flights from UK airports to Gibraltar trialled next July
- 4,305** views 24-hour national taxi strike in Spain tomorrow
- 3,794** views easyJet flight from Spain to UK diverts due to 'disruptive' woman
- 3,762** views Weather warnings issued as parts of southern Spain go below zero
- 3,623** views Serious flooding in Andalusia forces train cancellations and school closures

27 November - 4 December

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OUR VIEW

Spain is losing Big Mac battle

THE crowning of San Sebastian as the world's top food city is another feather in the cap for Spanish gastronomy.

But as the country's culinary heritage continues to attract international acclaim, Spain must be careful to retain its traditional mealtime values.

An upswing in demand for Iberian ham from China has seen demand outstrip supply, while the famed Mediterranean diet increasingly appears more medical advice than lifestyle choice.

And as the price of ham, olive oil and other delicacies rockets, working class Spanish families are increasingly turning to the same packaged, cost-effective fare that has sparked an obesity crisis across the globe.

A recent report by two international think tanks concluded that the country is moving away from the Mediterranean diet, as the relentless rise of convenience and fast food sparks a profound cultural shift.

The World Health Organisation says that Spain is one of the top European countries for obese children, while the proportion of overweight adults has increased from below 8 per cent in 1987 to 16 per cent today.

The Mediterranean diet should include large amounts of fruit, vegetables, pulses, whole grains and olive oil, but importantly, none of this comes in a box.

Foodie's delight - page 20

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Victims saluted

A MINUTE'S silence was observed in Almeria City to remember those who have perished in traffic accidents this year.

Provincial head of traffic for Almeria, Jose Maria Mendez, mourned the 21 fatalities on the province's roads so far in 2017. Another 76 people have been badly injured in the 578 serious traffic accidents that have occurred since January.

The ceremony was also attended by senior Guardia Civil officials and Diego Gutierrez, a delegate from the Association of Victims of Traffic Accidents. He called for a road safety course to be compulsory for all drivers in Spain.

By 2020 Almeria Province has pledged to reduce deaths and serious injuries on the roads by 50 per cent.

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Thank-Hugh very much

HE'S best-known for playing razor-clawed superhero Wolverine in the X-Men film franchise.

But there were no knives being sharpened after Australian actor Hugh Jackman jetted to Spain to promote his latest film.

The star received a rapturous reception at the premiere of *The Greatest Showman*, due to be released in Spanish cinemas on Friday, December 29.

Speaking at the event the heartthrob confessed he would not be turning to directing now his stint as Wolverine has ended. He explained: "I would be a terrible director, the actors would hate me."

Jackman's latest film sees him play Phineas Taylor Barnum, the creator of the Barnum and Bailey American travelling circus. Starring alongside Zac Efron and Michelle Williams, the musical boasts a soundtrack by Justin Paul and Benj Pasek who won Oscars for their work on *La La Land*.



Photo credit Twitter
EX-MAN: Hugh Jackman in Madrid.

What an Eiffel!

SHE'S the hotel heiress who shot to fame after her sex-tape leaked.

But Paris Hilton has proven there's more to her than meets the eye after revealing that her business empire is worth €2.5 billion in a radio interview.

The blonde beauty recently announced she is to open an Ibiza hotel. The entrepreneur is calling the venture, Paris's Boutique Hotel, and she explained the venture would be "very futuristic and very Ibiza."

WELL-HEELED: Paris Hilton.



Photo credit Paris Hilton/Instagram



Photo credit You Tube
BESOTTED: Alejandra Silva and Richard Gere.

She's a real pretty woman

ACTING legend Richard Gere has been spotted showing off his gorgeous Spanish girlfriend at an awards ceremony in Madrid.

The 68-year-old Officer and a Gentleman star certainly looked distinguished as he stepped out with Alejandra Silva, 34, at the Harper's Bazaar Awards.

The silver fox wore a navy coat over a white shirt as he snuggled up to the blonde businesswoman. Silva, whose father was for-

merly the vice-president of Real Madrid, is originally from Galicia and has made a successful career in PR.

Most recently starring in *Norman: The Moderate Rise and Tragic Fall of a New York Fixer*, Gere has been enjoying something of a comeback in recent years with a string of films.

Originally from Philadelphia, America, Gere was previously married to supermodel Cindy Crawford, and is devoted to Buddhism.

Seeing double

A SPANISH politician who has been compared to Prince Harry's future wife Meghan Markle has become an internet star.

But mother-of-two Begoña Villacis, 40, was able to see the funny side as she tweeted: "Between Buckingham Palace and Cibeles... I'm sorry but I'm sticking with Madrid."

Her comments came after the leader of centre-right party Ciudadanos in Madrid received streams of messages via social media.

Chastain in Spain

SHE'S been nominated for two Oscars and earlier this year tied the knot with Italian fashion boss Gian Luca Passi de Preposulo.

Actress Jessica Chastain, 40, continued to live the high life appearing at a Madrid photo call to promote her latest flick *Molly's Game*, flaunting her ample curves in a stunning knitted dress.



Photo credit Ciudadanos Madrid
TAKE TWO: Begoña Villacis.



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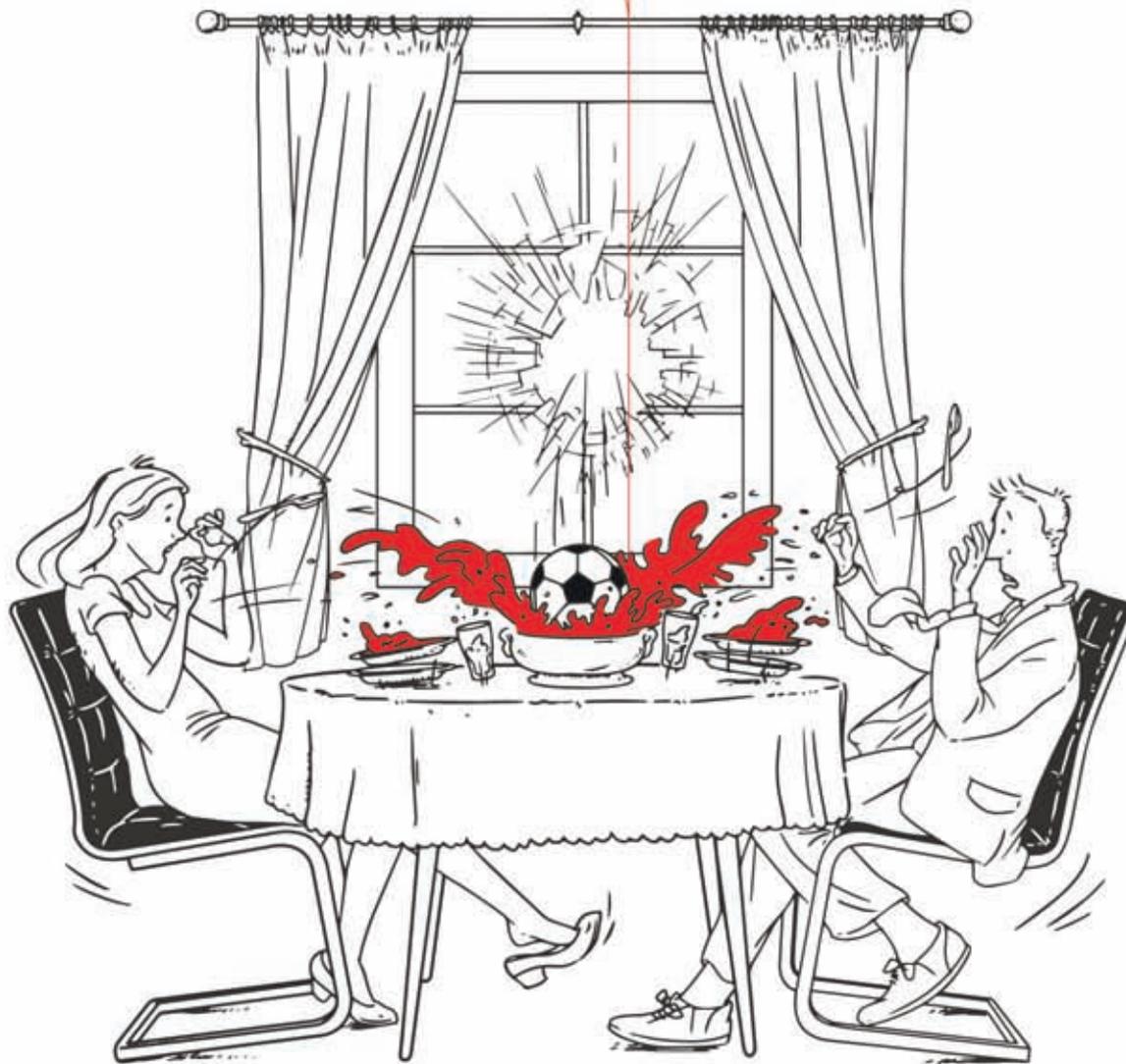
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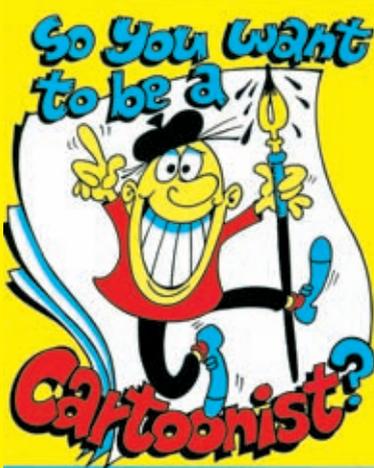


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NEWS EXTRA

Tunnel vision

LA VIA VERDE will soon become the longest tunnel in Andalucía, and officials hope that the walking route - which will unite Hijate, Seron, Tijola, Armuña, Purchena, Olula and Fines - will become a tourist attraction when complete.

€325,000 scam

SISTER companies in Almería have been accused of fraud. MTSS and LGM are alleged to have created a network of companies in order to fraudulently claim grants from the Andalusian authorities worth nearly €325,000.

Tijola invests

TIJOLA will receive €300,000 of investment from the Agricultural Employment Promotion Programme, to improve the town's water supply network, schools and public spaces, after a PFEA deputy and the mayor viewed the project's progress.

Crash panic

FOUR people were injured in a car accident at the Nicolas Salmeron park in Almería City. Local Police and medical services attended the scene and the victims have been transferred to Torrecardenas hospital for treatment.

Arrests made in cafes, bars and restaurant thefts

NATIONAL POLICE have arrested two men on suspicion of robberies in Almería.

The men, aged 27 and 42, allegedly robbed six of the city's cafes, bars and restaurants last month.

They are accused of stealing over €4,500 in cash, several electronic devices, bottles of alcohol and National Lottery tickets.

One of the arrested men is known to police and alleged to have committed five of the robberies alone.

The methodology of the robberies were similar, with all of the incidents committed between 2am and 6am in the downtown area of the



A NIGHT'S WORK: The robberies took place in the early hours before the culprits were held by police (inset).

city, between November 1 and 14.

The robbers forced their way into venues by bending the iron bars on the windows

and then entering through the holes.

One of alleged perpetrators was provisionally detained.

Food bank fraud plot

By Lindsay Hutchison

A POLICE investigation launched at the beginning of November has found three people guilty of selling products marked with the official Food Bank stamp, a stamp which clearly states that the sale of these items is prohibited.

The Food Bank is a non-profit charitable foundation set up in 1999 to distribute food to the most disadvantaged families throughout the

province of Almería.

Two of those arrested were in charge of associations which were authorised to withdraw food from the European Aid Fund (FEAD).

Leaders of various charities had reported two associations based in Roquetas de Mar, both authorised to withdraw food items for underprivileged families, yet both failing to make any charitable deliveries.

Families for whom the products were intended were

contacted and reported that the deliveries had not reached their homes, which proved that the products were being withdrawn by the two associations but were not then being charitably donated.

A third suspect, in charge of transporting the goods to a street market in Puche which takes place on Wednesdays and Sundays, was identified and all three individuals were arrested by agents of the National Police for the scam.

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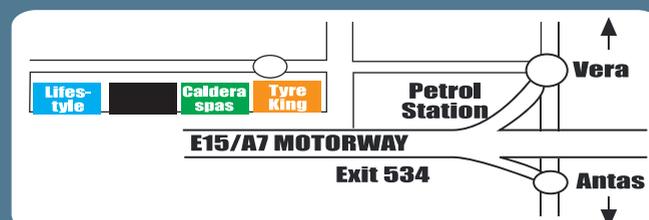
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Picture perfect

THE association of the 'Most Beautiful Villages in Spain' has held its annual assembly in Mojácar.

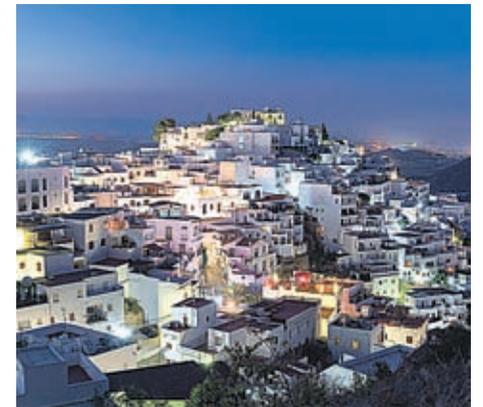
The meeting saw 11 new locations added to the group, which now boasts 67 members.

Formed in 2011, the network met to discuss its plans for the coming year, including a new guide, trips between the villages and tourist packages.

The mayor of Mojácar, Rosa Maria Cano, and the president of the Association, Francisco Mestre, led Saturday's event.

Cano said that she hoped the organisation could continue to provide a dynamic forum for councillors from all over Spain to share their experiences.

She added that the assembly should help protect, preserve and promote the beauty



SLEEPING BEAUTY: Mojácar by night.

of the villages.

A number of the new members are from Andalucía, including Segura de la Sierra, Zahara de la Sierra and Bubion.

A HUGE marihuana growing operation was uncovered in Zurgena. Two people were arrested during a Guardia Civil raid on the uninhabited farmhouse.

The local men, aged 37 and 42, have been charged with drug cultivation and stealing electricity.

Pot farm shut down

Police found 315 fully-matured marihuana plants in a tool shed at the property. They became suspicious that the property might be being used to cultivate drugs after receiving reports of possible electricity

fraud in the area.

Despite being officially uninhabited, the property was consuming huge quantities of electricity as the crooks installed heat lamps, air conditioners and humidifiers to grow their crop.

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Protect your pensions from the lifetime allowance trap

Are your UK pension funds safe from tax penalties of up to 55%?

If you have been saving into pensions for years or have several funds, you could go over the UK government's 'lifetime allowance' (LTA) without realising it. At £1 million (£1.3 million from 6th April 2018), the limit sounds high, but it counts all pension benefits (excluding the State Pension) and growth accumulated over a working lifetime.



By **Gerald Turner,**
Partner,
Blevins Franks

What are the penalties?

If you exceed the limit, extra tax is payable whenever you access your funds – technically called a 'benefit crystallisation event.' How much you pay depends on the way benefits are withdrawn – rates are 55% for lump sums and 25% for income or transfers. So at best, the price for being over can cost you a quarter of your funds, at worst: over half.

Being non-UK resident offers no protection. Usually, under the

double tax agreement, Spanish residents escape UK taxes on British pensions (except government service pensions). However, for those over the allowance, these rules do not apply – the LTA tax is applied in the UK first and is not recoverable.

How can you check your position?

Calculating how much of your allowance you have used is not always straightforward, so check

with your provider or financial adviser.

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) will first test your allowance when you start drawing your pension, then every time you access funds and when you turn 75. If you die before 75, any lump sums paid to your beneficiaries will also be subject to the LTA test and subsequent tax penalties.

How can you protect your funds?

A higher limit can be secured by applying for HMRC's LTA 'protection.' This usually has strict conditions attached, however, so take guidance first.

Expatriates have the option of transferring UK pension funds to a Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme (QROPS). Doing this can limit your exposure to LTA penalties while providing tax-efficiency, currency flexibility and estate planning advantages.

If you transfer UK pensions into a QROPS and your total benefits

are under the limit, you will not face LTA taxes. However, the QROPS must be within the EU or European Economic Area (EEA) – such as Gibraltar – otherwise you risk a 25% 'overseas transfer charge.'

Once in a QROPS, funds are out of reach of LTA charges, no matter how much you have or how you access it. Those at or close to the limit should consider transferring and paying any tax charges now before funds – and tax liabilities – increase in value.

Another option is to take your UK pension as cash and reinvest into a tax-efficient Spanish-compliant arrangement. In any case, before making any pension decisions, taking regulated advice is crucial to determine your most suitable approach and avoid pension scams.

If you are near the threshold, consider acting sooner rather than later to prevent growth tipping you over the limit. The LTA is only set

to increase in line with inflation each April, so there will not be much leeway if you are already at the upper end.

Regardless of whether the LTA will affect you, with Brexit around the corner, now is a good time to review your pension options.

Living in Spain, you should regularly check your financial planning to make sure you take advantage of available opportunities and protect your wealth in the most suitable way for your particular circumstances.

Tax rates, scope and reliefs may change. Any statements concerning taxation are based upon our understanding of current taxation laws and practices which are subject to change. Tax information has been summarised; an individual is advised to seek personalised advice.

Keep up to date on the financial issues that may affect you on the Blevins Franks news page at www.blevinsfranks.com.

With so many options for your UK pension funds, what are the best solutions for expatriates living in Spain?

Deciding what to do with your pensions is one of the most important financial decisions you make. Take regulated advice to understand how all the options and opportunities affect you and the tax implications in Spain.

With our pension, tax and investment expertise, Blevins Franks provides bespoke advice based on your situation and aims. We get to know your unique situation before reviewing how the pension options would work for you, from a tax and financial security point of view.

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Assault charge

A MAN who attacked his wife and three people who tried to help her was convicted of assault by an Almería court.

The local man, aged 32, escaped prison and was instead fined and slapped with a restraining order preventing him from going near his victims.

The incident took place in Almería's Nicolas Salmeron park. He began screaming at his partner and then attacked

her in full public view.

One man intervened and received several punches for his trouble. He lost a tooth and had his glasses broken.

Another two people stepped in and were punched, kicked and even bitten by the assailant. He then ran to a nearby bar and grabbed a knife, which he used to chase the man whose tooth he had already knocked out.

He was eventually subdued and arrested by police.

Cards, camera, action

Man admits online fraud with aid of camera

AN 18-year-old man has reportedly admitted using the credit cards of two customers from his workplace to make purchases of around €1,500 - without stealing the cards.

A further two people - one of which is yet to be located - may have also been targeted by the youngster, who worked in the hotel industry in Vera, according to Spanish media.

The Guardia Civil have said the number of victims could rise and that his em-

ployer was unaware of his action.

Despite not having the physical cards, the man was able to make online purchases through photographs.

Data from the images he obtained was enough to make internet purchases, which often only require an account number, name and sort code.

The first victim reported that 15 transactions had been made on two accounts - totalling €1,300 - despite the account owner not authorising the purchases and

being in possession of the cards.

Another person reported three unrecognised charges to their account worth over €200.

The purchases - including online bets, two televisions, a high-end mobile phone and console controls - and similarities between the allegations, led police to the suspect.

He initially denied the charges but later admitted to the offence, before being arrested in Garrucha.

€2.9 million was spent by Madrid's council on Christmas lights this year, €350,000 more than last year.

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Almería nominated for food title

ALMERIA'S City Hall is supporting the city's candidacy for Spanish Capital of Gastronomy 2019.

Local leaders want to make the city a hotspot for food-centred tourism in Spain.

The city is well-known for its food - notably the diversity

and quality of its tapas - and its local produce.

The mayor described the city's cuisine as 'excellent, traditional and innovative,' while giving his backing to the bid.

Various local groups have also thrown their weight behind the initiative.



The provincial deputy of tourism, Javier Aureliano Garcia, claimed that the title could give the city's tourism industry an 11 per cent increase.

The competition is run by the Spanish Hospitality Federation and the Spanish Federation of Journalists and Writers of Tourism.

The winner is expected to be announced in October next

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Tapas in Almería, could be crowned next October.

year, according to Spanish media.

One local food blogger, Steve Homer, said the city "has some very talented chefs, but we are yet to see the very best of what they can produce."

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NEWS EXTRA

Garrucha raffles Rome

GARRUCHA Council is offering a weekend trip to Italy in a Christmas raffle encouraging residents to shop locally, with tickets handed to shoppers until January 6 and various cash prizes on offer.

Holding fort

THE 11th century Almería fort is to be restored at a cost of €56,000 over the next two months as officials hope to preserve the monument and address security concerns.

EU funds

CALAR ALTO ASTRONOMICAL CENTRE is to receive a €1 million EU grant, with the money to be used for improving the facility's telescopes, cafe and energy efficiency. Andalusian authorities are expected to provide additional funding in 2019.



PALMED OFF: A Moroccan woman was prepared to pay €3,500 to stay in Almería.

Immigration scam fails

TWO people have been given a suspended prison sentence and fined by a court in Almería, for attempting to illegally register an immigrant in Spain.

The pair intended to charge a Moroccan woman €3,500 in exchange for help in obtaining a residence card.

The man and woman were each

given a six month sentence - suspended for two years - and given a €450 fine for falsifying official documents and aiding illegal immigration.

