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Clothes off the back of a lorry

A truck driver for a well-known Spanish clothing brand has been arrested in Alicante for stealing merchandise for years before he delivered it to shops.

According to the National Police, officers also arrested two men who regularly bought the goods at well below their real value.

A van was intercepted near Avenida Médico Ricardo Ferre de Alicante when police noticed the occupants 'reacting strangely to their presence'.

The passenger was found to be wanted by a court for a gender violence offence, which the officers thought at first was the reason for their



Photo: National Police

nervousness, but when they looked in the back they found six boxes of clothing with the labels still attached, worth a total of €8,000. Neither the driver nor his

companion could give a convincing explanation as to where the garments had come from, and they became more nervous until one of them admitted that about twice a week for the last three years, a clothing delivery driver had been selling him five or six boxes from his truck, which he sold on through second-hand clothing applications.

The officers arrested them for continuing theft, and the outstanding warrant for one of them, and then handed over the stolen clothing to the logistics warehouse.

The suspects, who are aged between 27 and 42 and all Spanish, were put before a court in Alicante.

Clocks spring forward

Don't forget clocks go forward one hour this Saturday night/Sunday morning. At 02.00 it will be 03.00



Photo: Freepik

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Nine arrested for human trafficking offences

Nine people suspected of human trafficking offences have been arrested after warrants were executed in Spain, Kent and across the West Midlands on March 20.

The warrants were executed by officers from West Midlands Police working with the West Midlands Regional Organised Crime Unit (WMROCU), Spanish National Police and the National Crime Agency (NCA) after a lengthy, detailed and meticulous investigation into an escort agency that offered paid sexual services in the United Kingdom and Spain.

It is alleged that the heads of the organised crime group controlled and profited greatly from these sexual services, trafficking women within the United Kingdom in order to fulfil demand.

It was in Madrid that Spanish National Police arrested a man and a woman, both aged 43, thought to have control over the business.

Simultaneous warrants were conducted in the West

Midlands and beyond.

In Kent a 68-year-old man was arrested and a 50-year-old man in Tamworth.

Three men, aged 28, 29 and 55, were arrested in Sandwell and two men, aged 41 and 46, were arrested in Birmingham.

All were detained on suspicion of conspiracy to control prostitution, conspiracy to traffic within the UK for sexual exploitation and money laundering offences.

All nine remain in custody for questioning and extradition proceedings for the man and woman arrested in Spain have begun.

Detective Constable Steve Oldbury said: "The warrants executed today are the result of a long running investigation into the activities of this organised crime group.

"We believe the group has netted thousands of pounds a week with funds regularly and illegally transferred out of the country.

"At the heart of this criminality is the women who are alleged to have been coerced



Photo: National Police

and intimidated into performing sexual services.

"Their welfare is of the utmost concern.

"We work with partner agencies who are able to safeguard these women and provide ongoing support."

Neil Keeping, National Crime Agency Regional Manager for Spain, said: "We know that organised

crime groups target victims, both in the UK and overseas, for sexual exploitation purposes.

"Victims are often seeking a better life, but are instead forced into the sex industry where they are controlled and exploited by offenders who treat them as commodities in the pursuit of profit.

"Sexual exploitation is one of the most commonly reported forms of UK-based exploitation and is extremely harmful for adult victims.

"We are grateful to our partners in Spain who have assisted West Midlands Police with this investigation, and will continue to work with them as extradition proceedings begin."

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Hashish lab dismantled

A laboratory for making a concentrated form of hashish resin called rosin was dismantled in Los Alcázares as part of a National Police operation which detained 17 people.

According to a spokesman for the force, the gang managed six sizeable marijuana plantations and two cannabis associations in Murcia region, distributing drugs using various means, including vehicles with hidden compartments to take vacuum-packed buds to other provinces.

The lab had all the equipment required to extract rosin from buds of marijuana by procedures which varied temperature, pressure and time to obtain solid products and liquids which could be vaped.

In February, officers searched 11 addresses in the region and noted the gang took significant security precautions, having seized an electric stun gun, GPS de-



Photo: National Police

vices, frequency inhibitors, two air pistols and a National Police jacket, which are usually used to steal drugs from other gangs, the spokesman noted.

They also seized almost 2,000 cannabis plants, 32

kilos of marijuana buds, 1.5kg of rosin and various quantities of hashish and amphetamines.

The 17 people arrested included two detained in Alicante province and two in Barcelona.

Tip shops Polop pot

A tip-off from the public and enquiries with resident communities enabled Guardia Civil to dismantle a marijuana

plantation in Polop de la Marina. Officers located the detached house in an urban-

isation in late November, a police spokesman said loud noise from air conditioning units and a strong smell of marijuana were coming from the property.

Stake-outs and further enquiries confirmed their suspicions and, after identifying the vehicle that was being used there, a suspect was linked with the investigation, he explained.

Moreover, the house was illegally using electricity at a rate of up to 58,000 watts during the nights.

Officers searched the villa on February 7 and arrested a Lithuanian man on suspicion of public health offences and electricity fraud.



Photos: Guardia Civil

They seized 389 cannabis sativa plants, 2,485 kilos of prepared marijuana, weighing and packaging materials and a car.

The spokesman noted that bottles of carbon dioxide

were being used to accelerate the growth of the plants.

The suspect was released on bail, subject to precautionary measures, by a Villajoyosa court.



Three arrested following migrant deaths at sea

A joint operation between the National Police and Guardia Civil, supported by Europol, has led to the arrests of two men and a woman who allegedly forced at least 37 migrants to jump from a boat, five of whom drowned.

The suspects are accused of carrying people smuggling activities, which resulted in deaths.

The presumed members

of the smuggling network allegedly facilitated the travel of migrants, in boats, between Kenitra (Morocco) and Cádiz.

The joint investigation resulted in the discovery of the precise location of the boat and the identification of the itinerary of this smuggling activity, according to a Europol spokesperson.

The investigation led to the identification of three

suspects, allegedly responsible for the death by drowning of five migrants who were thrown into the sea in November 2023.

The three suspects allegedly forced the migrants – through violence and intimidation – to jump off of a high-speed boat into the water.

They threatened them with machetes, forcing their passengers to jump into the

sea, knowing that there were strong currents active and that many of the migrants were not able to swim.

A boat crew, which was in the area at the time, managed to save five migrants out of the 37 on board, all of whom were forced to jump into the water.

Later on, the authorities recovered the bodies of five migrants, who were also travelling on this boat.

The migrants had paid between €3,000 and €12,000 for this risky journey to Spain.

On the action day, Europol deployed two analysts to Spain to support the national authorities with technical expertise, to cross-check operational information against Europol's databases, and to provide leads to investigators in the field.

Calp News

Aguas de Calpe begins the remodelling of the Barranc desalination plant to improve its performance

Aguas de Calpe has begun work on the Barranc Salat desalination plant. The aim is to improve the water and electrical efficiency of the plant, while guaranteeing its production capacity in the event of a possible increase in the salinity of the water.

The work consists of modernising this desalination plant, which is more than 23 years old and consists of two units: Barranc Salat I and Barranc Salat II. The plan is to renovate the Barranc Salat I plant, which

was built in 2000 and has a capacity of 8,000 cubic metres per day, and to add another water rack to the Barranc Salat II plant, which was built in 2002 and has a capacity of 3,000 cubic metres per day.

"These works will guarantee the production of the Barranc Salat desalination plant and therefore the supply of drinking water to the population," said the mayoress, Ana Sala, who highlighted the fundamental role played by this plant in providing this service during periods of high water consump-

tion, such as summer. She added that with these works, the desalination plant "will also have lower energy costs and water losses will be reduced".

On the other hand, the Barranc Salat II plant will be extended with a new water rack that will be kept in reserve and will be used in case of breakdown or maintenance work on the other racks of the plant, thus guaranteeing the production capacity of the plants.