They also paid a fake partner for the woman an unknown amount of money to help with the scam.

After registering falsified documents, the attempt to deceive

Spanish authorities that the woman could legally remain in the country failed.

Police realised that the Moroccan lady and her alleged partner did not know each other during an interview in December 2015, when their stories contradicted each other.

The alleged couple were registered at the Almería address of the sentenced man and woman, despite having no links to the property.

3.4 million people are currently unemployed in Spain according to government statistics, with 7,255 losing their jobs in November alone.

High-speed shenanigans

AN update on the Almería to Murcia high-speed rail connection was presented by national public works minister, Iñigo de la Serna. He said that the deadlines for the granting of tenders had been shortened to 2018.

The work itself is still scheduled for completion in 2023, a time frame that has met great resistance among Costa de Almería and Costa Blanca business leaders. The minister also said that using a single, rather than double, track for the majority of the railway in Almería Province was sufficient for local needs.

In response, the platform for the Defence of the Railway in Almería urged the government to tighten deadline works and aim for completion before 2023. The railway was originally meant to be finished by 2016.

The platform, comprised of local politicians, business and community leaders, has been highly critical of the plan to use a single track through most of Almería Province.

The high-speed rail won't just enable Almería residents to travel to Madrid or Barcelona quickly, it is essential to transport the province's enormous agricultural output to the rest of Europe.

De la Serna claims a double track would be a waste of money in Almería Province and that the current plans meet Madrid's commitments to Almería '100 per cent'. He says changing the plans now would only lead to more delays.

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Home alone

Mum jailed for abandoning children

A SINGLE mum has been jailed in the UK after she flew to Spain for a one-week trip and left her three children at home.

The 37-year-old woman left her 16-year-old son to look after the others aged six and eight.

The woman from Cheshire, who can't be named for legal reasons, had flown to Spain to watch friends take part in a bodybuilding competition.

Liverpool Crown Court was told she was found out when the youngest child told a teacher. The school contacted social services but the woman refused to fly home.

Instead she tried to put the children with a woman who had been investigated for

child sex abuse.

Prosecutor Zia Chaudhry told the court the woman had falsely claimed that she'd arranged for a friend to look after her children while she was away, but the friend had cancelled due to a bereavement. She had created fake emails to back up the lie.

In 2013, the woman's youngest child, aged three at the time, had been found wandering the streets in the early hours of the morning.

And earlier this year, the single mum left her two youngest children in a car while she visited a gym.

She pleaded guilty to two offences of child neglect and attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Sentencing her to 12 months imprisonment Judge

Robert Trevor-Jones branded her "callous and self-centred."

"You showed quite persistent failure to perform your parental duties and a breach of the trust, and you then covered it

up. "You were asked to come home at the earliest opportunity but you declined and remained until the expiry of that week, displaying callous, self-centred indifference to the position of your children - a thread which runs through this case."

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SITTING COMFORTABLY: The two leaders in Downing Street.

Rajoy tells May: Brexit talks will begin soon

THE prime ministers of Britain and Spain have met in Downing Street for Brexit talks.

Theresa May and Mariano Rajoy discussed the next phase of negotiations during a lunch meeting on Tuesday, which also covered citizens' rights, Gibraltar and the Catalan referendum. Rajoy told May that he was "absolutely convinced" the next phase of Brexit talks would begin shortly, despite Monday's deadlock over the Irish border.

Writing in the *Guardian* ahead of the meeting, Rajoy said the two countries' histories were "inextricably intertwined, and will continue to be so."

He added: "Britain can count on Spain's loyal and sincere friendship."

May said: "I want to reiterate my support for

Prime Minister Rajoy on Cataluña. It is important that the rule of law is upheld and that the Spanish constitution is respected."

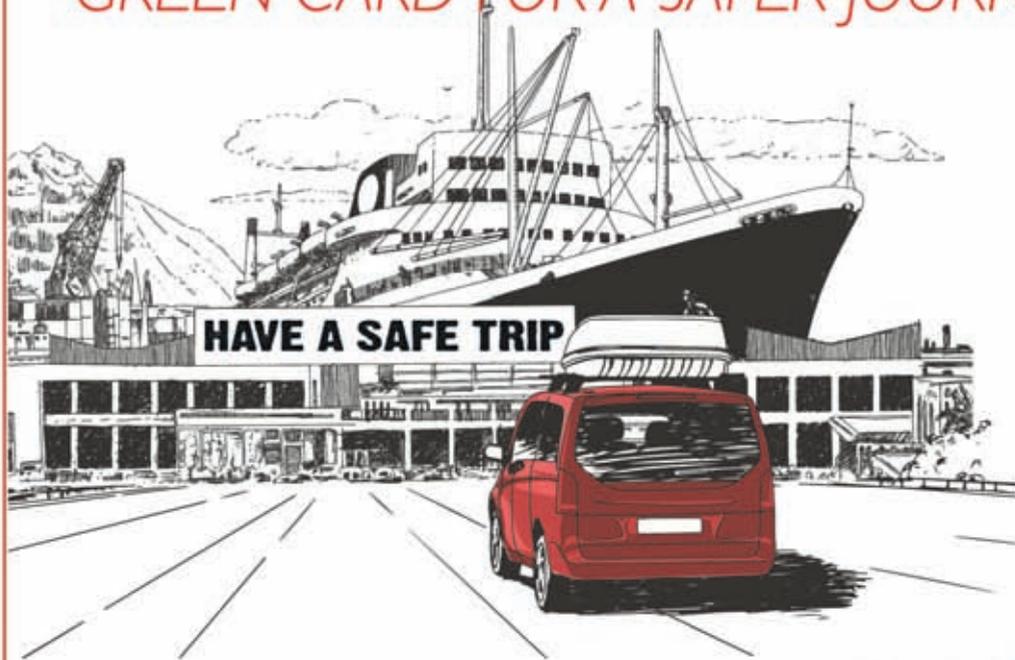
Thanking the UK for backing the Spanish government during the Catalan referendum, Rajoy wrote that Brexit would not break the countries' 'friendship'. Though he emphasised the importance of trade between the two countries, he later tweeted that 'the main priority for Spain is and will continue to be the preservation of the rights and interests of citizens.'

His article did not mention Gibraltar, which has been a source of some tension between the two nations.

There were a number of demonstrations in Britain protesting against the Spanish government's conduct during the Catalan referendum.

56.3% of Spaniards between the ages of 18-64 speak more than one language.

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Key developments as Catalan election looms

FOUR prominent members of the movement for Catalan independence have been denied bail as new polls suggest pro-independence parties could lose their majority.

But in a surprise move, a Supreme Court judge dropped the international arrest warrant against the former Catalan leader, Carles Puigdemont.

The PDeCAT leader remains in Belgium, alongside four other former cabinet ministers, who have also had the international warrants dropped. Spanish warrants remain in place.

He had fled the country after being sacked by the Span-

ish government for pushing ahead with plans for independence, following the Catalan referendum. Back in Spain on Monday, Puigdemont's former vice-president, Oriol Junqueras; a former cabinet member, Joaquim Form and civic group leaders Jordi Sanchez and Jordi Cuixart were denied bail.

Meanwhile, the latest poll predicts pro-independence groups will win only 67 of 135 seats in the December 21 regional elections, five short of their total in 2015.

The percentage share of the vote is set to remain similar, according to the Sociological Research Centre poll, but

with pro-independence parties now running separately, their majority could be lost.

Previous polls had shown anti and pro-independence blocs running neck and neck.

Today's Supreme Court ruling did allow bail to be set at €100,000 for six other former cabinet members. But Junqueras, Form and the leaders of Assemblea Nacional Catalana and Omnium Cultural - Jordi Sanchez and Jordi Cuixart - will remain in jail.

The judge said he was concerned that the four might break the law if released, but added that he did not believe they would leave Spain.



FULLER MOON: The phenomenon over Segovia last week.

STAR PERFORMER: A meteor shower could be visible next week.

Shoot for the stars

STARGAZERS will be treated to one of the most impressive meteor showers of the year next week.

The Geminids are set to peak on next Wednesday night and the morning of Thursday December 14.

Viewers' experiences will vary depending on atmospheric conditions, but southern Spain should see the spectacle comparatively clearly because it has less light pollution than many other areas.

Depending on weather condi-

tions, space enthusiasts will be able to view up to 120 meteors per hour, according to *space.com*.

As the name suggests, the shooting stars - which are visible worldwide for a number of days - appear to come from the Gemini constellation.

The shower is thought to be nearly 200 years old and is one of the most famous in the astrological calendar.

It has been getting stronger since because of Jupiter's gravi-

ty pulling the shower closer to earth. Experts advise that binoculars are not necessary but suggest staying away from artificial light and allowing 20-30 minutes for the human eye to adjust to the dark.

There is thought to be no danger of any meteors reaching the Earth's surface.

Meanwhile, last week a 'supermoon' was visible over parts of Spain. Two more are expected next year, in January in February.

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Ref: NW1089 Beds: 2 | Baths: 2
Immaculate 2 bedroom ground floor apartment, front and rear terraces, close to beautiful pool and beach.

Holiday home in the sun

Looking for a great family holiday home? This week's properties offer excellent value for money, perfect locations and have good rental potential. **Most have swimming pools, all have terraces and offer spacious accommodation. Arrange a viewing today.**

Mojacar 169,950€



Ref: NW1083 Beds: 2 | Baths: 2
Well presented refurbished duplex, new kitchen and doors, private driveway, roof terrace, sea views and close to the beach.

MOJACAR 164,000€



Ref: NW1110 Beds: 2 | Baths: 2
2 bed south facing apartment with large terrace, in Al Boroki community with lifts, stunning sea views, large sunny terrace.

Turre 230,000€



Ref: NW1087 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2
Attractive 3 bed villa on Agua Nueva, excellent condition, with garden, roof terrace, AC and sold furnished.

VALLE DEL ESTE GOLF 134,950€



Ref: NW1091 Beds: 3 | Baths: 3
3 bedroom triplex with 3 bathrooms, terrace and gardens. Excellent rental property.

Cariatiz

PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

Price: 199,950€



REDUCED Stunning modern villa with private pool, views over olive orchards, separate garage and driveway, only a 10 min walk to village shops and bars, 20 mins drive to the beach.

Ref: NW1056 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2



Mojacar REDUCED 279,950€



Ref: NW1058 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2.5
Well presented 3 bed villa with private pool, terrific sea and mountain views, 5 mins from beach

Mojacar EXCLUSIVE 449,950€



Ref: NW1082 Beds: 3 | Baths: 3
Impressive 3 bed gated villa with pool, garden, garage, roof terrace, large plot, parking, central heating only 300 metres to beach

MOJACAR 379,950€

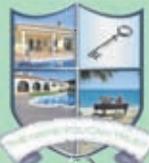


Ref: NW1051 Beds: 3 | Baths: 2
Large 3 bedroom villa with pool, garage, sea views, 100 metres from beach.

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IT'S CHRISTMAS. FELIZ NAVIDAD

Rich, Andrea, Wendy & all at Calida Homes would like to wish all our Buyers and Sellers a wonderful Christmas and take this opportunity to say a huge **THANK YOU** for making 2017 such a fantastic year.

Our appointments for early in the New Year are quickly filling up with qualified cash buyers many of whom are referrals so they will only be viewing with Calida Homes. We require quality villas with swimming pools in the following locations **ARBOLEAS, ZURGENA, LA ALFOQUIA & ALBOX** as these are their chosen areas.

If you are thinking of selling and are not currently listed with us then choose Calida Homes. Your property is our priority and **SOLD** is our favourite 4 letter word
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Foodie's delight!

Spain is home to 'world's best city'

ACCORDING to a major study commissioned by a British catering service Spain is top of the list of the world's top 100 cities for food. San Sebastian, in the north of the country, led the rest of the world in the survey for Caterwings.



SAN SEBASTIAN: 'World's best city for food' and (inset) the quality of local cuisine.

And it's not just based on the number of Michelin stars.

Ratings from 20,000 food journalists and restaurant critics were taken into account to evaluate the quality of the local food scene in hundreds of cities worldwide.

They also considered the number of restaurants per 10,000 citizens, the percentage of fast food outlets to restaurants, plus vegetarian and vegan options.

The study also looked at affordability, calculating

how many hours a person on minimum wage would have to work in order to afford a two-person dinner in a restaurant and the percentage of fast food chains as compared to restaurants.

San Sebastian stands above the competition thanks to its affordable offer for tourists.

Tokyo, the city with the most Michelin stars, comes second in the top 100, scor-

ing particularly low on vegetarian and vegan options, while New York is third.

Spain had another two entries in the top 10, with Barcelona in fourth and Madrid in seventh.

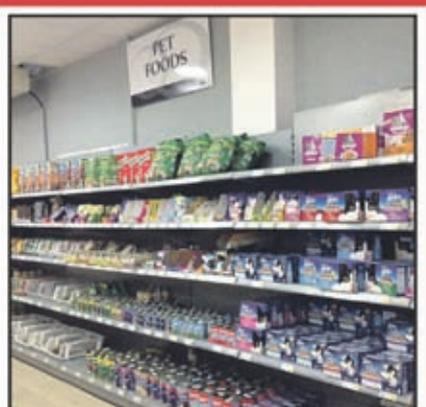
London squeezed into the top 10 at ninth place.

Other notable appearances in the top 100 were: Glasgow (61), Manchester (64), Edinburgh (77), and Brighton (93).

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- Los Carasoles - New Horizon Villas, bus stop (37.360793 - 2.013983)
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THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT: Lady Ellen and Stuart Drury.

PAWS-PATAS annual Christmas Fayre was a cracking success, raising over €1,800 for the charity. They would like to thank everyone who booked space for their stalls and to Peter and Raimonda at Scotty's bar/restaurant who worked with great speed in delivering all the food and drink requests.

A record crowd of people attended and were greeted by Father Christmas and given a raffle ticket with their €1 entrance fee. Music entertainment was kindly provided by Lady Ellen and Stuart

Drury. It was a long day for the PAWS-PATAS organisers and with the sales of crafts, merchandise, soft toys, jewellery, books a whopping €1,860 was raised.

This money will greatly help the shelter with its day to day animal care, vital shelter repairs and continuing neutering programme.

Please help them raise a little extra by buying a raffle ticket for the grand prize draw which is being held at 4pm on Sunday at Scotty's (near the Red Cross roundabout in Mojacar). Tickets are still

on sale until that date at Scotty's and will also be on sale at The Bedar Xmas Fayre tomorrow (Friday).

You can also buy one of the 2018 calendars from our locales situated in Mojacar, Turre and Las Buganvillas which are packed with photographs and lots of PAWS-PATAS information.

PAWS-PATAS continually needs volunteers to help assist in all areas of their charity work. For further information please visit the website: www.paws-patas.org or call: 678 490 217.

British councillor tells EU: stop holding expats hostage

A BRITISH councillor representing Rojales, Alicante, has told a meeting of the European Parliament that senior politicians are holding expatriates 'hostage' to achieve their own objectives.

Speaking in Brussels, Derek Monks expressed concerns that people who moved to Spain to take advantage of freedom of movement and labour now risked being exploited.

"I expressed the con-

cerns of all of us who took advantage of moving," the councillor told *Euro Weekly News* in a letter.

"Senior politicians negotiating terms of the breakaway are using us as pawns to arrive at their ultimate goals," he continues.

"I expressed anger at this and pleaded for an end to this holding us as hostages to achieve other objectives."

Letters - page 44

Sweet sounds

COME and join The Rose Singers in their annual Christmas concert at Miraflores, Camping Los Gallardos.

On Thursday December 14 at 7.30pm you will have the chance to join in with some of your favourite carols, have a turkey sandwich and a mince pie in the interval and try for a prize in the raffle, all in aid of ASADIS (Asociacion Amigos Discapacitados) supporting disabled children in the Los Gallardos area.

Tickets are €8 and are available from Forget-Me-Not (Las Buganvillas), Total Entertainment (Turre), the Camping Los Gallardos shop, by calling Sue on 950 617 737 or on the door.

Come along and join the fun and support this great cause.

A sweet time for all

THE Anglican Church of Mojacar is holding a Christingle Service next Wednesday at 5pm.

A Christingle consists of an orange to represent the world.

A red ribbon round it represents the love and blood of Christ.

Sweets and fruit represent all

God's creations.

A lit candle represents Jesus's light in the World.

Everyone will be given one of these Christingles while we sing carols, all are welcome to this special service and we would love to especially welcome your children, grandchildren and friends.

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PS Thanks

Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and all the staff at EWN and a great big thank you for your support. It means a lot to our members.

Bill White, Indalo Players, Almeria

Thank you so much for promoting our Christmas events. You will be pleased to know the extravaganza is now sold out!

Anita Humphreys, La Cala de Mijas Lions, Malaga

Again we thank you for your continued support for our concerts. Our audiences are growing thanks to the exposure you provide to us within your weekly publications. Our growing audience is also fantastic news for the charities that we support. Many thanks, on behalf of the choir and ASADIS.

April Roa, Publicity Officer for the Rose Singers, Almeria

Many thanks for your continued support. You including our news means so much to everyone, it is much appreciated. It creates a scramble to get a paper each week!

Rod Manuell, The International Music Society, Fuengirola



GUYS AND DOLLS: Most of the cast under the watchful eye of FBI agent, Eric Mess.

Indalo Players strike again

THE Indalo Players performed their murder mystery, 'The Speakeasy Murder' in El Cortijo.

It was another complete sell-out and the audience were delighted with the dancing, the music and the fiendish murder.

The very next night the whole play was re-enacted in the spacious Miraflores ballroom and again, the audience was delighted with all the mayhem you would expect from a sleazy nightclub in downtown Chicago during the 1920's. The Indalo Players also enjoyed another full house at La Reva on Vera Playa. Same play but a different murderer. Among the audience members was Spectrum radio's, Richard Shanley with his lovely wife, Jessica.

They are always on the lookout for new members on stage, back stage or front of house. Please contact them by phone on: 671 810 819 or by email on: willianwhite9552@aol.com.



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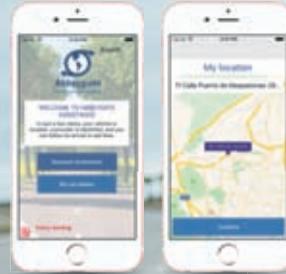
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Price: 259,000€ Ref: 1939



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and log cabin. Air con. Log burner
Too many extras to list!!
A real must view property

Price: 189,950€ Ref: 1749



Apartment in San Juan
2 Bed 1 Bath. Fully furnished. 2 Communal
pools. Communal Gardens and playground
Close to all amenities
Very good value !!

Price: 79,999€ Ref: 1660

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Photo credit: Albox Computer Club

DAVID SHEAR: Champion of the community has passed away.

Community hero passes away

DAVID SHEAR, founder of Albox Computer Club and PIRdA (Proyecto Informatica Reciclada de Albox) has sadly passed away. He passed just after 8am on Monday November 27. His wife, Margaret was with him.

David had been ill for some time but was relentless right up to the end and determined to help as many people as he could for as long as he was able.

David, who had worked a lifetime with computers (about 50 years!), decided that he wanted to help people understand their computers better.

About 11 years ago, he enquired whether there was a computer club in Albox. He discovered that there was not but enquiries had been made by another like-minded person.

That person was Fred Sheriff. David and Fred got together and founded Albox Computer

Club which continued for about another three years at which point they decided to register Albox Computer Club as a non-profit making association with the Junta de Andalucía.

David felt that it was not enough just to educate people about their computers, he also wanted to help those who were unable to afford their own by providing them with one, thereby putting them on a more equal footing.

This ethos also extends to different groups like charities, non-profit associations, small businesses, local government offices etc. This was achieved by accepting donations of broken or outdated computers, refurbishing them and donating them to deserving causes.

The section dealing with the donation of recycled computers is an activity of Albox Comput-

er Club. That activity is known as PIRdA.

PIRdA have just moved to their new workshop in Albox and will continue the PIRdA activity started by David. Their new location is Calle Ramon y Cajal 32, Albox.

Among the donations PIRdA have already made have included families, schools, colleges, councils, libraries, Local Police, Red Cross, various cancer charities like: MACS y Asociacion Española Contra el Cancer (AECC); non-profit associations; Virgen del Rio (disabled persons' association); Age Support; ABSE and many other deserving causes.

For further information on Albox Computer Club and PIRdA, please check out their websites on: www.alboxcc.com and www.pirda.org.

Rest in peace David.

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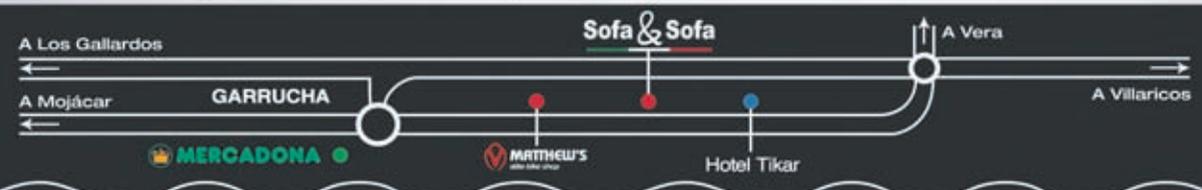
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If the insured cannot enter their property due to a damaged lock due to attempted break-in or the loss or theft of keys, or any other reason preventing the opening of the door, Línea Directa will not only pay for an emergency locksmith but also any labour costs. However, the cost of replacing the lock or mechanism is not covered under the policy.