The work has a budget of 1.5 million euros and is expected to be completed this year.



Makeover for town park

Calpe council is to completely refurbish the Parc dels Garrofers park, next to the Casa de Cultura, at a cost of €230,989.

The project is 100% funded by the provincial government as part of the Plan +Cerca 2023 and is expected to take four months to complete.

The work will focus on the replacement of the children's play equipment and the installation of a shock-absorbing surfacing.

The existing equipment in the park will also be replaced with new benches and litter bins.

In the lower part of the park 'there is currently a circuit of fitness equipment which is not being used as it is in poor condition due to the length of time it has been in use', according to the town hall.

It is planned to remove the existing equipment and install a new fitness circuit 'with four fitness elements and two elements for users



with reduced mobility'.

In addition, a wooden pergola will be installed in a paved area with tables and benches.

The park is currently surrounded by a brick wall and a steel fence; the highest part of the fence is made of wood and needs to be replaced due to its poor condition.

Mulberry trees will be planted to provide shade in the children's play area.

Finally, the public toilets will be refurbished.

Councillor for urban planning, infrastructure and urban quality, Juan Manuel del Pino said: "This park had become outdated, especially the play area and its paving, which were in a very bad state.

"The works will improve the park as a whole, adding more trees and improving a park which, given its location, is used by many people."

Helping businesses create jobs

Improvements to Rojales' La Bernada industrial estate are being made by the town hall at a cost of over €160,000.

The work involves replacing pavements and disabled access, resurfacing streets, installing electric vehicle charging points, setting up security cameras, signposting, restoring green areas and creating a business directory and a website.

This will take about two and a half months and should be finished at the end of May if all goes to plan, said councillor for works and services Jesús Martínez.

The town hall has applied for a subsidy from the regional government's busi-



ness competitiveness institute (Ivace) to help cover the expense, having invested about €600,000 in recent years to modernise local industrial estates.

The councillor said the project is vital to keep creating employment and La Bernada has a wide variety of businesses offering diverse jobs and services.

Call for 'equal access to water'

Valencia and Murcia want a 'national pact for water', which would see more of the precious resource brought from wetter areas of Spain to the dry south-east of the country.

The presidents of the two regions – Carlos Mazón and Fernando López Miras, both from the Partido Popular (PP)

– have signed a manifesto calling for the country's water resources to be 'linked up'.

They noted that 'excesses' of water in the north and west of Spain should be 'brought to where it is really needed'.

Full report in Thursday's

Costa Blanca News



Sports hotel construction closes in on finish line

By Irena Bodnarec

Works on the four-star €15 million sports hotel located within the Camilo Cano sports complex in La Nucia are entering the final phase.

Once completed it will enable athletes and sports teams to stay and train in the same location without having to travel.

The 9,900 square metre building will have 142 rooms, including two suites, distributed across three towers, a large hall

with a cafeteria, restaurant and multipurpose dining room, which can be divided into three separate spaces that can also be used for conferences, meetings and other events.

Mayor Bernabé Cano visited the site, alongside the hotel director Juan Balerdi and several councillors.

Once completed, the private project will generate 100 jobs, benefitting the local community, noted a council spokesperson



Walkers or burglars?

A burglary of a house in Orihuela's rural district of La Aparecida has been pinned on three suspects arrested nearby after the rapid response of National Police based in the city.

Officers were sent to the house, where several people had broken in, at about 13.00 on March 5, but the intruders had fled before they arrived, according to a police spokesman.

Several patrols joined a search operation that soon managed to locate two suspects who seemed nervous when they were interviewed by officers and met the description of the assailants which they had been given.

Several residents of the area also gave descriptions of the alleged burglars, two women and one man, and the tools they used to break in, as well as how they had got into the house.

The search was stepped up to find the third suspect, who was caught within minutes after she had left the other two in an attempt to evade the police.

The suspects were interviewed but the officers said their stories did not make much sense and were contradictory, claiming they had been going for a walk in the area.