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Should your TV or video appliance be accidentally damaged or stolen, Línea Directa will provide another appliance of similar characteristics for a maximum of 15 days at no extra cost.

Hotel, restaurant and laundry service

If you are forced to leave your home because

it has become uninhabitable due to an accident, Línea Directa will transfer you and any occupants insured under the policy, to a minimum three star hotel for a maximum of five days.

During the forced abandonment, restaurant expenses up to a limit of €50. If the homeowners washing machine breaks down, any laundry expenses incurred are covered up to a maximum of two days and a daily limit of €30.

Home surveillance expenses

If your home is at risk from easy outside entry due to robbery, fire, flood or explosion, then Línea Directa will send security staff at its own cost until the event is remedied, for a maximum of 24 hours.

Moving and storage expenses

In the event of forced abandonment of your home, policyholders may request a house moving service up to a limit of €2,000. Línea Directa will search for removal services to help the insured move home and store furniture if required.

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

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Mojácar Playa



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LV746 229,350€

Vera Playa



2 bed, 2 bath, townhouse of 88.13 m² + 67.74m² of terraces on a pretty urbanisation. 2 adult & 2 children's community pools. In walking distance of amenities.

LV712 120,000€

Palomares



3 bed, 3 bath, linked villa of 235m² on 116m² plot. Solarium, integral garage & gardens. Sun room + sea views. A/C & part furnished.

LV729 165,000€

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€

Mojácar Playa



Top quality 3 bed, 2 bath, villa with 2 x 1 bed, 1 bath apartments of 287m² on a plot of 500m². In walking distance of the beach. Many extras.

DV1443 495,000€

Mojácar Playa



3 bed, 3 bath, detached villa of 105m² on a plot of 424m² + garage of 11m². Private pool & terraces. Sea views. Excellent location for beaches & amenities.

DV1428 295,000€

Huerca Overa



Beautiful 4 bed, 4 bath, country residence of 344m² on a level plot of 20,000m² with exceptional views to the sea. C/H, A/C, garage & pool. Highly recommended.

DV1442 399,950€

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and A Very
Happy New Year!

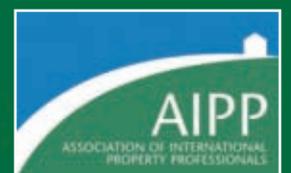
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OPEC members agree to cut output

AT a meeting of the members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and selected non-members it was agreed to continue to reduce production.

This group which includes Russia wants to see oil prices rise and are extending the curbs until the end of 2018 in order to combat the competition from shale oil which helped to stifle the market.

Since the first reduction, prices have risen by 30 per cent.

Spain's ruling party to raise court charges

FOR the first time ever in Spain, a political party is to be brought to trial following the destruction of records concerning €48 million in Swiss bank accounts.

It is alleged that the Partido Popular ruling party led by Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy held a secret fund containing the money in Switzerland and that former treasurer Luis Barcenas with the help of others destroyed evidence of this on laptop computers.

Barcenas together with a former IT specialist and a party lawyer are being put on trial for harming

By John Smith

the computers and concealing damaging evidence before investigators were able to undertake their work.

Prime Minister Rajoy has already appeared before a court to give information on his knowledge of financial impropriety within the PP but at that time made it clear that he had no idea of what, if anything, was going on.

The former treasurer is also involved in what is known as the Gurtel affair which revolves

around a private fund allegedly made up from secret donations which were then dispersed to various party members and supporters.

Luis Barcenas has so far denied wrongdoing and suggests that the Swiss funds were innocently held on behalf of a number of investors.

The decision to actually try a political party will certainly raise a number of technicalities including who should represent the party in court and how any verdict will affect individuals if the party is found guilty.

Equal pay demand aids women

COMPANIES who employ more than 250 workers will be required to correct any inequality in pay between men and women.

This is to be Spanish government policy as it wants to ensure that men and women receive equal pay if they have the same responsibility and functions within the company.

According to Spanish media, there is often as much as a 30 per cent disparity in salaries paid to women and companies will also be required to include unions in any review they undertake.

Quote of the Week

In the fourth quarter, without doubt, Cataluña saw a strong deceleration ... October has not been a good month, but we see a certain normalisation in November," Economy minister Luis de Guindos on Spain's accounts.



Photo Credit: Roman Voloshyn Shutterstock

Producing wooden goods.

Manufacturing boom in Spain

A GLOBAL organisation has announced that the Spanish manufacturing sector is growing more quickly than even before the economic crisis.

The spur to this has been increased production thanks to the winning of new business despite the Catalan crisis and is a 129-month high.

Although these figures are very impressive, the report by IHS Markit shows that six members of the Eurozone have actually achieved better results but the news for the Spanish economy is encouraging.

The current state of the Spanish economy is so buoyant that Economy minister Luis de Guindos is now content that the end of year forecasts for GDP will be met.

"November's surveys produced a clean sheet of improved PMI readings for all countries, resulting in the best performance for Eurozone manufacturing since the height of the dot-com boom over 17 years ago," noted Chris Williamson, Chief Business Economist at HIS Markit in the report.

» BUSINESS EXTRA

Sludge test

SPAIN is testing new ways of treating wastewater and sludge as part of a European Union funded project. The aim is to reduce the risk of pollutants damaging the environment and recovering energy and fertilisers from the sludge.

Pension news

NEW legislation to be introduced next year will make it easier for Spanish pension funds to invest in a wider range of products. This will remove current obstacles which prohibit investment in risk capital, hedge funds and real estate.

US changes

MAJOR insurance company MAPFRE will be restructuring its international divisions and is pulling out of five US States. Whilst it will continue to offer insurance across much of America, it has decided to sell its New York business through an investment bank.

New VP for European Bank

A SPANISH minister has announced that he believes that the position of vice-president of the European Central Bank will be filled by a Spaniard.

Luis de Guindos also confirmed

that he was not standing for the position of president of Eurogroup which consists of finance ministers from the 19 countries which form the Eurozone.



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LONDON - FTSE 100

CLOSING PRICES DECEMBER 4

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Anglo American	1,380.00	21.00	1.55	19,250.16
Associated British Foods	2,895.00	-53.00	-1.80	23,342.51
Admiral Group	1,919.50	-3.50	-0.18	5,503.03
Ashtead Group	2,185.00	286.00	15.06	9,490.28
Antofagasta	929.00	19.50	2.14	8,983.62
Aviva	509.75	-1.25	-0.24	20,467.53
AstraZeneca	4,830.00	53.00	1.11	60,750.35
BAE Systems	565.00	13.00	2.36	17,576.76
Babcock International Group	735.50	38.50	5.52	3,515.16
Barclays	191.50	-2.00	-1.03	33,032.14
British American Tobacco	4,700.00	-84.50	-1.77	108,460.20
Barratt Developments	602.50	-3.50	-0.58	6,117.24
Berkeley Group Holdings	3,534.50	-284.50	-7.45	5,147.14
British Land Co	630.00	0.50	0.08	6,301.10
BHP Billiton	1,355.00	10.00	0.74	28,386.25
Bunzl	2,115.00	-34.04	-1.61	7,107.91
BP	493.00	1.00	0.20	97,217.50
Burberry Group	1,727.00	11.00	0.64	7,311.75
BT Group	257.40	-3.40	-1.30	25,893.33
Coca-Cola HBC	2,429.00	60.00	2.53	8,633.83
Carnival	4,855.00	89.00	1.87	10,030.13
Centrica	144.00	-0.60	-0.41	8,077.91
Compass Group	1,535.50	36.50	2.43	23,715.10
Croda International	4,249.50	13.50	0.32	5,618.36
CRH	2,702.00	2.47	0.10	21,621.31
ConvaTec Group	214.90	20.90	10.77	3,756.34
DCC	7,260.00	105.00	1.47	6,351.10
Diageo	2,569.50	1.00	0.04	64,036.46
Direct Line Insurance Group	395.00	29.20	7.98	5,010.50
Experian	1,555.00	28.00	1.83	14,187.34
easyJet	1,415.00	9.00	0.64	5,594.68
Ferguson	5,392.50	62.50	1.17	13,303.49
Fresnillo	1,408.50	100.50	7.68	9,454.35
G4S	275.00	18.40	7.17	3,982.17
GKN	310.50	0.40	0.13	5,320.75
Glencore	339.65	0.05	0.01	48,769.38
GlaxoSmithKline	1,310.50	31.00	2.42	62,934.53
Hargreaves Lansdown	1,592.00	-1.27	-0.08	7,584.36
Hammerson	521.00	1.50	0.29	4,110.89
HSBC Holdings	732.10	-1.90	-0.26	147,240.09
International Consolidated Airlines Group	613.50	0.50	0.08	12,568.10
InterContinental Hotels Group	4,355.00	6.00	0.14	8,197.13
3i Group	910.00	25.50	2.88	8,743.62
Imperial Brands	3,067.00	2.50	0.08	29,271.43
Informa	696.75	-50.25	-6.73	6,171.80
Intertek Group	4,977.00	-40.08	-0.77	8,388.27
ITV	158.75	-1.15	-0.72	6,432.60
Johnson Matthey	3,025.00	-6.00	-0.20	5,853.42
Kingfisher	332.50	-1.50	-0.45	7,223.94
Land Securities Group	929.50	-4.50	-0.48	6,906.49

COMPANY	PRICE(P)	CHANGE(P)	% CHG.	NET VOL
Legal & General Group	256.50	-10.70	-4.00	15,929.22
Lloyds Banking Group ORD	65.75	1.00	1.54	47,520.05
London Stock Exchange Grp	3,803.50	24.50	0.65	13,057.54
Micro Focus International	2,381.00	-108.00	-4.34	10,765.59
Mediclinic International	690.50	125.00	22.10	4,126.72
Merlin Entertainments	357.90	6.00	1.71	3,601.13
Marks & Spencer Group	306.00	-3.40	-1.10	5,079.75
Mondi	1,796.00	30.00	1.70	8,584.59
Morrison (Wm) Supermarkets	216.50	0.20	0.09	5,081.36
National Grid	885.00	-2.52	-0.29	29,790.22
NMC Health	2,978.00	0.29	0.01	5,808.70
Next	4,452.50	20.50	0.46	6,522.39
Old Mutual Group	199.75	4.85	2.49	9,697.31
Paddy Power Betfair	8,400.00	75.00	0.90	7,060.91
Prudential	1,842.50	-16.50	-0.89	48,136.41
Persimmon	2,480.00	-60.00	-2.36	7,811.41
Pearson	705.00	-3.00	-0.42	5,702.42
Reckitt Benckiser Group	6,450.00	72.00	1.13	45,820.41
Royal Bank of Scotland Group	276.50	-0.10	-0.04	33,051.67
Royal Dutch Shell	2,382.50	18.50	0.78	107,248.19
RELX	1,747.50	33.50	1.95	18,392.35
Rio Tinto	3,520.00	18.50	0.53	47,477.11
Rolls-Royce Group	863.00	6.00	0.70	15,649.66
Randgold Resources	6,450.00	-325.00	-4.80	6,375.82
RSA Insurance Group	632.50	24.00	3.94	6,200.38
Rentokil Initial	325.00	6.90	2.17	5,839.96
Sainsbury (J)	232.50	0.20	0.09	5,080.06
Schroders	3,442.00	-8.00	-0.23	7,804.55
Sage Group (The)	746.00	-28.50	-3.68	8,360.66
Segro	484.00	-6.92	-1.26	5,480.99
Shire	3,670.00	8.50	0.23	33,288.00
Smurfit Kappa Group	2,250.00	-104.00	-4.42	5,555.22
Sky	1,064.00	127.50	13.61	16,085.70
Standard Life Aberdeen	424.50	2.40	0.57	12,787.83
Smiths Group	1,490.00	30.00	2.05	5,854.27
Scottish Mortgage Invstmnt	442.00	-8.60	-1.91	6,312.34
Smith & Nephew	1,315.00	5.00	0.38	11,422.90
SSE	1,330.00	-39.00	-2.85	13,913.47
Standard Chartered	733.05	-5.35	-0.72	24,290.13
St James's Place	1,167.00	-47.00	-3.87	6,393.75
Severn Trent	2,171.50	72.50	3.45	4,943.81
Tesco	195.20	1.15	0.59	15,919.93
TUI AG	1,357.00	8.54	0.63	7,939.69
Taylor Wimpey	196.65	2.25	1.16	6,364.01
Unilever	4,213.50	49.50	1.19	51,474.78
United Utilities Group	817.50	11.00	1.36	5,588.08
Vodafone Group	226.00	1.70	0.76	59,816.01
Worldpay Group	420.40	3.24	0.77	8,472.00
WPP Group	1,290.00	-17.00	-1.30	16,511.60
Whitbread	3,580.00	12.00	0.34	6,551.99

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COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE%	CHANGE	VOLUME(M)
3M	241,150	-0.82%	-1,990	143,809,58
AMERICAN EXPRESS	97,8600	+0.15%	0,1500	84,568,87
APPLE	171,050	-0.47%	-0,800	875,605,57
BOEING CO	271,380	-1.96%	-5,420	161,908,02
CATERPILLAR	141,520	+0.26%	0,370	83,855,89
CHEVRON	119,51	+0.44%	0,52	226,785,25
CISCO SYSTEMS	37,600	+0.80%	0,300	187,302,02
COCA-COLA	45,97	+0.44%	0,20	195,095,96
DOWDUPONT	71,01	-1.32%	-0,95	166,256,31
EXXON MOBIL	83,46	+0.20%	0,17	352,950,94
GENERAL ELECTRIC	17,8800	-2.24%	-0,4100	155,552,06
GOLDMAN SACHS	248,95	+0.53%	1,31	92,923,58
HOME DEPOT	180,4200	+0.33%	0,6000	210,171,40
IBM	154,76	+0.51%	0,79	143,127,35
INTEL CORP	44,6800	-0.36%	-0,1600	208,776,57
J.P.MORGAN CHASE	104,7900	+0.26%	0,2700	360,712,67
JOHNSON & JOHNSON	139,9800	+0.47%	0,6500	376,032,21
MC DONALD'S CORP	172,8700	+0.52%	0,9000	137,729,75
MERCK AND CO. NEW	55,87	+1.09%	0,60	151,846,49
MICROSOFT	84,260	+0.11%	0,090	646,372,32
NIKE	59,88	-0.89%	-0,54	78,175,43
PFIZER	36,3500	+0.25%	0,0900	216,582,30
PROCTER AND GAMBLE	90,360	+0.41%	0,370	228,592,61
TRAVELERS CIES	136,21	+0.47%	0,64	37,296,54
UNITED TECHNOLOGIE	120,12	-1.10%	-1,33	95,932,20
UNITEDHEALTH GROUP	226,78	-0.61%	-1,39	219,343,57
VERIZON COMMS	51,25	+0.71%	0,36	208,346,83
VISA	110,73	-1.65%	-1,86	200,689,02
WAL-MART STORES	97,3500	+0.12%	0,1200	290,863,82
WALT DISNEY CO	105,2500	+0.41%	0,4300	159,186,91

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NASDAQ

CLOSING PRICES DECEMBER 4

COMPANY	PRICE	CHANGE NET / %
Most Advanced		
American Woodmark Corporation	\$ 127.70	28.10 ▲ 28.21%
Aeglea BioTherapeutics, Inc.	\$ 4.73	0.73 ▲ 18.25%
Stitch Fix, Inc.	\$ 23.60	3.56 ▲ 17.76%
Foundation Medicine, Inc.	\$ 62.60	9.40 ▲ 17.67%
Versartis, Inc.	\$ 2.25	0.30 ▲ 15.38%
Ambarella, Inc.	\$ 62.03	7.76 ▲ 14.30%
Titan Machinery Inc.	\$ 21.57	2.57 ▲ 13.53%
Xunlei Limited	\$ 15.43	1.78 ▲ 13.04%
Geospace Technologies Corporation	\$ 16.39	1.75 ▲ 11.95%
Nutanix, Inc.	\$ 36.06	3.26 ▲ 9.94%
Synlogic, Inc.	\$ 11.20	0.99 ▲ 9.70%
Most Declined		
Overstock.com, Inc.	\$ 42.30	4.80 ▼ 10.19%
China TechFaith Wireless Comm Tech Lim	\$ 2.60	0.27 ▼ 9.41%
Zumiez Inc.	\$ 19.95	1.85 ▼ 8.49%
PetIQ, Inc.	\$ 20.34	1.84 ▼ 8.30%
American Software, Inc.	\$ 11.98	0.93 ▼ 7.20%
U.S. Auto Parts Network, Inc.	\$ 2.19	0.17 ▼ 7.20%
QuinStreet, Inc.	\$ 9.95	0.74 ▼ 6.92%
Aratana Therapeutics, Inc.	\$ 5.45	0.40 ▼ 6.84%
Ichor Holdings	\$ 26.47	1.94 ▼ 6.83%
Axsome Therapeutics, Inc.	\$ 5.275	0.375 ▼ 6.64%
Red Robin Gourmet Burgers, Inc.	\$ 48.95	3.45 ▼ 6.58%

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Price Movement

Accumulating Funds

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EUR Currency B
Multi Asset Conservative B GBP
Multi Asset Conservative B EUR
Multi Asset Balanced B GBP
Multi Asset Balanced B EUR
Multi Asset Growth B GBP
Multi Asset Growth B EUR

DEALING PRICE

£0.9792.....-£0.0004
€0.9518.....-€0.0010
£1.1585.....-£0.0038
€1.0775.....-€0.0038
£1.3235.....-£0.0064
€1.2193.....-€0.0061
£1.4784.....-£0.0086
€1.3690.....-€0.0082

Price Movement

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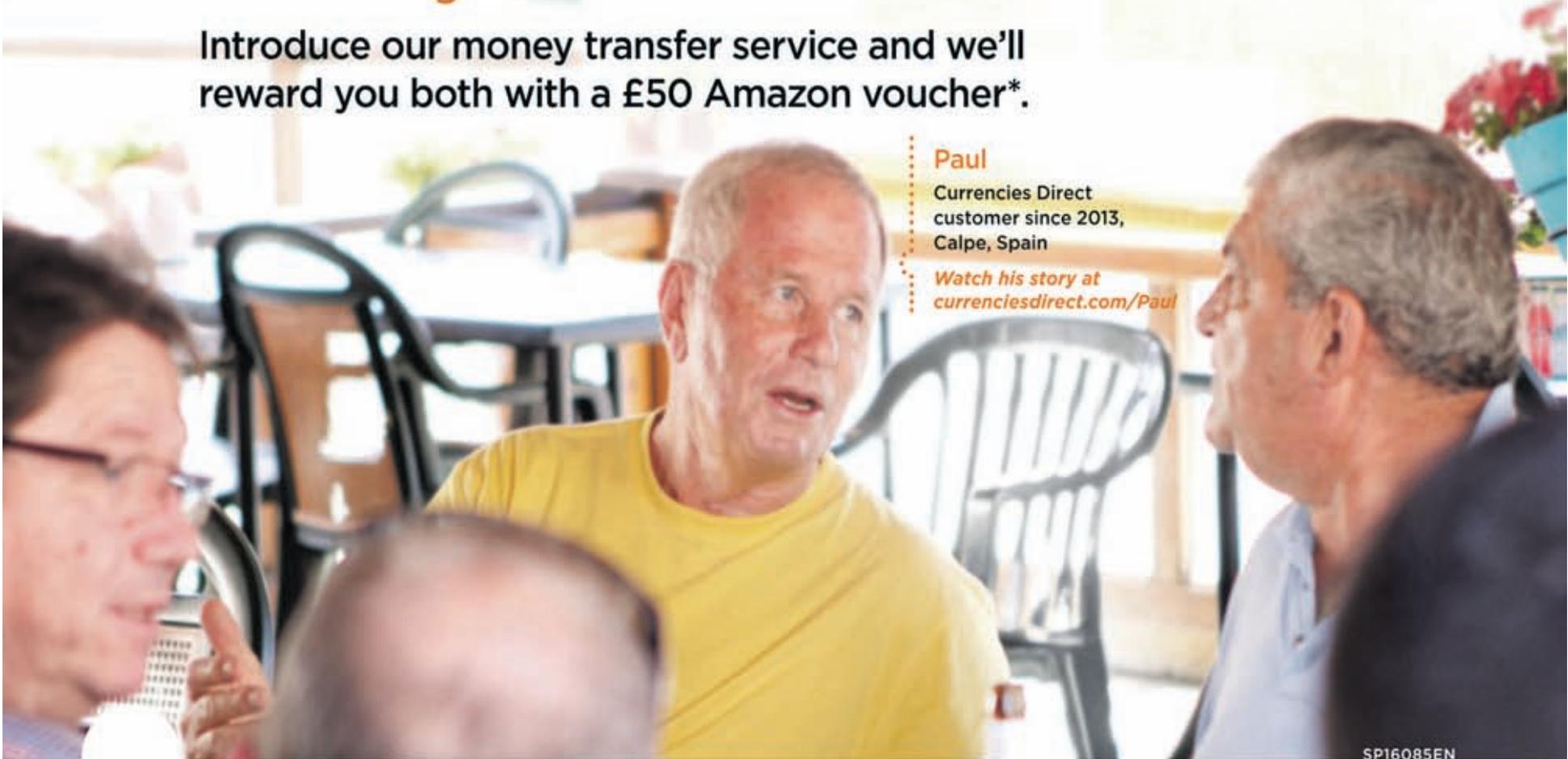
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WINTER HEATING WILL BECOME PRICIER

Electricity cost goes up

A DEDICATED Spanish ecological group has highlighted the fact that some four and half million Spanish residents will face the arrival of winter in situations of energy poverty.