The police also managed to recover the stolen goods from the burglary.

The man and two women detained, who were aged between 19 and 36 and all Spanish with 'a multitude' of records for different offences, were handed over to a court in Orihuela.,

The investigation remains open because the methods used in this burglary were similar to others committed previously, so the suspects' involvement in other crimes has not been ruled out.

Flag of hope

By Irena Bodnarec

Two years ago, Thomas Judge embarked on a truly heroic journey to raise awareness about mental health, walking 2,378km from Teesside to Benidorm, arriving in the resort on November 17, 2022 – British fancy dress day.

He was greeted by the mayor Toni Pérez, British vice-consul Liz Bell and a BBC film crew as well as a legion of supporters.

Thomas returned to Benidorm this week where he once again met the mayor, presenting him with the framed Spanish flag that accompanied him on his journey in recognition of the support he received – which went straight on the shelf of his office and in exchange, the mayor presented him with a photograph taken on the day he completed his epic walk, with the flags clearly visible.

Likewise, the St George Cross flag was presented to British vice-consul Sara Munsterhjelm, who was also present at the mayor's office in Benidorm.

The walk Thomas did was to raise funds for First Contact UK Mental Health with the aim of opening a respite facility and it looks like this will become a reality in the not-too-distant future here in Benidorm.

Photo: Town hall



Donation to Protección Civil

By Pat Bramah

Last Thursday, March 21 at the Marina Alta Costa Blanca Floral Club (MACBFC) floral demonstration meeting, a donation was presented to the Protección Civil, Teulada/Moraira to buy necessary items for the ambulance service. The money was raised from our Christmas hamper charity raffle, which our members and guests so generously supported.

The photo shows our guest demonstrator Lynne Sharpe, who made the presentation on behalf of the club to Jesus Jeners Ferrers representing Protección Civil.

For photographs of Lynne's floral demonstration check out our Facebook page: Marina Alta Cesta Blanca Floral Club.

For further information about the MACBFC please see the website at www.marinaaltafloralclub.es.



Photo: MACBFC

Checks – then fines – for lawbreaking scooter riders

A campaign to inform scooter riders about the regulations they have to abide by has been launched by Torrevieja town hall.

Local police chief Óscar Cartón said they will be setting up specific checkpoints for these personal mobility vehicles.

First they will inform riders of their obligations – then, if they fail to observe the rules, officers will start to issue fines ranging from €80 to €1,000.

Full report in Thursday's



Photo: D Jones

Costa Blanca News

International stamp collectors fair in Calpe

Since last December, the philatelic societies of Calpe and Benissa have joined forces to organise an international philatelic stamp collecting event - choosing Calpe tennis club as the venue and every third Sunday of the month as the date - with the intention of making it one of the main events of its kind in the Valencian region. They want this cultural and philatelic activity to be attended by all foreign residents living in the area, from one end of the province of Alicante to beyond Valencia.

The gathering is gradually growing, and three meetings have already been held - all of them starting at 10.00, with the

aim of exchanging, buying or selling stamps and philatelic documents, while creating friendships around the post-

age stamp and its collecting. This international stamp exchange is already preparing its next event on April 21, and does not intend to close in summer, given the large influx of tourists to our coasts, where philately could be one more alternative to those summer days of sun and beach.

The philatelic societies of Calpe and Benissa are calling on all philatelists and collectors in general who wish to participate to do so, simply by going to the Club de Tennis Calpe (Partida Gargasindi), every third Sunday of the month from 10.00 onwards.

Photo: Calpe town hall

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Auditions done and dusted

By Leigh Humphries

The Rojasles Pantomime Group recently held auditions in preparation for its 2024 production of Dick Whittington.

A number of enthusiastic auditionees gave their all to secure the role they wanted, and, as a result, an entertaining time was had by everyone involved. Competition was stiff and the panel faced some very difficult decisions.

After much deliberation - the wealth of talent in the group was certainly outstanding - the panel agreed on the cast list and all the hopefuls were notified. As this pantomime draws on a large cast, everyone who applied was given a role or in some cases, multiple roles.

Soon after the auditions, the group also enjoyed a well-organised social event in

the form of 10-pin bowling followed by lunch. Of course, the panto and upcoming read through dominated a very cheerful and excitable afternoon.

Pantomime is a very traditional, British form of theatre and the classic story of Dick Whittington contains no end of humorous lines, slapstick comedy, singing and dancing and a cat with lots of cattitude!

We are always looking for new members to join our happy crew, and the planning is now being put in place for extra hands to help with building and painting scenery, making props, helping backstage, etc.

Should you wish to join Rojasles Pantomime Group, please email rojalespanto@yahoo.com. You will receive a warm welcome.



The bowling teams

Photos: RPG

All welcome to NAC Divine Service

The New Apostolic Church in Denia will be holding their 'Divine Service' this Easter Sunday March 31. We will be celebrating Easter with the special service beginning at 11.00 accompanied by many musical interludes, soloists, and musical contributions. The service will be held in German and simultaneously translated into Spanish and English.

Afterwards there will be an 'Easter party' with warm

meatloaf and drinks, followed by coffee and cake. During the meal and afterwards, we will be entertained with music.

There is something for everyone, for young and old, for all tastes, to celebrate this Easter. Everyone is very welcome!

Address: New Apostolic Church Denia, Camí Alt de Dénia a Xàbia, 8, 03700 Dénia (near Hotel Port Denia).



Fun musical therapy by The Jukes

Once again a wonderful afternoon enjoyed not only by the residents of Benimeli Residential but also the performers, The Jukes of El Verger.

A concert of old and classic songs to get the audience

dancing and singing along, which is therapeutic as well as great fun.

The Jukes of El Verger are a group of people who get together and enjoy playing for fun, they also do many free

concerts during the year for a variety of local charities and organisations.

Pictured (l-r) Pete, Jo, Pat, Bob, Gilly, Lynn and Richard with our leader Cazzie kneeling.

Photo: Cazzie Millington.

For full reports on social and cultural events see Friday's **Costa Blanca News**

The sky's the limit at Costa Blanca Astronomical Society

By Christine Ord

The Costa Blanca Astronomical Society take great pleasure in inviting you to a public talk, to be given by Professor Alan Fitzsimmons from Queens University in Belfast.

Professor Fitzsimmons is an expert in the field of asteroid and cometary science. He uses world-leading observatories to measure the physical properties of solar system bodies and their composition.

You may remember a couple of years ago there was much speculation about the origin of an extra solar system visitor called 'Oumuamua'. Some even speculated that it was an alien spacecraft visiting our solar system. Professor Fitzsimmons was involved in the observation and analysis of this object as well as other interstellar visitors in the past.

His talk will tell us about these objects and is titled 'Interstellar objects - the real aliens'

He describes his talk as follows: "Our modern theories of planet formation imply our Milky Way should be awash with orphan comets and asteroids. Yet none had been seen in cen-

turies of watching the skies. All this changed in 2018 and 2019, when interstellar objects 'Oumuamua' and 'Borisov' were discovered passing through our solar system. This talk will give the background to the new field of investigation, how we uncovered the secrets of these messengers from afar, and how they opened up new investigations into the formation and evolution of planetary systems. We will end with looking ahead to next year, when the next great leap in our ability to find these mysterious objects will occur."

The talk will take place on Wednesday, April 3 at the Casa de Cultura in Denia - Sala De Actos, first floor at 19.00.



Professor Alan Fitzsimmons

Everyone is welcome.

The language will be English and there is no need to reserve seating. If you have any questions, please telephone the secretary of the group on 671 152 686.



Oumuamua

Photo: CBAS



U3A Vall del Pop - Ladies at Lunch

By Sally Ellis

Tuesday, March 19 was the festival of San Jose, in Spain, Fallas and Spanish Father's Day, so Ladies at Lunch were extremely lucky to be hosted by the restaurant Nou Portet, Murla, on such an important and busy day.