Weather reports suggest that Spain is in for an exceptionally cold snap, prices of electricity have recently risen by 2 per cent and as so much is generated by relatively inefficient coal and gas turbines, then prices will continue to rise.

As far as pensioner expatriates are concerned, the winter fuel allowance that their compatriots in the UK and indeed other parts of Europe receive is not granted here in Spain, as the British government introduced a temperature eligibility criteria which removed Spain from the accepted countries, saving the British government €11 million per annum.

The last payment was made in 2014 and in announcing the decision to cancel the payments, the then Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith who was heavily pro-Brexit told a British newspaper:

“It’s absurd and offensive that taxpayers are funding these payments for people who have retired to the Mediterranean and enjoy warm weather. The European Union has frustrated our attempts to address this issue in the past, but with our new temperature-based eligibility criteria we’re able to satisfy EU rules as well as prevent this obscene waste of taxpayers’ money.”

According to *ECOtias.com*, the online ecological group, customers of the electricity companies in Spain have to pay the highest charges in Europe and although in theory, it is possible for those who live in poverty to claim assistance to pay their bills it is incredibly difficult.

The group claims however that even the government accepts that the requirements to obtain the assistance are complicated and less than 50 per cent of those entitled are likely to actually apply and receive the financial assistance available.



Keeping warm at a cost.

To make things just that little bit worse, the financial support offered by the government doesn’t even come from national funds but from regional and municipal funds with no additional support from Madrid.

Whilst other countries continue to look for new sources of cheaper, safer energy, Spain does not even encourage the creation of solar power by individual households any longer, following complaints from the large energy companies that their profits could be hit.

Middle East remains a target

SPAIN continues its wooing of major countries in the Middle East as it hosts the first Iran-Spain Joint Economic Commission in Madrid.

Iranian Deputy Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Mojtaba Khosrotaj is to co-chair a meeting where he will discuss endorsement of agreements on economic cooperation.

Signing the Iran-Spain Economic Cooperation Roadmap and several memoranda of understanding is also on the Iranian delegation’s agenda.

Despite the dislike that America continues to display against the Iranian regime, Spain was quick to forge diplomatic and economic links with Iran once the international trade restrictions were lifted last year.

As Saudi Arabia is one of Spain’s larger trading partners and is in direct opposition to Iran, the Spanish government will have to be careful about how close to Iran it is perceived to be.

Unemployment a problem as the service sector is still erratic

THE employment situation in Spain continues to suffer a roller coaster effect, especially in major tourist areas where unemployment continues to rise.

The overall national rate of unemployment increased by just 0.21 per cent with 7,225 more unemployed than in October, but the number was much higher in the Balearics and Malaga Province.

Although the overall trend of unemployment is falling in Andalusia, Malaga saw the number increase for the fourth month in succession and there are now 158,330 unemployed, an increase of 3 per cent over the previous month and the largest increase for five years.

Temporary contracts will increase during the months of December and January as shops and service industries expand their work force to take into account Christmas, New Year and Three Kings activities, but then the figures of unemployed are likely to



More customers, more jobs.

increase again as the temporary contracts expire.

There are still 3.47 million people registered as unemployed in Spain and with the fall in those contributing to the social services, the annual Christmas bonuses for pensioners will have to be found from somewhere.

As the number of unemployed increased in the service sector, the good news was that an increasingly larger number of workers are being

recruited in the building sector which suggests that the rise in house and commercial property construction is continuing at a pace.

Whilst the government is generally very positive about the future state of the economy, there is no doubt that the Cataluña crisis has not been helpful, although Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy has pledged that the country’s economic growth could reach 3 per cent next year, if Cataluña returns to ‘normalcy’ after the election to be held on Thursday December 21.

Whilst it appears that the situation concerning Catalan independence is becoming resolved, as those who pressed for the declaration are now modifying their demands, the fact that so many companies moved out of the region to ‘safer’ provinces does mean that the employment situation there has become less certain and there will be some temporary ‘hiccups’ in the figures until the New Year.

Video game sales increase

THE Spanish love video games, having spent €67 million on games and consoles this Black Friday.

This information compiled by GfK Global and released by the Spanish Association of Video Games (AEVI) goes on to confirm that this shows an increase in sales of 22 per cent over the 2016 figures for the same period.

The increase saw larger numbers of games and consoles sold, so the amount spent was not solely due to an increase in unit price.

Whilst manufacturers and developers continue to bring new games and upgrade consoles, so the market for their product seems certain to remain strong.

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Photo by Curren Wikimedia

The Nissan Leaf Electric Car.

Car sales are strong

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NOVEMBER was a particularly good month for the registration of new passenger vehicles in Spain with a total of 104,200 sold, 12 per cent more than last November.

Part of this success was due to some major offers by various dealers to coincide with Black Friday, but the total for the 11 months of 2017 is still up by 8 per cent over the previous year at 1.13 million cars.

In the problematic area of Cataluña, sales to rental companies were down considerably but purchases by companies and private

drivers were well up and almost matched the national increase.

Most successful manufacturer so far this year has been Renault followed by SEAT and Volkswagen.

Spain is also beginning to see a definite increase in promotion of electric cars with larger public car parks installing charging points although due to the fact that few cars can travel further than 300 kilometres with a new charge, hybrid vehicles are likely to set the trend for the immediate future.

Huge refinery contract shared with Spanish group

THE latest major contract to be awarded to a Spanish construction company is worth €1.135 billion from the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO).

Working in conjunction with French company Technip and Korean Samsung, the Spanish company Técnicas Reunidas is taking one third of the overall contract worth €3.53 billion.

The site of the oil refinery is in Sitra on the east coast of Bahrain and represents a major refurbishment of the entire factory with Técnicas Reunidas being responsible for renewing the crude oil unit, the vacuum unit, the hydrocracker (which releases different gases from oil), various plants and auxiliary services.

In addition, the company will be involved in the joint purchase of equipment

and construction of the entire project.

The refinery currently produces up to 360,000 barrels of oil each day and part of the reason for the upgrading of the plant is to improve both efficiency and to make the entire operation more environmentally friendly.

This is an area where Spanish know how has achieved a great deal of success and the Middle East market has been exceptionally important to Técnicas Reunidas which has undertaken 25 major projects in the area, earning some €20 billion in the past 10 years.

The announcement of the news of this new business award helped the company's share price which has been performing poorly of late to increase by 1.5 per cent.

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Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow...!

LEAPY LEE SAYS IT
OTHERS THINK IT



THE main, glaringly obvious reason that China and Russia consistently refuse to condemn, or completely sanction North Korea, is because that between them they have enough weaponry clout to finally dominate the western world. As allies, they are powerful enough to back up their ideals with a military might that could utterly annihilate both the USA and any other European democracy that chose to resist.

The overwhelming force of these three countries would be more than capable of finally achieving what they have all been seeking for generations, a Communist domination of the planet. The fact that Communism, both Chinese and Russian, has become more 'Westernised' and capitalistic over the last 20 years or so, has nothing to do with it. These countries are still run by undemocratic dictators, who still use their citizens as pawns in their common, relentless ambitions to take over the world.

The problem is of course that neither America, or the UK for that matter, will ever bow to these despots, however threatening they become. For this reason, and with the leader of our most powerful ally a bit flaky to say the

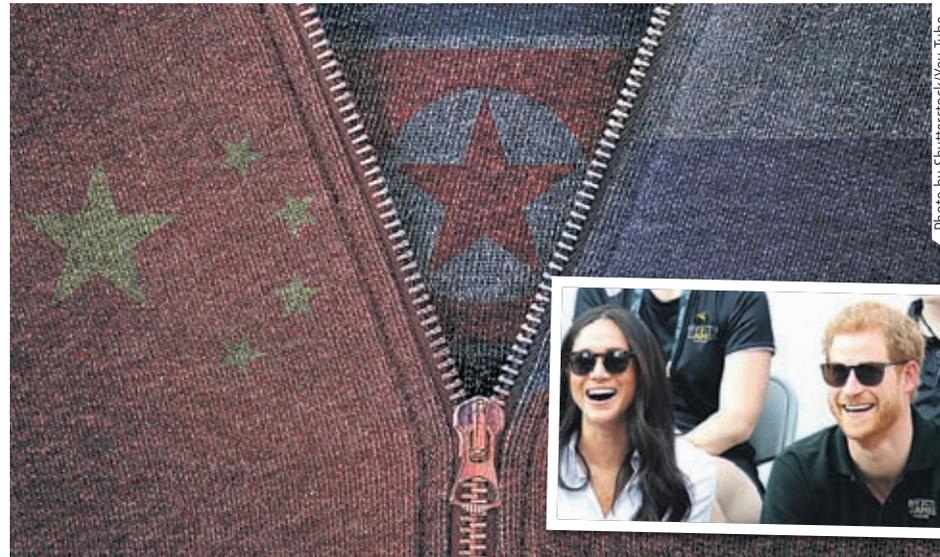


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COLLUSION AND MANIPULATION? China, North Korea and Russia and (inset) Meghan and Harry.

least, I believe we are even nearer to a nuclear holocaust than we were during the Cuban crisis. And there ain't a darned thing we can do about it. Eat, drink and be merry folks, for tomorrow...!

I don't know about you, but I think Ms Meghan has our Harry completely by the short and curlies. Putty and manos come to mind.

Far from immediately jumping up and down with joy, as Harry suggested, I think 'Mum' would have been a little more cautious in her approach to this extremely assured and capable young lady, before succumbing herself to her undoubtedly charming persona. Unlike her lad, who is, at this point in time not quite sure if he's on his a..se or his elbow. Time will tell my

friends, time will tell.

As much as I welcome constructive criticism of my columnistic endeavours, I still abhor the vitriolic spitting, that seems to consume the small number of sad sacks of the ilk that descended on my recent, completely innocuous EU gaffe like a flock of indignant, jowl jiggling vultures. What I do fail to completely understand is why, if my comments cause such stress and mental suffering, they still continue to peruse them?

This great paper is full of extremely competent and highly respected writers, so why don't they simply pass me by? Believe me, both myself and my thousands of wonderful like-minded readers, wouldn't miss them one iota, and frankly don't need them either. Bye!

Writing this in the sunshine of the extremely welcoming and still highly lovable Malta. What a pleasure to be back among this wonderful race of genuine and friendly people after so many years. Still consider this is where the ol' boy could finally end his planetary innings.

Have a good week. Be kind to someone. And whatever ya do. Always keep the faith.

Love Leapy.

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OUR NEW OFFICE IN ALBOX

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We went from strength to strength in a recession and now employ 12 members of staff affording our clients a service second to none.

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With our offices in Mojacar, our new prominent office soon in Albox and our planned offices for 2018 in surrounding areas, we know we have the exposure for your property to achieve a sale. All agents can have properties on their books but its what they do as an agent to sell them is what matters. It's no easy task to sell a property here to be honest, especially with the bad press over the last few years and the local forums negative attitude to property sales and agents in general. However not all agents are sharks and not all houses are illegal! Some of us want to do the right thing! want to sell your property for you! want to make sure purchasers buy a dream home and not a nightmare! comply with the laws in place! and our family business is one of them. So if you have a legal property to sell, please give us a chance. We can not guarantee to sell every property, no agent can! but we can guarantee no other agent will try harder or has the exposure Spanish Property Choice can offer you. Why not call in and meet us?



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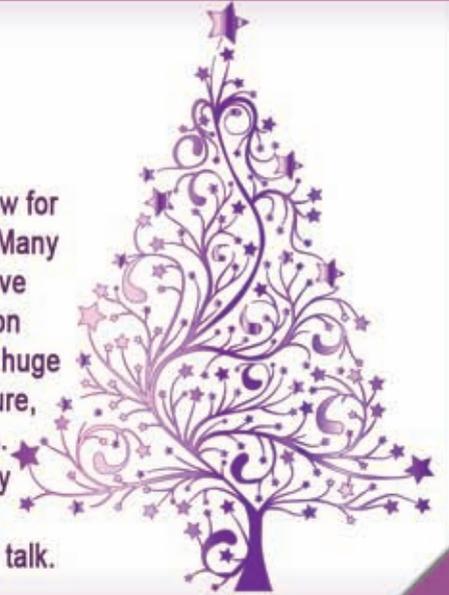
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Seen a good movie lately?

Mike Senker

In my opinion

Views of a Grumpy Old Man



WHAT'S happened to the film industry? Well first it's now the 'movie' industry. I come at this from a slightly different angle this week as I was in the 'movie business' for over 20 years. I could watch maybe 100 plus films a month.

Now, I'm talking about when video first started in 1979, when films never went on TV for seven years after they left the cinema and remember there were only three TV stations then. There was no Sky, no cable, just old fashioned terrestrial TV. I now have unlimited access to as many movies as I want and, to be honest, most of them are absolute garbage. I don't want a lot from a movie. I want to be entertained. I don't like horror movies except maybe something like the first Alien and the Exorcist, which many of you wouldn't know, was banned in the UK on video for 25 years.

But I digress. I want my movies to have a beginning, middle and an end. I'm totally fed up with watching stuff now that starts brilliantly, keeps you interested for 90 min-

utes then just ends, leaving you not having a clue what happens. No Country for Old Men - glued to it, and then it ends, not a clue. Why? Doubt was another one. The list is endless just like these films. But I can't be alone in wanting to know what happens at the end of a film. Sometimes there is an end but it's almost like all the budget has been spent making the first and middle parts and there's only \$50 left for the ending!

Then there's the super hyped films - the Emperor's New Clothes award for last year's was La La Land. What a load of tosh. I couldn't even be bothered to watch the end. Then, of course, is the studio's biggest cop out. The reason you don't see so many great movies any more like The Sting, Butch Cassidy etc is because they want to play safe and make sequels and now even prequels.

Most do not work. They are crap. Yes there are a few exceptions but mostly they are a waste of time. Never ever, ever watch a remake of a movie you loved when you were younger or of a TV series you liked.

I'd love to know what good movies you have seen lately or what movies have disappointed you. I can recommend a couple - Book of Henry and Florence Foster Jenkins.

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Email me: mikesenker@gmail.com

Advertising feature

It's a caring business sitting in a house!

REMEMBER the first 'Home Alone' movie with Macaulay Culkin left in his parent's house while they're away? Teenage children and worrying images of gouged French-polished tables and stained carpets are one thing, but how to manage if no one stays at home?

How can you care for your property when you're on holiday? With both urban and rural crime on the rise, an empty house over the holidays is never a good idea. Fortunately, today we have options that are inexpensive and more secure. Heard of 'house-sitting'?

House-sitting..?

House-sitting is a way for homeowners to find checked people to care for their property and pets, without 'care' costing the earth. In fact, if you join the right online network the house-sitters are free! For them it's a holiday. House-sitting suits retired professionals who make up a large number of house-sitters, as they look for affordable travel after a lifetime of work, home and pet responsibilities.

How to find out more

Enabled by the internet 'house-sitting networks' are like social networks but with added security and review systems allowing you to meet



RETIREES: Make up a large number of house-sitters.

checked sitters online. They help you find sitters to look after your home, prepare specific instructions and they follow those requests - it's part of your 'house-sitting agreement.' Check the reputation of the network online (eg Trustpilot).

Pets cared for at home

The most popular use

for house-sitters is actually as pet-sitters, it cuts out the cost of kennelling. Moreover, pets remain in their home with their routines. Vets say this reduces animal stress especially when they sense their owners are leaving.

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TECH FOR THE TIMID

SMOKING has addicted us ever since Walt Raleigh discovered that sticking a leaf in your mouth and setting fire to it could do more than just burn your lips.

But society's greatest addiction is barely getting started: our smartphones.

The internet is knee-deep in surveys as we know. One of the latest says 87 per cent of owners go to sleep and wake up with their smartphones. Younger users touch, swipe or tap their phones 2,617 times a day.

Those of us closer to our sell-by dates may be slightly less hooked, but not necessarily. The biggest growth in smartphone use is now among the so-called 'silver surfers.'

The figures for average teen messaging are truly breathtaking, not to mention thumb-destroying: 67 texts tapped out daily, with a staggering 1,831 a day coming in.

I feel quite inadequate. Some 900 million texts sent every day according to the latest figures, and the best I can usually manage is 'On way put kettle,' or my standby to my other half during hypermarket 'mazeophobia': 'Where hell r u?'



SMARTPHONES: Time to retrain the brain?

Smartphones are the new cigarettes

After a decade of growing smartphone addiction, Terence Kennedy now shares a recognised medical syndrome: FOMO, the fear of missing out

Never before has one device combined every element of modern mass media: telephony, texting, music, video, the internet, social media, video games and that most vital and most accessed material of all: cat

videos. Barely 10 years since the first iPhone changed the world forever, we are well and truly hooked.

With almost as many mobile phones in the world as people, and two billion smartphones engaged in

a frenetic tapping routine even Fred Astaire couldn't match, is it time to wave a red flag?

Smartphone use makes us crash our cars, walk into lampposts, send inappropriate messages to the wrong people and heaven help us all, seriously wind-up Kim Jong-un. One American city has even conceded defeat and is embedding its 'Walk' and 'Don't Walk' street-corner commands into the kerb, because it's too much trouble for ambulatory texters to actually look up when crossing.

Unlike man-flu which my partner steadfastly refuses to credit as a 'real' disease, smartphone addiction is now a recognised condition, though you do have to wonder whether treating it with therapy widely available online isn't a bit like prescribing diet pills to an anorexic.

If you recognise yourself even remotely in some of the above, perhaps it's time to just put down your phone, get out there, and smell the roses. At least until someone invents a smartphone which can also produce odours, like the short-lived 1960 'Smell-o-Vision' experimental movie.

Perhaps my dear old granddad's motto takes on a new life in this pixel-addicted era: 'Everything in moderation' except moderation.

Turn off the tap

THERE are some simple steps if you're tapping too much:

Set rules for your phone use; why not give it a break from nine in the evening to seven the next morning?

Don't use your phone while driving. Though under my wife's household rules, texting over dinner will have far more serious consequences.

Schedule break times from your smartphone or social media.

Download an application if you're really in trouble: among them, BreakFree and Mental let you temper your online usage, while ColdTurkey and SelfControl let you block the really addictive sites.

And when you really know you have a problem? If you identify with this recent headline from the Daily Telegraph:

'One in 10 of us check our smartphones during sex.' Seriously?

THURSDAY THOUGHTS

By Graham Braben, Albox

I'm all for progress

PERSONALLY, I'm all for progress. After all, without it we'd all still be driving Ford Capris and singing along to any combination of various members of the Osmonds that you can think of. But on the other hand, there are times when it can leave you open-mouthed, whilst you wonder quite what is happening.

I've always enjoyed the Olympics, one of my first Olympic memories was Mary Rand winning the long jump gold medal at Tokyo 1964. I used to get up uncommonly early to watch it live on the BBC and found it so exciting largely because I should have been tucked up in bed at the time!

If a report is to be believed then the Olympics of the future will be somewhat different. There are three sports - well I think they're sports - that have been given the go ahead for recognition. Dodge ball. Arm-wrestling. And, the pick of the pops as the late Alan Freeman would have said, pole dancing!

But progress keeps on coming. Driverless buses are one example. No longer do you have to put up with the driver telling you they don't have the right change, or driving past your stop on the pretext they didn't see you or didn't hear the bell. One was even tested in Las Vegas last month... it crashed!

As with most things, progress has its advantages and disadvantages but, personally, I embrace it wholeheartedly. Only yesterday I was playing Subbuteo while I was listening to records on my Dansette record player. No, I've always been on the cutting edge - just that mine needs sharpening a bit!

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

Flying by the seat of their pants while we shop till we drop

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

BRITISH AIRWAYS really created a storm with its latest wheeze: First on pays highest fare, last on gets cheapest deal (but may lose hand luggage to the hold). But, really, what else would you expect from an industry that refers to 'pax' as 'self-loading baggage'?

But the airports themselves are just as bad, aren't they? Passenger activity there boils down to three things: departing, arriving and waiting with 'pax' a captive audience, with disposable income, usually lots of time, and literally nowhere else to go.

So it shouldn't surprise us that airports are carefully designed to make us spend, spend, spend our hard-earned cash.

Well, they might think all



BRITISH AIRWAYS' new 'pay least, board last' policy has caused uproar among travellers. (inset) Passengers queuing to board a British Airways flight.

those wretched duty-free shops we're forced to walk through after security are inclined to make us spend! However, after the usually long and frankly irritating experience of passing through them, the first thing I want to do is find somewhere quiet to sit down and recover.

And another thing while I'm at it: most of us 'browsing' are only doing it to while away time. We're not shopping. We're either bored, or simply unable to find

somewhere to sit from a deliberate policy of limiting seats in overcrowded airports - Stansted particularly guilty in this respect!

Oh, and I've missed out: the security checks that one time lasted as long as the flight; the flight delays and inadequate compensation; the sense that every official involved in the process is trying to catch us out and send us to the back of ever-growing queues; the bag-drop queues; the poor signage; the car

parking rip-off charges; the interminable wait for the lack-of-courtesy bus; the dire, overpriced terminal food; the aft consumerism of terminal shopping. Not to mention fear of flying itself!

Speaking of flights, if a British explorer recently rescued from the depths of the jungle of Papua New Guinea while trying to find a remote tribe should invite 'volunteers' to help him on a future trip, how about 'volunteering' a few of our MPs to join him? Names on a postcard please...

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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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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A nice tip for the summer

SIR

I am used to the tipping DNA of daily life in the US where I once lived.

However, as an expat who has now lived in Spain for the last four years, I was interested to learn last week that a friend's daughter who worked in a local beach bar this summer received a set €175 a week cash payment throughout the season from the bar owner to cover for tips received.

The four other staff working at the bar - now all paid off for the winter - also received the same amount, a very fair tips system in my book, and a useful euro boost to each agreed monthly wage.

Often I know tips are all put in one pot (rather than staff keeping individual tips received) and then equally shared out, but sadly some bar owners keep all tips left arguing that monies received can help 'cover for breakages,' a policy that seems very unfair in my view.

N Stretton, Fuengirola

A voice for the people

I RECENTLY had the pleasure of being one of the four guest speakers at the European Parliament Committee of the Regions in Brussels after being nominated by Valencia's Regional Government. The main issue was citizens' rights, and I expressed the concerns of all of us who took advantage of moving to Spain.

Senior politicians negotiating terms of the breakaway, are using us as pawns to arrive at their ultimate goals. I expressed anger at this and pleaded for an end to this holding us as hostages to achieve other objectives. I also asked for consideration to be given to offer



Mr Monks addresses the European Parliament.

dual nationality for those interested or some form of European citizenship to ensure no future change of governments could seek to amend the agreements and to preserve our rights. On another issue, it has been stressed that the padron is to be used to determine who will be covered under agreements reached eventually in Brussels, and expatriates should check

if they are on the list as a priority.

This in fact also applies to all countries, not just the British. The more we have on the padron, the more funds Central Government allocates to each town hall. It is in all our interests.

Derek Monks Councillor Public participation, Integration and Coordination of Urbanisations, Rojales

Dear Nora

WHEN I started to read your column in last week's issue I was intrigued about the squabble between Gordon Ramsay and Michel Roux. That is actually not my concern, which is that most of the time people are referring to a chef regarding a Michelin star. Many experts have continuously explained and clarified the Michelin star is NOT connected to a chef, but always to the restaurant, the food, the service etc.

Dr Ir Johannes Hagelen, Malaga

Mapped out

IN your papers *EWN* and *RTN* you often show missing knowledge of Nordic Geography.

Scandinavia is: Denmark, Norway, Sweden. Finland is not in Scandinavia but a member of the Nordic Countries which are: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the autonomous islands: Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

Bjorn Beining, address withheld

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.

Flight from Spain to UK diverts due to 'disruptive' woman

IT'S good that the airline took action and I do hope the person is charged and has a heavy fine to pay for causing the plane to land in France. Maybe if more people were fined the cost of the fuel, airport costs and delay times for staff and passengers they would behave in a more responsible way. *Dawn Sanchez Young*

They're a pain in the backside. I've been on those disruptive flights and had delays more than I like to mention. They should fine them and disqualify their passport. *Margaret Downes*

Workman killed in ice cream factory accident

I've worked all over Spain. H&S is hit and miss depending what company you work for. I was a service engineer in power generation, this industry has always been strict.

But the rest say no more. *Colin Carter*

There are full EU regulations to cover all of this. Exactly the same as the UK. It is how they are implemented that are the issue. *Alan Whitehead*

You are right Alan. Of course there are H&S rules here. In some cases stricter than the UK. However, they're only as

Comments from EWN online

good as the folks overseeing them. *Darren Briddon*

Leo the Lion: The roar has faded

Fly high Leo, rest in love and laughter. We will remember your beautiful smile and bravery forever. Love to your beautiful family at this time. xxx *Liz Bagshaw*

My thoughts are with his family, this little Angel has flown bless him. xx *Sallyann Wiseman*

What a brave little warrior, Leo, up with the angels -- sleep well. *Pauline Pearson*

Mother-of-three dies after

pit bull dog attack

I have lost count of the number of these types of dogs without muzzles running off the lead in children's play areas. Some heavy fines please! *Justice Christopher*

Gosh I couldn't agree more Christopher, I've seen many of these dogs in public spaces without muzzles and it frightens the hell out of me when I have a young child and two terriers with me. *Vanessa Campbell*

It's not the dogs, it's ALWAYS the owners!! *Julieann Sanchez Lewis*

That's not true Julieann. Any qualified experienced dog expert will tell you that NO dog is 100 per cent predictable in its behaviour no matter what the owners do. It's an animal and these breeds are unfortunately more dangerous than other breeds and that's why certain types of owners want them. But if people really think it is ALWAYS the owners' fault then the owners should be prosecuted and jailed when the dog attacks. Then people might think twice about getting a breed that is lethal when it attacks and just get a regular dog. That would solve the problem. *Lisa Centellas*

Be warned

WHILE strolling with my husband on Sunday at the marina in Cabopino, I was approached by two women thrusting carnations down my cleavage. While trying to extract the flowers I was robbed from my handbag so quickly that even my husband did not realise what was happening, and they disappeared when I gave chase. Please warn the public not to stop for anyone! Incidents like this are multiplying and it is not just the tourists that are being snared. What can be done?

Anne Geddes, Costa del Sol

No nativity

DOES anyone at the *Euro Weekly News* have any information about the Nativity Display on exhibition at the Palau in Altea? Last Xmas, we couldn't find any information whatsoever about it, and finally walked up in the pouring rain, only to find that it wasn't being displayed!

Patricia James, Albir

Editor's note: We contacted the Palau who explained that they no longer have a Belen as for staffing reasons the installation opens only for functions.

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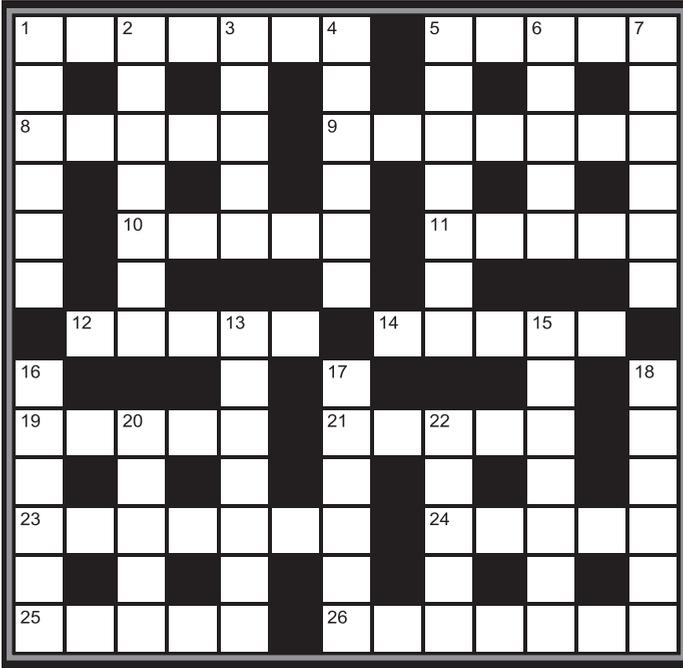
Cryptic

Across

- 1 Chop up trees to get a badge (7)
- 5 Releases from custody with some cricket gear (5)
- 8 Flower seen in a dell up in the Lake District (5)
- 9 Disturb a US soldier by the gallery (7)
- 10 Psyche revealed by Macbeth, ostensibly (5)
- 11 Side with gal in trouble (5)
- 12 Push soldiers (5)
- 14 Drink from fractured pipes (5)
- 19 Introduction of Fairtrade butter extract (5)
- 21 Support for fifty on the boundary (5)
- 23 Hospital doctors bury bridge partners (7)
- 24 Die surrounded by gold? Goodbye (5)
- 25 Nervous of fickle teens (5)
- 26 African country seen rebuilt by girl (7)

Down

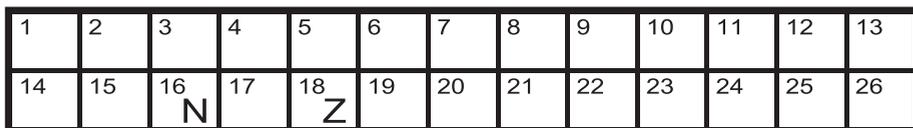
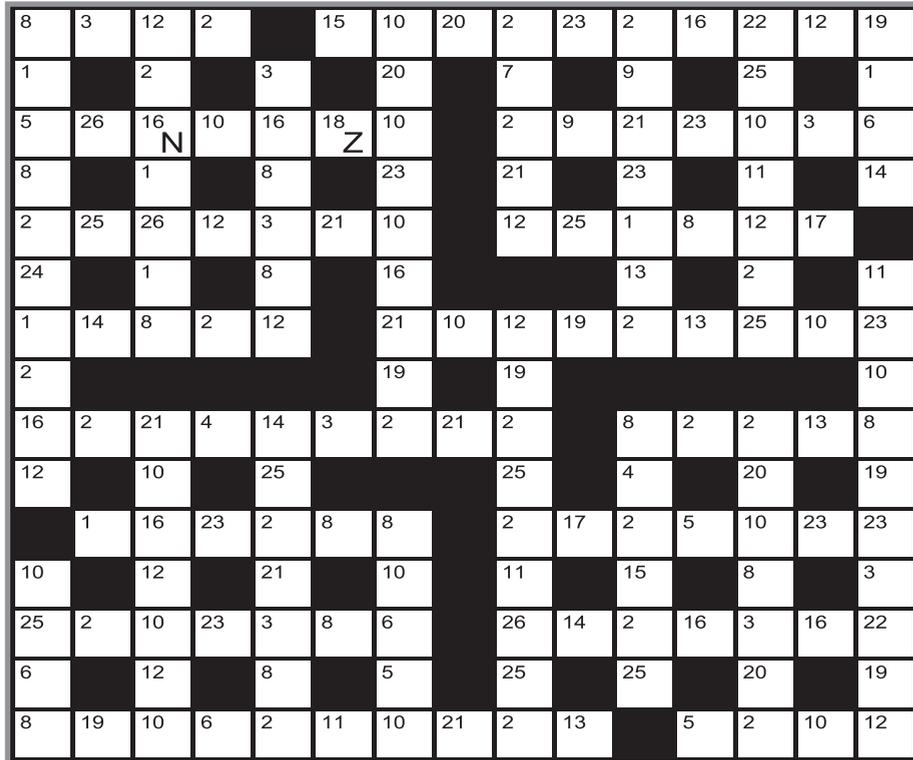
- 1 Really enjoy dressing (6)
- 2 Rebel Euro MP's leader (7)
- 3 A number going to church for fish (5)
- 4 Pass by the Spanish part of church (6)
- 5 Army unit rebuilt a bridge (7)
- 6 Irish terrorists meet queen - one from Baghdad, perhaps (5)



- 7 Reveals aftertaste in several beer mugs (6)
- 13 Small bed by lake for inner circle (7)
- 15 In search of Neptune, sounds like (7)
- 16 A heap of snow lost at sea (6)
- 17 A follower endures explosions (6)
- 18 A ceremony in a Spiritualist's meeting (6)
- 20 Stick to prohibition outside (5)
- 22 Exhaust water supply after day (5)

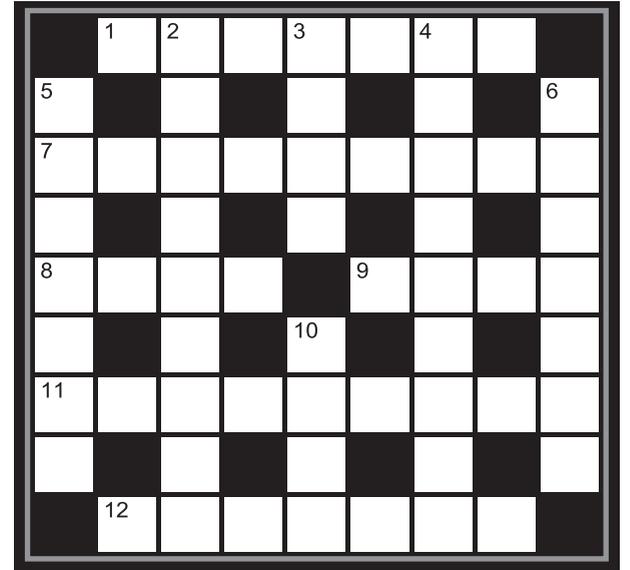
Code Breaker

Each number in the Code Breaker grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In this week's puzzle, 16 represents N and 18 represents Z, so fill in N every time the figure 16 appears and Z 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.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION FACING PAGE

Quick



Across

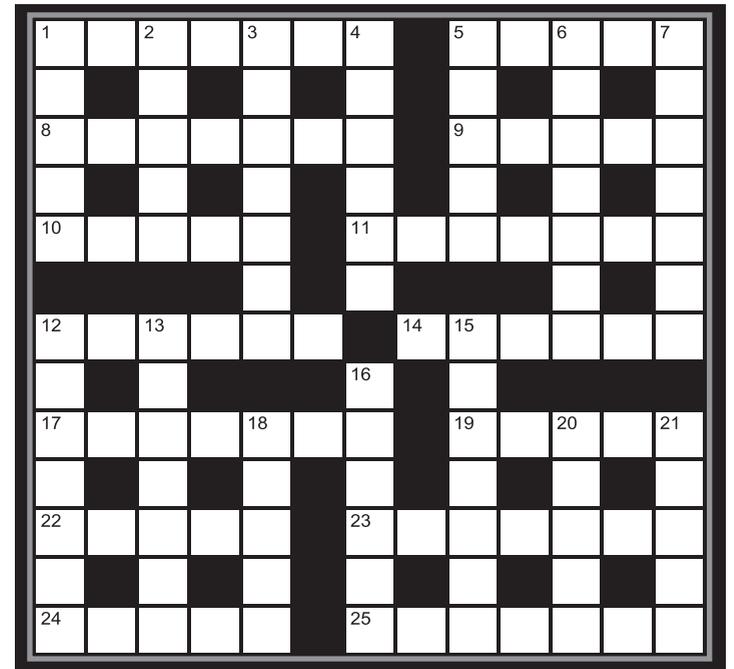
- 1 Get or find again (7)
- 7 Large company of musicians (9)
- 8 Expense (4)
- 9 One (4)
- 11 Crude (9)
- 12 Answers (7)

Down

- 2 Beyond normal limits (9)
- 3 Do what one is told (4)
- 4 Widespread (9)
- 5 Abstract idea (7)
- 6 Associate (7)
- 10 Written account of money owed (4)

English - Spanish

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



Across

- 1 Bracelet (7)
- 5 Principio (comienzo) (5)
- 8 Langosta (de mar) (7)
- 9 Sobrina (5)
- 10 Cuchara (para comer) (5)
- 11 Islandia (7)
- 12 Anchovy (salted, tinned) (6)
- 14 Codicioso (6)
- 17 Aisle (aeroplane, theatre) (7)

Down

- 1 Píldoras (5)
- 2 Book (5)
- 3 Government-licensed tobacconist's (7)
- 4 Tener miedo (6)

Across

- 5 Desde entonces (5)
- 6 Promedio (7)
- 7 Martes (7)
- 12 To suck in (air or dust) (7)
- 13 Waterfall (7)
- 15 Rosary (7)
- 16 Votantes (6)
- 18 Laws (5)
- 20 Exilio (5)
- 21 Pears (5)

CROSSWORD PAGE

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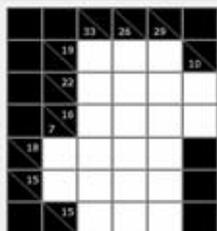
MADDOCKS' VIEW ON LIFE



' I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK - BUT SHE MISSES THE THRILL OF ACTUALLY SEEING THE LOVE AND HAPPINESS ON THE FACES OF HARRY AND MEGHAN! '

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



TARGET:

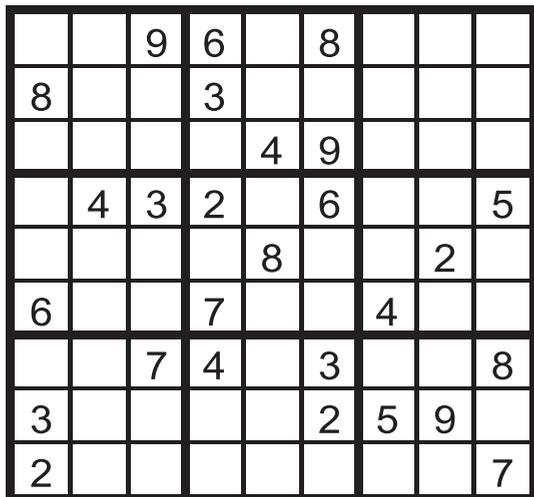
- Average: 6
- Very good: 13
- Good: 9
- Excellent: 16

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

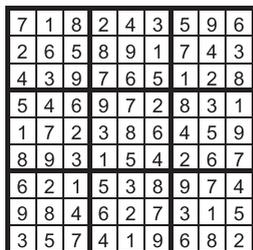
chip chop cope copy corp crop epic hope hype hypo peri pert pier pith pity poet pore port prey pyre ripe rope rosy rope tope topi trip type typo chirp coper crept crypt epoch hoper hyper optic perch picot piety pitch pithy porch price pricy repot rosey thorp thrip toper topic tripe trope typic chirpy cipher copier copter cypher photic pitchy poetic poetry pother pricey pyrite recopy trophy tropic pitcher trophic HYPOCRITE

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



LOTTERY

UK NATIONAL LOTTERY

Saturday December 02



IRISH LOTTO

Saturday December 02



EURO MILLIONS

Tuesday November 28



Friday December 01



EL MILLON: TGX83224

LA PRIMITIVA

Thursday November 30



JOKER: 3 311 430

Saturday December 02



JOKER: 4 642 369

EL GORDO DE LA PRIMITIVA

Sunday December 03



YOUR STARS FOR NEXT 7 DAYS

AQUARIUS (January 21 - February 19)

Don't chance your plans being disrupted by ill health. Get any problems sorted out now even if you think they are 'nothing'. When you are feeling good it is easy to take that for granted. Fresh foods and air mean more at the moment than making an extra few pounds.

LEO (July 24 - August 23)

Keeping up the activity level physically is really in your best interests this week. It is a pivotal point where your resolutions in this area could fail. With life very busy, it is still important to retain your priorities. A promise broken may still be restarted without trauma, just determination is needed.

PISCES (February 20 - March 20)

Your mind is positively buzzing with ideas. There has been so much progress in your personal life during the past year that it is hard to believe. However, you are capable of being very dynamic and single-minded. This is why, now, you may be patting yourself on the back. Keep colleagues on your side by taking a particular interest in them.

VIRGO (August 24 - September 23)

Does someone in the family need your attention? Don't begrudge time spent with them, even if you are busy. Consider what you would want others to do if you were in the same position.

ARIES (March 21 - April 20)

There are moments of boundless energy which really urge you to 'get up and go'. Make use of this at work, where most progress is to be made this week. Be you a politician, pensioner or anyone in between, the opportunities are there to be had. Slow progress on the love front should not see you fretting. At the moment, your priorities are paramount.

LIBRA (September 24 - October 23)

With your enthusiasm socially at a peak, now is the time to get involved with anything that takes your fancy. A project involving music or painting will give you the chance to make new friends. Children and young people fill your time for a lot of this week and certainly give you a reason to smile.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21)

Bring more zip to your life by putting the spotlight on your health. Getting out and about lifts the spirits, while perking up the diet with new foods brightens the system. As energy levels come up this week, be aware of what is happening around you.

SCORPIO (October 24 - November 22)

This week will see more progress on a health issue. Maybe you have recently given up something or taken to the gym. Recent weeks may have conspired to upset your best efforts. It is never too late to make a fresh start, though, especially right now. Someone who gives your confidence a boost also leads you to believe that anything is possible.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

The chance to travel seems exciting but can be made even more so by including a few people who are on your wavelength. So busy have you been on the more mundane aspects of life that the 'big picture' may have faded into the background.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 - December 21)

Avoid like the plague people who would dampen your spirit. It may not be deliberate but, if you are near repressed or depressed people, it may rub off. Find positive, active people to be near. If you have not started a form of exercise, then now is as good a time as any. Make it group activity if you want more social contacts.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

An authority figure may also be seen as a possible romantic attachment. Your talents and charm serve you well when approaching this person. Opportunities need approaching with eyes wide open, however, because they could be time-consuming and disruptive.

CAPRICORN (December 22 - January 20)

Romance will find you this week if only you are in the right frame of mind. You may be inclined to refuse festive social gatherings that hold no prospects for you, but don't close the door on anything. The right kind of companions are sometimes found in the strangest places.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

ENGLISH-SPANISH

Across:

- 1 Cuchitril, 8 Bone, 9 Calabacin, 10 Bottle, 13 Maleta, 15 Algas, 16 Deber, 17 Hairy, 18 Glove, 21 Sorteó, 22 Espejo, 25 Divertido, 26 Ayer, 27 Announcer.

Down:

- 2 Usado, 3 Heart, 4 Travel, 5 Idioma, 6 Housewife, 7 Germany, 11 Taburetes, 12 Large, 14 Ashes, 16 Dustpan, 19 Loción, 20 Veneno, 23 Pitón, 24 Judge.

CRYPTIC

Across:

- 1 Bodily, 4 Boosts, 9 Aloof, 10 Airdrie, 11 Sweeping, 12 Dill, 14 Disney, 16 Tokens, 19 Tone, 20 Valencia, 23 Cottage, 24 Annul, 25 Sermon, 26 Deters.

Down:

- 1 Braised, 2 Drone, 3 Life peer, 5 Oars, 6 Surmise, 7 Steel, 8 Faint, 13 Moderate, 15 Senator, 17 Stables, 18 Latex, 19 Tacks, 21 Canoe, 22 Dado.

QUICK

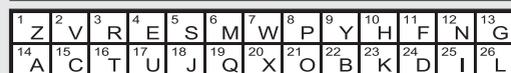
Across:

- 2 Harass, 5 Beta, 6 Retina, 7 Arms, 11 Less, 13 Uganda, 14 Drab, 15 Desire.

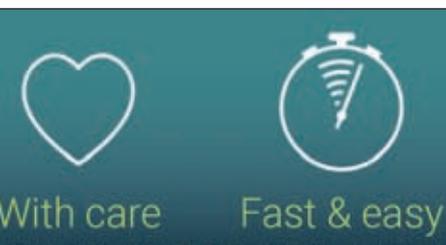
Down:

- 1/8 Bear hug, 2 Harsh, 3 Arid, 4 Stalls, 7 Absurd, 9 Glade, 10 Pass, 12 Sham.

CODE BREAKER



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THURSDAY	BBC one	BBC TWO	itv	CHANNEL 4	CHANNEL 5	sky sports main event
07 DECEMBER	5:30pm Money for Nothing	12:00pm BBC Newsroom Live	5:00pm Tipping Point	6:00pm Four in a Bed	3:00pm The Flight Before Christmas	9:00am Good Morning Sports Fans
	6:15pm Pointless	1:00pm The Daily Politics	6:00pm The Chase	6:30pm Come Dine with Me	4:40pm A Star Crossed Christmas	9:30am Live European Tour Golf
	7:00pm BBC News at Six	2:00pm Snooker	7:00pm ITV News London	7:00pm The Simpsons	6:30pm 5 News at 5	11:30am Live Ladies European Tour Golf
	7:30pm BBC London News	3:45pm Rugby Union	7:30pm ITV Evening News	7:30pm Hollyoaks	7:00pm Neighbours	1:30pm Live European Tour Golf
	8:00pm The One Show	6:00pm Snooker	8:00pm Emmerdale	8:00pm Channel 4 News	7:30pm 5 News Tonight	3:00pm SKY Sports News
	8:30pm EastEnders	7:00pm Celebrity Eggheads	8:30pm Tonight	8:55pm The Political Slot	8:00pm UK's Strongest Man 2017	7:00pm SKY Sports News
	9:00pm Holby City	7:30pm Strictly - It Takes Two	9:00pm Emmerdale	9:00pm Great Canal Journeys	9:00pm Traffic Cops at Christmas	8:00pm Live Pool: Mosconi Cup Day
	10:00pm Love, Lies and Records	8:00pm Snooker	9:30pm Paul O'Grady: For The Love of Dogs	10:00pm Catching a Killer	10:00pm Brick Mansions	11:00pm The Debate - Live
	11:00pm BBC News at Ten	9:00pm MasterChef: The Professionals	10:00pm I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!	11:25pm 999: What's Your Emergency?	11:00pm 5 News	
	11:30pm BBC London News	11:00pm Live at the Apollo		12:25am Born to be Free	11:05pm Brick Mansions	
FRIDAY 08 DECEMBER	5:30pm Money for Nothing	12:00pm BBC Newsroom Live	3:00pm Judge Rinder	3:10pm Countdown	3:00pm A Christmas Promise	9:30am Live European Tour Golf
	6:15pm Pointless	1:00pm The Daily Politics	4:00pm Dickinson's Real Deal	4:00pm Lost and Found	4:45pm Christmas Under Wraps	11:30am Live Ladies European Tour Golf
	7:00pm BBC News at Six	2:00pm Snooker	5:00pm Tipping Point	5:00pm A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun	6:30pm 5 News at 5	1:30pm Live European Tour Golf
	7:30pm BBC London News	6:15pm Put Your Money	6:00pm The Chase	6:00pm Four in a Bed	7:00pm Neighbours	3:00pm SKY Sports News
	8:00pm The One Show	7:00pm Where Your Mouth Is	7:00pm ITV News London	6:30pm Come Dine with Me	7:30pm 5 News Tonight	4:00pm SKY Sports News
	8:30pm Sounds Like Friday Night	8:00pm Strictly - It Takes Two	7:30pm ITV Evening News	7:00pm The Simpsons	8:00pm The Gadget Show	5:00pm Ram Slam T20 Challenge
	9:00pm EastEnders	8:00pm Snooker	8:00pm Emmerdale	7:30pm Hollyoaks	9:00pm Brunel	8:30pm Football
	9:30pm Still Open All Hours	9:00pm Mastermind	8:30pm Coronation Street	8:00pm Channel 4 News	10:00pm Eight Days That Made Rome	11:00pm The Debate: Derby Day Special
	10:00pm Have I Got News for You	9:30pm Only Connect	9:00pm Judge Rinder's Crown Court	8:00pm Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast	11:00pm Eight Days That Made Rome	
	10:30pm Mrs Brown's Boys Christmas Special 2015	10:00pm The Year in Music 2017	9:30pm Coronation Street			
	11:00pm QI					
SATURDAY 09 DECEMBER	5:30pm Final Score	1:30pm Tom Kerridge's Best Ever Dishes	4:00pm Endeavour	1:55pm Come Dine with Me	5:20pm 5 News	12:00pm Football
	6:10pm Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme	2:00pm Demolition	6:00pm The Chase	4:00pm Come Dine with Me	5:25pm Nativity 3: Dude, Where's My Donkey?!	4:15pm Rugby Union
	6:40pm BBC News	3:00pm Operation Snow Tiger	7:00pm Paul O'Grady: For The Love of Dogs	4:30pm A Place in the Sun	6:35pm The Family Man	6:15pm Football
	6:50pm BBC London News	4:00pm Escape to the Continent	7:25pm ITV News London	5:30pm Best Laid Plans	7:35pm 5 News	8:30pm Gary Neville's Soccerbox: Giggs
	7:00pm Pointless	5:00pm Mastermind	7:35pm ITV News	6:30pm Grand Designs	7:40pm The Family Man	9:00pm Best PL Goals
	7:45pm Strictly Come Dancing	5:30pm Snooker	7:50pm You've Been Framed!	7:30pm Channel 4 News	8:55pm 5 News Weekend	Classic action from the Premier League.
	9:20pm Michael McIntyre's Big Show	6:30pm John Noakes: TV Hero	8:15pm Ninja Warrior UK	8:00pm Guy Martin's WWI Tank	9:00pm Santa Makes You Laugh Out Loud	Best PL Goals Soccer Pm
	10:20pm Casualty	7:10pm BP Confidential	9:20pm I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!	10:00pm X-Men: Days of Future Past	10:00pm Football on 5	11:30pm Cricket
	11:10pm BBC News	8:00pm Snooker	10:50pm Through the Keyhole	12:35am The Drop	10:55pm Football on 5	
		11:00pm QI XL				
SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER	4:00pm Songs of Praise	9:35am Countryfile	5:40pm The Chase	4:00pm The Sorcerer's Apprentice	3:55pm Trolls Holiday Special	3:15pm Live Nissan Super Sunday
	4:35pm Toy Story	10:30am Saturday Kitchen	6:35pm How to Spend it Well at Christmas with Phillip Schofield	6:10pm The Snowman	4:25pm 5 News	5:15pm Live Nissan Super Sunday
	5:50pm Blue Planet II	12:00pm Food and Drink	7:35pm ITV News London	6:45pm The Snowman and the Snowdog	4:30pm Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End	8:30pm La Liga Greatest Games Football
	6:50pm BBC News	12:30pm My Life on a Plate	7:45pm ITV News	7:10pm Channel 4 News	5:30pm 5 News	10:45pm Live NFL: Sunday Game
	7:05pm BBC London News	1:15pm MOTD2 Extra	8:00pm Ninja Warrior UK	7:30pm Britain's Wildest Weather 2017	5:35pm Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End	A match from week 14 of the 2017 NFL season.
	7:15pm Countryfile	2:00pm Snooker	9:00pm The Chase Celebrity Special	9:00pm Coastal Railways with Julie Walters	7:45pm Need for Speed Chappie	1:50am NFL Gameday Week
	8:15pm Strictly Come Dancing	6:15pm Ski Sunday	10:00pm I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!	10:00pm The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	10:00pm 5 News	2:20am Live NFL: Baltimore @ Pittsburgh
	9:00pm Blue Planet II	7:15pm Flog It!			11:00pm Chappie	
	10:00pm Attenborough and the Giant Elephant	8:00pm Snooker			11:05pm Chappie	
	11:00pm BBC News	12:00am Employable Me				
MONDAY 11 DECEMBER	5:30pm Money for Nothing	4:20pm 32 Brinkburn Street	6:00pm The Chase	6:00pm Kirstie's Handmade Christmas	12:55pm The Christmas Gift	7:00am Total Goals
	6:15pm Pointless	5:05pm The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway	7:00pm ITV News London	7:00pm The Simpsons	2:30pm Rooftop Christmas Tree	9:30am Total Goals
	7:00pm BBC News at Six	6:05pm The Blue Planet	7:30pm ITV Evening News	7:30pm Hollyoaks	4:15pm A Rose at Christmas	10:00am Good Morning Sports Fans
	7:30pm BBC London News	7:00pm Celebrity Eggheads	8:00pm Emmerdale	8:00pm Channel 4 News	6:00pm 5 News at 5	11:00am Premier League Daily
	8:00pm The One Show	7:30pm Strictly - It Takes Two	9:00pm Coronation Street	9:00pm Includes sport and weather.	6:35pm The Yorkshire Vet: Winter on the Moors	12:00pm Sky Sports Daily
	8:30pm Panorama	8:00pm Celebrity Antiques	9:30pm Coronation Street	9:00pm Paul Hollywood Supersoppers	7:30pm 5 News Tonight	1:00pm SKY Sports News
	9:00pm EastEnders	Road Trip	10:00pm Hatton Garden	9:30pm 999: What's Your Emergency?	8:00pm Weather Terror	7:00pm SKY Sports News
	9:30pm Would I Lie to You?	9:00pm Nigella's Christmas Table	11:00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather		9:00pm Police Interceptors	8:00pm SKY Sports Tonight
	10:00pm The Real Marigold on Tour	10:00pm Employable Me			10:00pm Concorde: Triumph and Tragedy	8:30pm Football
	11:00pm BBC News at Ten	11:00pm Insert Name Here				11:00pm The Debate - Live
TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER	3:15pm Armchair Detectives	5:00pm The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway	6:00pm The Chase	3:10pm Countdown	6:00pm 5 News at 5	9:00am Good Morning Sports Fans
	4:00pm Escape to the Country	6:05pm The Blue Planet	7:00pm ITV News London	4:00pm Lost and Found	6:35pm The Yorkshire Vet at the Great Yorkshire Show	10:00am Good Morning Sports Fans
	4:45pm The Hairy Bikers	7:00pm Celebrity Eggheads	7:30pm ITV Evening News	5:00pm A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun	7:30pm 5 News Tonight	11:00am Premier League Daily
	5:30pm Money for Nothing	7:30pm Strictly - It Takes Two	8:00pm Emmerdale	6:00pm Kirstie's Handmade Christmas	8:00pm Steve Backshall's Hedgehog Rescue	12:00pm Sky Sports Daily
	6:15pm Pointless	8:00pm Celebrity Antiques	8:30pm Save Money: Good Food	7:00pm The Simpsons	9:00pm Jo Brand's Cats and Kittens	1:00pm SKY Sports News
	7:00pm BBC News at Six	Road Trip	9:00pm How to Spend it Well at Christmas with Phillip Schofield	7:30pm Hollyoaks	10:00pm Ben Fogle: Return to the Wild	7:00pm SKY Sports News
	7:30pm BBC London News	9:00pm MasterChef: The Professionals	10:00pm Hatton Garden	8:00pm Channel 4 News		8:00pm SKY Sports Tonight
	8:00pm The One Show	10:00pm Rick Stein's Road to Mexico	11:00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather	9:00pm Food Unwrapped		10:00pm SKY Sports Tonight
	8:30pm EastEnders			10:00pm Does Christmas		11:00pm SKY Sports News at Ten
	9:00pm Holby City					
WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER	4:45pm The Hairy Bikers	5:05pm The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway	5:00pm Tipping Point	3:10pm Countdown	2:30pm Season's Greetings	7:00am Cricket
	5:30pm Home for Christmas	6:05pm The Blue Planet	6:00pm The Chase	4:00pm Lost and Found	4:15pm Murder, She Baked: A Christmas Pudding Mystery	3:00pm SKY Sports News
	5:30pm Money for Nothing	7:00pm Celebrity Eggheads	7:00pm ITV News London	5:00pm A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun	6:00pm 5 News at 5	4:00pm SKY Sports News
	6:15pm Pointless	7:30pm Strictly - It Takes Two	7:30pm ITV Evening News	6:00pm Kirstie's Handmade Christmas	6:35pm The Yorkshire Vet	5:00pm Ram Slam T20 Challenge Sf
	7:00pm BBC News at Six	8:00pm Celebrity Antiques	8:00pm Emmerdale	7:00pm The Simpsons	7:30pm 5 News Tonight	8:30pm Football
	7:30pm BBC London News	Road Trip	8:30pm Coronation Street	7:30pm Hollyoaks	8:00pm Police Interceptors	10:45pm Live Fight Night: Katie Taylor
	8:00pm The One Show	9:00pm MasterChef: The Professionals	9:00pm Gino's Italian Coastal Escape	8:00pm Channel 4 News	9:00pm GPs: Behind Closed Doors	1:00am SKY Sports News
	8:00pm Mary Berry's Country House Secrets	10:00pm Peaky Blinders	9:30pm Coronation Street	9:00pm The Secret Life of the Zoo	10:00pm Harrogate: A Yorkshire Christmas	2:00am SKY Sports News
	10:00pm The Apprentice	11:00pm The Apprentice: You're Fired!	10:00pm Hatton Garden	10:00pm The Channel		3:00am SKY Sports News
	11:00pm BBC News at Ten		11:00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather	11:00pm Vanished by the Lake		4:00am SKY Sports News

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



TV Couch Critic

Buenos-dias Piers a turn-off unlike must-view box sets

THOUGH unsure how many readers are also regular viewers of morning television, friends staying recently are avid *Good Morning Britain* (ITV 1, weekdays 06.00-08.30) watchers, so for a few days the show became background to breakfast preparation.

It is presented by the lovely Susanna Reid, the delightful Charlotte Hawkins, the accomplished Ben Shephard and someone called Piers Morgan.

Good Morning Britain (GMB) is much lighter viewing than the BBC early morning offering, though flicking between the two, some offerings are remarkably similar.

What is not similar is the Piers Morgan effect.

I thought Piers had decamped to the US (thankfully not to España) but it seems he has since returned and is now a regular on the ITV morning show.

While I understand that controversy and over-the-top opinions can generate viewers, Piers takes this to a new and uncomfortable level.

Some recent viewing gems include his guide to a good marriage: pick up your other halves' socks; he thinks HE



RANT: Piers Morgan not a morning delight!

set up Prince Harry and Meghan Merkle plus his rant about how good the GMB show is compared to its BBC rival.

EASY TO WATCH: Victoria Derbyshire.

On occasions his co-hosts are literally lost for words and it is easy to see why. Keeping to the daytime TV theme

for a moment, having accidentally caught the *Victoria Derbyshire Show* (BBC2, weekdays 09.00 and BBC News Channel) I am now a fan.

Victoria and an excellent team of reporters tackle sensitive and sometimes hard-hitting original stories, audience debate and breaking news, all in an easy-to-watch BBC2 style; truly an antidote to Piers, if you need one.

I am thrilled that the BBC is planning a *Strictly Come Dancing Christmas Special* (BBC1, Christmas Day, time TBC).

Hosts Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman will oversee six couples performing a routine which tells the story of What Christmas Means to Me

(them). Jeremy Vine is half of one dancing pair; I have no words.

If seeking some stop/start viewing whilst decorating the Christmas

tree, Box Sets have to be the way to go.

These are essentially entire series you can watch via a catch-up service. One of the best on offer is *Game Face* (E4, via All4) and sees the much underrated Roisin Conaty navigating through a clumsy and hectic life, punctuated with hilarious driving lessons with instructor Damien Molony.

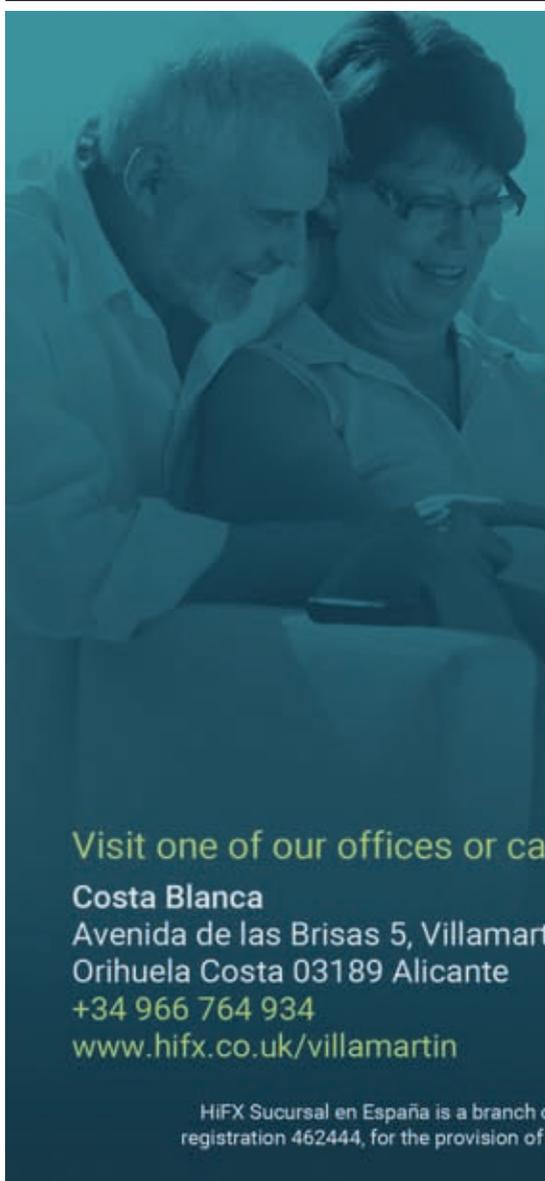
The BBC is now fully in the Box Set space and is showcasing some wonderful BBC3 programmes most of us would otherwise miss.

Junior Doctors, Blood, Sweat and Tears doesn't always sit well with the mince pies, but is a frank documentary series following what seven newly-qualified doctors get up to as they continue their training; one is going to really annoy you!

The BBC are also offering three complete series of *Josh*; there is a lot to get through if watched back-to-back, but even with a break the show tends to grow on viewers; it's a comedy about friends who go way back starring Josh Widdicombe, Elis James, Beattie Edmondson and Jack Dee.

Jennifer Saunders puts in all too-brief appearances for only three episodes as Beattie's mother, a true gem in the making!

Critique - J S, Mojacar, Almeria



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The wrong book for Spain!

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.

BEFORE we came to Spain I had a few moments of reflection to imagine what books would best aid me through the upcoming adventure.

The huge medical book allowed one to home analyse various symptoms, cross referenced against each other and what possible diagnosis or solutions might be advisable and utilitarian.

Remember, this place of Mojacar wasn't on the map, any map of Spain. Space was cramped for a long journey so only one other tome was hand carried, *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau.

My coming journey to Spain unfortunately dove-tailed exactly with one of the books major premises: "I went to the woods because I wish to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die discover that



PARADISE: Water gardens within one year in La Parata.

I had not lived". That, for the time, summed up my sincerest feeling - getting deliberate.

Walden is not just required reading in all US high schools but contains the very skeletal essence of American's self reliance, pioneer spirit, get it done yourself and rely on no one.

Well, upon reflection, it was a noble and admirable gesture for an unworldly young man to carry such fine words with him while stepping forth into 'tierra incognita'. But now, having lived and worked for close to five decades in Spain nothing could be further from the actuality of the truth of existence here!

Spain is a society of amigos. You got a problem, share with your friends, one of their distant cousins can solve it for you. If you're with the wrong set of friends, banditos, they'll drain you dry. But good amigos are there forever and constant too.

Conviviality is the order of the day. People that you meet on the way up of-

ten arise to essential positions that you will need in the future.

Talk is essential, just chat that takes you nowhere often leads to important information being dropped. One Sunday we walked as a family up to the Parata to take them cold beers and extravagant nibbles they wouldn't buy themselves.

I remarked how great it would be to do a development there, but it lacked water. "No, no, on the contrary," they corrected me. There were water springs in the not too distant caves and an aqueduct built by the Moors about 500 years ago which just needed to be cleaned out and wha-la, running water 24/7 right to their door.

The next day I walked the line up to the water filled caves and started negotiating to buy the finca from the five brothers.

Since that day, I have been perplexed that those living in the farmhouse never did such. They could have lived in a virtual garden of paradise. I guess, not all things are found in books (nor solved). Sometimes self reliance does come into play - even in Spain.

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Advertising feature

Spectacular show for Aguilas

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ers, this event is the largest yet for Helping Hands and comes at no small expense to produce.

Located beachside and just five minutes from the AP7 Aguilas exit, the beautiful Hotel Puerto Juan Montiel is the venue for this spectacular event on Saturday December 16.

A magnificent pre-show buffet is offered by the hotel at just €14 and the main show tickets are priced at €20.

Further information and tickets can be obtained by calling Linda on 634 456 701.

“ So very proud and excited to present the last of three amazing shows. ”

Advertising feature

Festive fun and frolics with MACS Sexy Santas

THINK Christmas - think twinkly lights, colourfully wrapped gifts, sleigh bells, festive movies, turkey with the trimmings and Sexy Santas... wait. What?

Yes, you heard right, Sexy Santas! A group of ladies (and men) in flirty Santa outfits, singing their hearts out to raise money for MACS, (Mojacar Area Cancer Support group).

MACS has been supporting cancer patients and their families for more than a decade, helping with translations, equipment, advice and generally being a much-needed shoulder of support during difficult times while fighting this cruel disease.

With no official government funding, fundraising is essential and groups like the Sexy Santas raise much-needed money to help keep this invaluable charity operating.

Every year this fun group gathers together in the run up to the festive season and visits bars and restaurants in Mojacar and Vera, with joyful voices and rattling tins, putting smiles on the faces of the customers and extracting a few euros from everyone to help this worthy and much-loved cause.



HAVE FUN: With the Sexy Santas this Christmas.

The Sexy Santas began in 1996, set up by a group of local ladies and was adopted by MACS in 2010 as part of the fundraising efforts. The concept went from strength to strength and at one stage the group comprised 28 volunteers!

A cheeky bunch, the ladies decided to break from tradition and change the words to well-known Christmas carols, many of which have the audience roaring with laughter, especially when they hear '10 lords a licking'!

The Sexy Santas aren't shy, the offer of folding-money rather than the jingling kind can raise a Santa's skirt an inch or two - all in the name of charity and festive fun!

This year the Sexy Santas are out and about on Saturday December 16. They have a packed schedule for the evening and the coming days will be spent rehearsing and putting final touches to the costumes.

For a bit of fun and to help this superb local charity, come along to any of the venues to support the Sexy Santas and MACS.

You will find them at the following locations (timings are approximate): In Vera at Pueblo Laguna - 8pm, in Los Gallardos at Miraflores - 8.45pm, in Mojacar, Dolce Vita - 9.30pm, Rose and Crown - 10pm, Kukis - 10.30pm and Imperial Chinese - 11.15pm.

In the meantime, the MACS team would like to wish all its supporters a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Contact MACS on 634 328 334, email them at macscancersupport@live.co.uk, visit the website www.macscancersupport.com or see the Facebook page.

When did you last have your jabs?

FOLLOWING the World Health Organisation's (WHO) announcement measles was spreading across Europe, it is a good time to check whether you are up-to-date on your vaccines.

While healthy adults will normally recover from the illness in around seven to 10 days, it is highly-infectious and can be harmful to teenagers, pregnant women, babies under one and those with a weakened immune system. One in 15 sufferers can go on to develop more serious conditions, including pneumonia and convulsions.

According to Public Health England (PHE), the disease has broken out in three areas of England recently, while cases have also been reported in Romania, Italy and Germany, posing a risk to those who have not had two doses of their MMR vaccine. PHE recommended those travelling to these countries take travel health advice before departing.



MEASLES VACCINATION: Disease has broken out in the UK.

Experts believe the outbreaks are linked to lack of immunisation due to widely discredited claims vaccines are linked to autism. The PHE have now reported 16 confirmed cases of measles in Leeds, 11 in Liverpool, and nine in Birmingham.

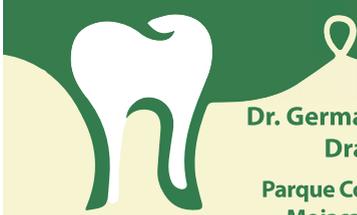
Dr Mary Ramsay, head of immunisation at PHE, explained, "the measles outbreaks we are currently seeing in England are linked to ongoing large outbreaks in Europe." She added, "this

serves as an important reminder for parents to take up the offer of MMR vaccination for their children at one year of age and as a pre-school booster at three years and

four months of age."

So whether or not you are travelling in Europe this Christmas, it is worth checking whether your vaccines are up to date.

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Keeping dementia at bay

WE are often advised to use regular exercise, supplements and a healthy diet to ward off dementia.

But researchers have found the answer could be even simpler, with people in a happy relationship 30 per cent less likely to suffer from the disease.

The results, which take into account 15 studies from the around the world, show married people cut their risk by almost a third, while widowed people increased their chance of developing dementia by 20 per cent.

The British-led report, which used data from more than 800,000 people worldwide, suggested the interaction and care marriages provide was responsible for the



HAPPY RELATIONSHIP: Could be key.

results. Researchers say they believe having someone to talk to keeps the brain active, while loved-ones are more likely to take medication, eat well and visit a doctor if re-

mindful by their partner.

Being in a loving relationship also makes people more likely to eat healthily and to go to the doctor if they are sick. A team at University

College London believe that conversely the stress of bereavement can impair the cognitive performance of widowers.

The researcher's explained, "our findings... are the strongest evidence yet that married people are less likely to develop dementia." They added, "dementia prevention in unmarried people should focus on education and physical health and should consider the possible effect of social engagement as a modifiable risk factor."

Marriage has previously been shown to increase the chance of surviving a heart attack, and lower the risk of high cholesterol, high blood pressure and type two diabetes.

What a pain in the neck

MORE than 80 per cent of back pain sufferers could be cured with a 10-minute treatment, it has been claimed.

Around 90 per cent of those suffering from a slipped disc and given 'gentle electrical energy' in the spine were able to avoid surgery, while 81 per cent were left without pain.

The side-effect free treatment uses electrical currents on the spine to relax muscles, removing pain in just one session, according to the study's lead author, Dr Alessandro Napoli from Sapienza University in Rome.

He explained, "the results have been extraordinary. Patients have been relieved of pain and resumed their normal activities within a day. Following this treatment, inflammation and pain go away."

According to researchers, back pain from a slipped disc is caused when nerves become irritated, forcing the vertebrae to constrict and reducing the space between the spine's discs. They claim a new treatment allows the distance between discs to expand again when the muscles are relaxed.

Dr Napoli, who recently presented his findings at the Radiological Society of

North America's annual meeting, explained, in 10 per cent of slipped disc cases the patient will not recover on their own, sometimes needing surgery. He added, "there's a big gap between conservative treatments for disc compression and herniation and surgical repair, which can lead to infection, bleeding, and a long recovery period."

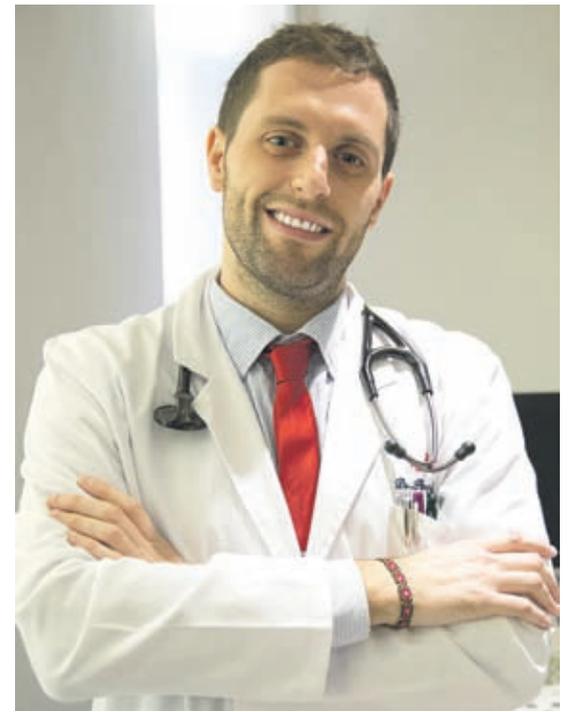
It has not yet been revealed if or when this treatment will become commercially available, however the study's results show back pain sufferers were still pain-free one year after their treatment.

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Migraines and what to do



SPECIALIST: Doctor Luis Perez Belmonte.

IS it normal to suffer a migraine?

Migraines are a frequent cause of headaches but not all headaches are migraines. They can be intense and causing pulsating pain to one or both sides of the head. If you have these symptoms and they persist you should be evaluated by a specialist, who will carry out tests including a blood test and an MRI.

What is the difference between a normal headache and a migraine?

Migraines tend to affect specific areas of the head and can be associated with neuralgic symptoms including visual alterations, numbness or tingling sensation in the face or hands and even, although this is rare, temporary paralysis of the face or other parts of the body. They usually last between 24 and 72 hours and wear off gradually. Patients usually identify their

symptoms quite quickly and as time goes by can learn to prevent or reduce attacks by taking certain measures.

How can I control these attacks?

When they happen I have to stop what I'm doing and if I'm driving it could be dangerous. Attacks can be hard to control but usually if caught early they can be kept in check. Stressful situations should be avoided and those prone to migraines should get plenty of sleep at night and avoid anything they suspect sparks their attacks.

What causes them?

The causes are unknown, but genetics, hormonal changes and certain medicines are believed to be involved. Some patients also relate their attacks to certain foods or drinks including alcohol, smoked foods, chocolate, citrus fruit or caffeine.

If you have any questions for Dr Perez Belmonte, please send them to:
jefemedico@helicopterossanitarios.com

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WE'RE often told 'two heads are better than one' when solving a problem. But does talking worries out actually help?

Actually no, according to one expert. Robin Bailey, a senior lecturer in psychological therapies at the University of Central Lancaster, has told one publication talking about our concerns too much can make us more depressed or anxious.

He says obsessively discussing one issue over and over again without a solution can cause panic and feelings of negativity, whereas conversations resulting in a plan can be positive.

Experts call the phenomenon 'co-rumination,' where a group of people encourage each other to discuss problems to excess and focus on negativity, as well as focusing on hypothetical problems. Mr Bailey says the problem is most likely to affect women.

He told one publication the concept is a "double-edged sword," noting that co-rumination in children aged seven to 15 is shown to produce "high-quality" friendships but also anxiety and depression amongst girls, but not boys. Another study showed sharing problems with co-workers increased the risk of burn out and stress, however.

Mr Bailey emphasised it could still be positive to talk an issue over, though, but that it is important to steer the conversation towards finding a solution which is



DISCUSSION: Can lead to stress.

It's good to talk?

then acted on. He added the benefits of co-rumination were only found in face-to-face conversations, including phone calls and texting, but not when using social media.

The expert claims sharing problems on sites like Facebook or Twitter only results in the negative consequences of the phenomenon, not the positive.

So the next time you call a friend to

discuss something on your mind, according to Mr Bailey, you can help strengthen your friendship and feel better about your worries by focusing on solutions.



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Update on food, drink, entertainments, what's on and weekly happenings



Photo by very bilbao / Twitter

FANTASTIC BAND: Bantastic Fand will play the last concert of the tour in Almería.

NACHO PARA and his group, Bantastic Fand, will complete their nationwide tour in Almería's Cervantes Theatre.

Before the concert, music journalist Joserra Rodrigo will present his book 'Pasión no es una palabra cualquiera' (Passion is no mere word), a collection of his previous writing on rock music and soul.

The rock band will return to Almería to finish the tour promoting their second album 'Welcome to the Desert Town.'

Bantastic Fand is a rock band

Night of rock

made up of seven musicians who released their first album, 'Strong enough to refuse,' in 2014. Founders Nacho Para and Paco del Cerro also formed the 90's group 'The River-tones' that performed at the Doctor Music Festival in 1998 with artists such as Bob Dylan, Deep Purple and Iggy Pop.

This summer they headlined 'The Last Waltz of Frias' festival,

the most prestigious American rock festival in Spain.

Tickets for the performance can be bought from the Cervantes Theatre box office or on the website Kuverproducciones.com for €12 in advance or €14 on the day (box office only).

Joserra Rodrigo's talk is at 7.30pm and the concert starts at 9.30pm.

Royal proclamation

ALMERIA City's 'Three Kings' have been named for next year's 'Fiesta de Los Tres Reyes Magos.'

This year the kings will have a unique resemblance to General Juan Jesus Martin Cabrero, Diego Cruz, musician and music promoter, and Jose Vicente Rull, manager of the HLA Mediterranean Hospital Group. A few days before the main event, the date of which is still to be determined, there will also be a ceremony which will see last year's kings hand over their crowns to the newcomers.

The parade is due to start at 7pm

on January 5 on the Rambla Obispo Orbera road, ending at the amphitheatre on Avenida Federico Garcia Lorca. As is tradition, the kings will throw out sweets to children during the parade, and will be attended by musicians, dancers and extravagant floats.

The next morning, on January 6, it is custom for children to open the presents brought by the Three Kings, who typically fulfilled the role of Santa in Spain until the holiday became more commercialised, although Spaniards now tend to open presents from both.

ENTRIES for the sixth edition of Huerca-Overa's Cycling Race of the Piglet are now open. The race will take place on Sunday, January 7, beginning on the Avda Guillermo Reyna and will consist of 16 laps.

Cyclists will race around an urban circuit which will run through avenues such as the Calle Alamo and Dra Ana Parra, before finishing back on the Avda Guillermo Reyna.

Winners of each of the three categories, male, female and amateur, will receive a stuffed piglet toy among other prizes.

Registration for the event is limited to 120 participants, with entry available via the website www.cronomur.es.

Piglet race to return

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AMIGOS DE LA PINTURA: On display in Mojácar.

Art show opens

THE Garrucha-based painting group Amigos de la Pintura are exhibiting for the first time in Mojácar, in the town's art centre.

The show is made up of 53 pieces, covering a variety of artistic styles from 20 artists.

Led by Graciana Peralta, the groups popular inauguration also featured Mojácar's councillor for Culture,

Raquel Belmonte.

Miss Peralta, the director, stressed that all artists in her association are given the freedom to express themselves.

She said: "everyone in the world can paint, they only need the enthusiasm and desire to find their own artistic expression." Miss Belmonte added: "the Culture Department is open to all groups

that wish to exhibit in Mojácar."

Although there is high demand for next year, she said spaces were still available.

Exhibition space is provided free of charge for artists or art groups wishing to showcase their talents. The free exhibition runs until December 31. Opening hours are 9am - 1pm Tuesday to Friday and 10am - 1pm on weekends.

WHAT better way to celebrate Christmas and New Year than to POP open a bottle of cava with friends?

A sparkling wine with Denominación de Origen (DO) status from Cataluña, cava can be produced throughout Spain, though about 95 per cent is from Penedes (near Barcelona) with Codorníu and Freixenet the major and best known among about 200 manufacturers.

Cava in Catalan means 'cellar' with the name officially adopted in 1970 to distinguish it from French Champagne, though only wines produced in the champenoise traditional method may be labelled cava.

The primary grape is Macabeu with faint floral aromatics and slightly bitter finish; Xarel-lo has stronger floral and fruity aromas while Paralleda has high acidity and citrus flavours, creating a balanced fruity sparkling drink closer to Champagne than Prosecco.



CAVA: Highly versatile when paired with food.

Spanish sparkle

Produced in varying levels of sweetness, the driest cava is brut nature, progressing through brut, brut reserve, seco, semiseco to dulce which is the sweetest.

Dating back as early as 1851, cava can be white (blanc) or rosé (rosat), which is produced by adding small quantities of red wines: Cabernet Sauvignon, Garnacha or Monastrell.

Though some regard cava as an aperitif or a drink served for a toast, in fact it

is highly versatile when food pairing as it can be light and refreshing all the way up to full-bodied.

Its acidity and effervescence will complement a whole range of foods including poultry, cured and smoked meats, fish and seafood in addition to light desserts and spicy Asian dishes.

Cava prices range from a few euros per bottle to €30 for a Gran Reserva, though in all cases I do not believe you will be disappointed.

Happy tasting.

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by Lorenzo Barbareschi



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GRAFFITI: Participants at work during the 2017 competition.

Graffiti contest deadline approaching

ENTRIES to the 2018 Hip Hop Street graffiti contest in Vicar will officially close on December 15.

The popular street art contest will be made up of 23 participants, 11 of whom will participate as individuals and the rest will participate in four groups of three in the group competition.

Finalists will be announced on January 8, before the competition officially takes place outside the Vicar Sports Pavilion on January 20, with the chosen artists creating pieces with spray paint to a free theme.

The prize for the winning group will be €1,200, while in the individual competition; first place will re-

ceive €600 and second place €400.

Hip Hop Street graffiti is open to all artists, with the exception of last year's winners, and entries can be given in person or sent by mail to the House of Youth and Sports of Vicar, located at C / Escritor Fernando Cano Gea 56, CP 04738 Vicar Almería.

Christmas concert

POPULAR choir The Rose Singers will perform their charity Christmas concert on Thursday December 14.

The concert will begin at 7:30pm at Miraflores, Camping Los Gallardos and concert goers will have the opportunity to join the choir in singing carols throughout the evening

There will also be turkey sandwiches and mince pies on hand during the interval and the concert will also hold a raffle, with all proceeds going towards Asociación Amigos Discapacitados (ASADIS) who support disabled children



CHARITABLE: The concert is in aid of ASADIS (Asociación Amigos Discapacitados).

in the Los Gallardos area. Tickets cost €8 each and are available from Forget-Me-Not (Las Buganvillas), Total Entertainment

(Turre), the Camping Los Gallardos shop, choir members themselves, by calling Sue on 950 617 737 or on the door.

Off to a flying start

NEARLY 20,000 tickets for next year's Dreambeach Villaricos festival have been sold in less than a month. The event is the largest electronic music festival in Spain, which saw more than 175,000 people attend during summer 2017.

The organisers of the festival announced that 19,000 tickets were sold for next year in less than a month, after they put a promotional price on five-day tickets which saw more than 4,000 tickets get snapped up in addition to the 15,000 that had already sold.

The festival will feature 'international stars' of EDM (electronic dance music), techno, drum and bass, hip-hop and trance music.

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Local boys done good

A YOUNG architect from Almeria Province has been put in charge of building a huge baseball stadium in Mexico City. Rafael Zamora Toledo was born and raised in Albox before moving on to study architecture in Madrid.

Aged just 27 he is now overseeing construction of the Magdalena Michuca Baseball Stadium in the Mexican capital. It will have the capacity to seat 20,000 spectators and is a massive responsibility for the young man.

Toledo works for a Chicago-based studio, moving to the Windy City three years ago as part of an exchange programme with Madrid Polytechnic.

His talent and Spanish helped land him the baseball stadium job. He plans to stay in Mexico afterwards to help

design a nanotechnology laboratory.

Toledo isn't the only Almerian forging success in Latin America. Businessman Javier Berruezo Segura, CEO of the Tijola-based Promobys Group, has been named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Paraguayan Chamber of Commerce.

His firm have been investing in Paraguay's real estate sector for seven years. It recently acquired one of four World Trade Centre towers in the capital Asuncion. The group owns 22 properties in the country, leasing five of them to the United Nations.

With the award, Segura, aged 39, became its youngest recipient. Spain and Paraguay have forged strong business connections in the past 40 years.



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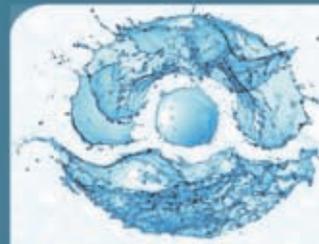
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He's a winner

BRITISH Kickboxing Team Captain Chris Aston, aged 26, also ranked World Champion, was demonstrating his skills at a studio in Albox following last month's victory at the World Association of Kickboxing (WAKO) in Hungary.

The champion hosted a Points Fighting Seminar at the Nemesis Studio in Calle Embajador Inocencio Arias.

Aided by Nemesis coach and 3rd Dan Steve Evans and his son 2nd Dan Lee Evans, Aston instructed students for a full day of Kickboxing and is set to return to Albox in the late spring 2018 to host a Mega Points Fighting Seminar weekend.

The Nemesis studio now run 16 Kickboxing and Kickfit sessions every week and is open to all ages.



KICKING OFF: Steve, left, with Chris and (inset) the trainees.

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Prestigious chess event for Albox

By Harrison Jones

GRANDMASTERS from across the globe took part in a fast chess tournament in Albox this weekend.

The 40th Open International Vicente Bonil saw Grandmasters (GM) from Spain, Venezuela, Argentina, Serbia, Britain and Bulgaria compete over eight rounds.

Murcian GM Jose Carlos Ibarra Jerez took the €1,000 prize, after being crowned champion for the second consecutive year.

He pipped the favourite Eduardo Iturrizaga from Venezuela, who finished second. England's James 'Jim' Plaskett came in sixth.

There are various varieties of fast chess - also known as speed chess - which restricts the time available for players to make moves.



CHECK MATE: Mayor Torrecillas said the event put Albox on Spain's cultural and sporting map.

Francisco Torrecillas, the mayor of Albox, said such activities put the area on "the national map" of culture and sport.

He added that local authorities would continue supporting the event for

years to come.

Entrants from Korea, Peru and Sweden were also among over 100 participants who took part in the Plaza de San Francisco event.

Over €3,500 was handed out in prize money.

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AN OASIS: The villa has a private pool and lots of sunbathing space, a kitchen fitted out to a high standard and a 'romantic' balcony.

BEAUTIFULLY presented three bedroom detached villa on a private plot, just a short walk to the centre of town with shops, bars and restaurants and of course the famous beach.

The property is set behind private gates, once you enter this oasis you will fall in love. The spacious and easy to keep garden has a private pool and plenty of space for sunbathing. Off road, private, secure parking.

The lounge is extremely spacious and airy with access to the staircase to the first floor or straight ahead to the terraces and kitchen. It also has a fireplace for the winter months. The kitchen is fitted to a high standard and has all appliances including a dishwasher, a filtered drinking water tap. A Zanussi washing machine is housed in the utility room which leads off the kitchen. A down-

A lovely property

DETACHED VILLA: With easily maintained garden and pool.

stairs shower room and toilet. Leading from the lounge is a spacious terrace and easily maintained garden (including

lemon, lime, olive and apple trees) a choice of terraces to give an option of different eating areas in or out of the

sun. For safety, the front terrace leading from the lounge has a gate which can be closed to prevent children gaining access to the swimming pool. Easy maintained garden around the whole house.

On the first floor, three double bedrooms, the master bedroom at the front of the house has a 'romantic' balcony with a view of the pool and lovely sea views. There is a comfortable queen sized bed with ceiling fan overhead and a spacious fitted wardrobe with plenty of storage space. The second bedroom has a double bed, dressing table and pine double wardrobe. The third bedroom also has wardrobes and a double bed with a balcony off to the side.

The family bathroom has a bath with shower above offering the perfect choice for all the family. This is a lovely property. It is the perfect holiday or per-

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manent home and we urge you contact us now to arrange to view it.

The property is being sold fully furnished and includes many extras, a log fire, pool table, many terraces.

Sale stats revealed

SEVEN in 10 Spanish buyers think properties are too expensive at present. A new study from Fotocasa revealed that buyers have spent an average of 8 per cent more on purchasing a property this year than in 2016.

The average expenditure now stands at €173,000. In the current climate bargaining is vital and the majority of buyers have some success. Six out of 10 buyers managed to negotiate the price down, by an average of €14,000, roughly 10 per cent of the average

asking price.

The study also shows that people are buying homes faster. Eight out of 10 buyers managed to close the deal in less than one year. Just over 60 per cent did so in less than six months.

For sellers the process is naturally longer, but just over half still managed within half a year.

Three quarters of buyers purchased a home to use as their main residence. Around 13 per cent bought property as a second home and 11 per cent as an investment, typically to be rented out.

By Matthew Elliott

ALMOST half of all the luxury real estate sold in Spain is within the thriving Madrid market. The Spanish capital accounts for 45 per cent of all luxury housing transactions.

Both domestic and international investors favour the city for properties ranging in value from €800,000 to €1.5 million.

The figures were released by Barnes Spain, which also revealed that a substantial proportion of international investors in Madrid are from Latin America, Asia and the Middle East.

Barnes also said that Madrid is distinguished by the quality of its renovations. Location is everything in the capital so, rather than build luxury homes in undesirable areas, people prefer to remodel older homes in prime neighbourhoods.

In 2017 alone Madrid residents have spent more than €2 billion combined on home renovations. Many do so with the specific intention of selling

Tale of two cities

LUXURY: Madrid market favoured by elite.

their property while the market is hot.

Meanwhile thousands of owners are taking advantage of high prices to rent out their homes. The average rent has shot up €17 per square metre this year.

There is a major contrast with Barcelona, which has

seen the prices of luxury homes plummet by 20 per cent since the Catalan crisis began.

Both wealthy foreign nationals, and multi-national corporations are reluctant to buy homes or offices while the uncertainty lingers.

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Winter cold has arrived, time to make your warm fireside sanctuary

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IF you are fortunate enough to have a well constructed fireplace or wood burning heater, it is a wonderful asset for keeping warm during the short days and long nights of winter.

Gardeners have an advantage for having a supply of wood to burn from their own garden while improving the health of their garden.

It is the right time to prune deciduous trees and shrubs in winter and this can be a great source of kindling and logs for your fire.

The Mediterranean trees that provide the best firewood are olives, almond, carob and to a lesser extent pine.

They are readily available from the regular pruning on farmland and larger gardens but if you have some of these trees in your garden you will have ready access to your own supply.

An enclosed fireplace that prevents sparks from flying out makes the range of wood that can be burned extended.

Wood such as pine and cypress can spit out sparks profusely, but burn well with plenty of heat if well managed.

Many other trees and shrubs can also be used such as citrus, mulberry, holm oak, hackberry, grape vine branches and they will give various amounts of heat and lengths of time to burn according to the characteristics of the wood.

It is a long term process to prepare firewood as living wood pruned off the trees is better left a year to dry out before burning to reduce their moisture level. Dead wood pruned off the trees can be used straight away.

It is easiest to cut logs to size when still green as the saw will have less difficulty to cut through them as the moisture acts as a lubricant for the saw.

The opposite is true for splitting wood as the drying process makes sawn logs shrink and crack naturally making split larger logs much easier.

I find it easiest to prune with creating firewood in mind so I cut the branches

to fireplace size as I prune. This makes it easier to transport the prepared logs and branches straight to the wood shed ready made.

Even with all the trees I have, I still need to buy wood to keep the fireplace burning 24/7 during the coldest months but I appreciate that the cost of firewood is usually justified when you understand the time it takes for trees to grow and the work to prepare, store and transport it for the wonder of a living fire to keep warm.

The ash from a fireplace can also be a benefit for the garden as a natural soil improvement. It should not be used in excess as it is very alkaline and is best used in combination with plenty of compost and manures that are more acidic to keep the soil ph balance neutral when adding the ash.

It is great for improving the soil texture which makes it easier to dig and provides loads of carbon which is important for storing nutrition from the other organic fertiliser added to the garden.



REGULAR PRUNING: Cut wood to size for use in the fireplace.

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Puppy love



PUGTASTIC: It is important to socialise your puppy from the get-go.

I HOPE you have not purchased a puppy from the internet or pet shops, if so expect your puppy to have health problems. If you have answered a newspaper advertisement I hope you saw the mother.

If you have a puppy I do hope that your vet has recommended a good puppy class for you to attend if not then in my opinion you have the wrong vet.

Your new member of the family is cuddly, pretty and being spoilt! Your puppy is making toilet mistakes and possibly started to chew up anything in site!

The main problem is that if the

truth be known you really do not know anything about your new member of the family. It is well

recorded that one of the most attentive times is when you buy your puppy. You will listen and remember

what was told to you by the 'breeder' who often knows very little about health, feeding, behaviour or train-

ing. Most if not all have no qualifications and the end result is that you are doing most things wrong.

Your next outing will be your first visit to the vet for inoculations and an examination. You will most probably buy a collar and lead, believe me it will be the wrong type, and toys, please do not buy a harness.

Your vet should be familiar with local training schools and should recommend you to a puppy class which is vital for both you and the puppy's future. A vet that does not recommend a puppy class (many run their own puppy classes) is really out of date therefore you should seek another vet.

So what is a puppy class?

Many people do not think it important to go to a puppy class, however in my opinion it is vital to attend and is good for your morale as you realise you are not alone in your suffering. There is so much you need to know and a good class will first calm you down as well as your puppy. You will now realise that your puppy is perfectly normal and you will be given so much information about correct feeding, handling, advice on the correct collar and leash as so many of you do get it wrong.

THE most wonderful time of the year has finally arrived, but make sure you keep your pets safe so they have a wonderful holiday too.

Although decorations make your house look festive, make sure that they're kept out of reach of animals or the new Santa figurine might just become your dog's new chew toy.

Have a happy howliday

It's also important to keep a watchful eye on fairy lights and power cords. Always tape or fasten the cords down so animals won't get tangled up in them or be tempted to chew on them.

An electrical wire makes a tempting plaything for any animal, but if you get a new puppy or kitten for Christmas, you should be extra careful.

Make sure your Christmas tree is weighed down so it doesn't

get knocked over. Vets also suggest leaving the tinsel off your tree, as it can cause problems if it's eaten.

Certain Christmas foods can also cause problems for your pet's digestion.

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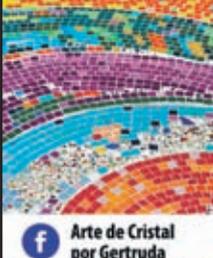
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Illustration of a couple in a romantic embrace.



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Clarkson
Quote of the Week

Telling people at a dinner party you drive a Nissan Almera is like telling them you have Ebola and are about to sneeze."

Some might say...

Fastest Jag
in town

THERE is a new fastest four-door production car on the planet. The Jaguar XE SV Project 8 supersaloon sped around Germany's Nurburgring Nordschleife track in a record time of seven minutes and 21.23 seconds.

The track is regularly used as a speed test for supercars. But the road legal Jaguar XE SV Project 8 would beat famous rivals, including the Ferrari Enzo and Porsche Carrera GT.

With a 600hp engine, the engineers behind Project 8 claim it has a top speed of 200mph and can reach 60mph from a dead start in just 3.3 seconds.

Jaguar call it "the most track-focused road legal Jaguar in history." The British firm are keeping production limited to just 300 vehicles. Prices begin at just under £150,000 (€170,000).

Mini's electric marvel LA's British invasion

By Matthew Elliott

MINI brought its new Electric Concept to the Los Angeles Auto Show this week. It was the US debut for the British brand's latest creation.

Alongside the Electric Concept, Mini also wooed the American audience with 10 different models. Its Ice Blue Edition is designed exclusively for the American market and was paraded alongside the Mini Hardtop 4 and new Mini Convertible.

But Mini's venture into the emerging electric market was the most anticipated moment of the show. The Electric Concept is



Photo by Mini

I NIFTY: Electric Mini will redefine small car market.

powered by a lithium-ion battery, emits zero emissions and is more mobile than the original, while maintaining the distinctive Mini look.

Large scale production of the Mini Electric is slated for early 2019, exactly 60 years after the classic Mini invaded British streets.

It will be released alongside hybrid plug-in model, the Mini Cooper S E Countryman ALL4. The hybrid Countryman can reach a top speed of 78mph on the electric motor alone. It switches into combustion mode when high performance is needed. Speeds of up to

189mph are possible.

Another British brand has raised eyebrows at the LA Convention Centre. Land Rover has released what has been described as the most luxurious Range Rover in history. The SV Autobiography is an SUV with a luxury interior including power-close door, a hot stone massage option, bountiful leg space, 4G wifi, wine bottle holders, and a fridge.

There is a plug-in hybrid version and a 4.4 litre SDV8 turbo-charged diesel option. Prices start at around £170,000 (€193,000). The SV Autobiography comes with its own signature watch for an extra €5,000.

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ROAD TEST by Nick Fletcher

Peugeot 5008 GT Line

MULTI-PURPOSE vehicles are declining in popularity as larger SUV models begin to dominate and a new contender has just been launched which will certainly shake up the SUV sector.

The new Peugeot 5008 is a seven-seater with a lot of visual cachet, a spacious interior and styling cues from its already popular 3008 stablemate. Priced from €27,385 (£24,495), the new 5008 is radically different from its predecessor and is certain to attract a raft of younger family buyers who like charismatic street image yet with day to day practicality.

The 5008 sets a new benchmark for quality cabin materials and standard of fit and finish for the brand and inside and out, this new model has a wow factor.

The engine range mirrors that of the smaller 3008, which uses the same platform, and embraces petrol and diesel units with varying power outputs, with manual and auto gearboxes available.

There are four trim levels and a 30cm (12 inch) display screen is standard on all models, as is a touch-screen info system, climate control and parking sensors.

On the road, the 5008 drives smoothly and is very composed on the corners, with minimal body roll. The car has a smaller than usual steering wheel which looks and feels a little odd but you quickly get

Stats panel

Model:
Peugeot 5008 GT Line
Engine:
2.0 litre diesel
Transmission:
6 speed manual
Performance:
0-100 kph 9.6 seconds, top speed 207 kph (129 mph)
Economy:
21.7 kpl (61.4 mpg)
Emissions:
118g/km

used to it. Driving position is great, with good forward visibility, and very supportive seating and well-balanced suspension combine to make the 5008 very comfortable.

My test model was a top-spec GT Line model with a 2.0 litre 148 hp diesel engine and six-speed manual transmission. The 0-100 kph time of 9.6 seconds is nippy for this class of vehicle, and top speed is 207 kph (129 mph). Fuel economy is very good at 21.7 kpl (61.4 mpg).

The GT Line model, priced at €34,931 (£31,245), has a lot of extra kit including keyless entry and push-button start, adaptive cruise control, leather seats, diamond-cut alloys, panoramic glass roof and multi-point massage facility on driver's seat.

With seats folded, load capacity is a massive 2,150 litres.

The new 5008 takes on established rivals such as the Renault Grand Scenic and newcomers such as the Skoda Kodiak, and is certainly going to give those - and other rivals - a hard time in the sector's sales battle.



Peugeot 5008 GT Line.

Model tested was UK-specification and equipment levels and prices may vary in other markets.

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TINY DANCER: Sir Elton with his luxury wheels.

Rocket Man's revenge

A BENTLEY once owned by Sir Elton John is up for auction. The S1 Continental Sport Saloon is being offered up to wealthy collectors at the Bonhams Bond Street sale.

Rocket Man bought the car in 1976, when it was almost 20 years old. He spent a small fortune renovating the car he described as 'the most beauti-

ful ever designed.'

The 1957 Saloon was soon equipped with air con, power steering and a state-of-the-art stereo system. In the early 2000s he sold it to businessman Sir Alan Sugar at a Christie's sale. Sugar paid more than €200,000 for the car. Later he famously remarked: "Elton John

stitched me up with this Bentley. I bought it at auction, on the phone. Bid against myself I reckon."

Sugar made a loss on the car when he sold it six years later. But in 2017 it is expected to fetch between €450,000 and €550,000 as the classic car market enjoys a lucrative revival.

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UKSPORTSCENE

with Andrew Atkinson

Premier League

SPAIN and Manchester United midfielder Ander Herrera is keeping focused on winning trophies ahead of the 2018 World Cup.

"We are optimistic of fighting for every title this season," said Herrera, ahead of United's derby clash against Manchester City on Sunday.

City are leading the Premier League title race but now that United have a fully fit squad available Herrera warned: "It's great to have players back."

Paul Pogba, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Marcos Rojo and Marouane Fellaini have returned to the fold after injury and Herrera said: "With them in the squad we are stronger."

Meanwhile Spain midfielder and World Cup winner Juan Mata has praised United teammate Marcus Rashford: "Marcus is something special - a great mentality - and great qualities," said Mata.

Liverpool host Everton at Anfield on Sunday with Toffees new boss Sam Allardyce chewing over his hopes after signing an 18-month contract at Goodison Park.

"I've taken over the reins to bring stability - I want to do much more - it's my job to get among the European places, the FA Cup final or League Cup final," said Allardyce.

Premier League fixtures: (Saturday) West Ham v Chelsea; Spurs v Stoke; Burnley v Watford; Newcastle v Chelsea; Swansea v WBA; Crystal Palace v Bournemouth; Huddersfield v Brighton.

Sunday: Manchester United v Manchester City; Southampton v Arsenal; Liverpool v Everton.

We go to the World Cup to try and win - Rashford and Mourinho say England have a chance

2018 World Cup

with Andrew Atkinson

ENGLAND'S 2018 World Cup hopes are alive and kicking with Manchester United ace Marcus Rashford ready to head for Russia for the Finals next summer.

"We are doing our best to go there with a real plan and intensity to try and win the tournament," said Rashford.

England have been drawn with Belgium, Tunisia and Panama in World Cup Group G with their opening game against Tunisia in Volgograd on June 18.

England meet Panama, playing in their first ever World Cup, in Novgorod on June 24, and play their final group match against top seeds Belgium in Kaliningrad on June 28.

Rashford, who has been in the England fold under three

managers in Gareth Southgate, Sam Allardyce and Roy Hodgson, said: "The players are gelling in a whole different way."

Southgate was appointed as England manager in November 2016, and Rashford, axed from England's squad by new Everton boss Allardyce, said: "The set-up, aim and vision of where we want to go is much better."

England appear to have a great chance of reaching the last 16 in the 2018 World Cup and Rashford, 20, said: "We have to build our own plan once we get to the World Cup, to try and win it."

England qualified for the World Cup without losing a game in qualifying and Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho believes they go to Russia with hope.

"England must have a chance. There's a great generation of players at different ages and with different qualities,"

said Mourinho.

"They have good experience at club level, playing in the Premier League and in the Champions League. England have great potential," said Mourinho.

With the busy December schedule - United were in action against CSKA Moscow in the Champions League on Tuesday - and Rashford said: "It's great to have all the games. We take one game at a time."

United, who last won the Premier League title under Sir Alex Ferguson in 2013, finished sixth last season; winning the League Cup and Europa League under Mourinho.

United host arch rivals and Premier League leaders Manchester City on Sunday; Bournemouth on December 13; travel to West Brom on December 17 and play Bristol City in the League Cup quarter final on December 20.

"By the time it gets to Christmas, it calms down a bit. You

start to see pathways - to certain tournaments - and trophies," said Rashford.

Rashford, who joined United's Academy aged seven, said: "You don't start to think about England until you start playing in the England youth team. That's when you start to dream about moments like this."

Rashford has been encouraged by England 1966 World Cup winning star and United legend Sir Bobby Charlton, 80, selected for four World Cups, who won 106 caps.

"Someone who has won it before - that's the biggest inspiration we can have as players," said Rashford.

Despite avoiding 2018 World Cup joint-favourites Brazil and Germany in the Group draw England boss Southgate was cautious.

"We've been good at writing teams off - and getting beat - we're going to make sure we're prepared," said Southgate.

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VALENCIA suffered their first defeat of the season as they were beaten 1-0 by 10-man Getafe on Saturday. The result leaves Los Ches five points adrift of league leaders Barcelona and just a point ahead of third placed Atletico Madrid.

Costa de Almería's best guide to local sport

TO READ MORE

THE Men's and Ladies' Singles Costa Almeria Area (CAA) bowls Singles Championships were played over several days this year, as opposed to several months in previous years. The new knockout competition over three days proved to be very successful.

The Ladies Singles Knockout competition was played at Indalo Bowling Club from Sunday 12 until the final on November 14, with 22 entries from Indalo, Almeria and Cabrera Bowling Clubs taking part.

The final was between Chris Parkinson, Ladies Captain of Almeria BC against the formidable Barbara Roscoe of Indalo BC. This was always going to be a tough game as both players

had convincing wins in their semi-finals against Barbara Davies and Linda Lester both from Indalo BC respectively.

Barbara Roscoe won well, but the result did not reflect the standard that Chris had played. Many times, she was holding winning shot/s until Barbara came in with brilliant shots to scuttle Chris's effort. All supporters appeared to enjoy the game and well done to both players.

The Men's Singles entries were very good, with 43 players taking part. Initially the venue was Mojácar BC (MBC) but changed to facilitate the numbers to Almeria BC (AL-BC).

The preliminaries to bring the numbers down to 32 players took place before the competi-



WINNER: Men's singles winner Reg Birmingham. • SMILES: Ladies' winner Barbara Roscoe.

tion and a competitive contest was had right up until the semi-finals and final, which took place on Sunday, November 26.

One of the semi-finals was between a very new player

from ALBC, Stephen Byatt, who had an amazing successful route to this stage beating some very good players. Because of Stephen's efforts, this game had the prospects of a classic

against his very experienced ALBC colleague Chris Ewer.

Unfortunately for Stephen, who played well, Chris was playing his top game and won comfortably. The other semi-fi-

nal featured two more ALBC players Reg Birmingham and Austin Crilly, with Reg taking an early lead.

Although Austin fought hard to close the gap to three shots on the 19th end, Reg continued to pressurise to win a great game.

The Final between Chris Ewer and Reg Birmingham was another quality game. Both played extremely good bowls, but Reg never let Chris go ahead and won by four shots.

On completion of the final, Ruth Compton, the CAA Delegada, thanked all players who took part, the umpires and markers who without the games would not be able to be played.

She then presented trophy and prizes to the finalists.

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