They catered for 26 ladies beautifully. The staff were very attentive, friendly and entertaining. Our waitress made sure we all received our chosen drinks, and checked all our starters and main courses and informed the kitchen. Entremeses (appetizers) of aioli, bread and empanadas (small savoury pastries) arrived, followed by a variety of pre-ordered salad, soup or crepe starters. We

went on to enjoy our tasty main courses and desserts.

As you would expect there was lots of chatter and laughter as we all caught up with one another.

We all sang 'Happy Birthday' to Ann Allen-Foord, celebrating her birthday on March 20.

A really good fun and uplifting afternoon was had by everyone.

Our next Ladies at Lunch event is Tuesday, April 16. A venue is yet to be confirmed.

If you would like to join our U3A activities and events please head to our website u3avaldelpop.com for more information about membership.

Photos: U3A VdP



New Scrabble club starting

As well as the successful weekly quizzes at 'El Bar S C' in San Cayetano, the owners, Sally and Caroline, are now planning another event to tax the brains of their customers! Mike Shail, who already runs a successful weekly Scrabble club in Campoverde on Friday mornings, has volunteered to host a monthly Scrabble session at 'El Bar S C' in San Cayetano.

The first meeting of 'Mike's Scrabble Club' will be on Thursday, April 4 from 15.00-17.00 and, if successful, will continue on the first Thursday of every month. Mike says, "If you enjoy playing word games such as crosswords, Wordsearch or Wordle or like watching 'Lingo' or 'Countdown' on TV, Scrabble could be for you. There is no competition, play

is just for fun, and no experience is necessary. 'Scrabble' boards and tuition will be provided, although you can bring your own board if you wish.'

To find out more please contact Mike Shail by email at mikeshail45@googlemail.com or telephone 722 445 006. To book a table at 'El Bar S C' ring 711 030 590 or email elbarsc4@gmail.com

For full reports on social and cultural events see Friday's **Costa Blanca News**

Easter fun at



Busot Animal Rescue Concern (BARC) have a few events in the pipeline to help raise funds for their animal sanctuary.

For Easter Saturday, March 30 they have arranged a wonderful evening of good food, entertainment and fun from 19.30 at the Cinco Hermanos restaurant in Busot. The menu is varied and delightful. The musical duo, Laura Marco and Juan Tarancón is professional and expansive. There will also be a raffle.

Make a decorated hat and join in the Easter bonnet competition, or just sit back, eat, drink and be entertained. Tickets are €25 which includes a three-course-meal with wine/ water. Please reserve your tickets from Pat on 630 892 513 or Steve on 677 093 585.

In conjunction with Busot town hall there will be a padel tournament held on April 3 and 14 (09.00 - 16.00) with qualifiers going on to the next round on April 20 and 21 (10.00 - 13.00). All levels are welcome and participants must be registered



by April 6. Registration is €5 which covers the court cost as well as a donation to BARC Call Sharon 711 011 731, Derek on 711 058 596 or Jesus on 670 096 474.

They have a rastro organised in Busot for Saturday, April 20 from 10.00-14.00 at the Plaza de la Generalitat. Tables are €5. Call Patsy on 641 845 388 to reserve a space.

On May 5 they are organising a sponsored 12km mountain walk of medium difficulty which will take about five hours to complete.

On May 18 there will be a family fun day from 13.00-18.00 at Barcland.

For further information on any of these events or about the animal sanctuary please contact Pat Earle on 630 892 513

Photos: BARC

BARC EASTER CELEBRATION

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Freemasons BBQ fundraiser

By Irena Bodnarec

On Saturday, March 16, the Freemasons Santa Faz Lodge 48 held a charity walk along El Campello promenade, in which 36 people took part, with 25 of



Organisers Barry and Gill Hovell Photo: I Bodnarec

them sponsored. The walk was followed by a barbecue at The International Club.

The event was organised by charity events organiser Barry Hovell with the assistance of wife Gill, who helped organise the delicious accompaniments to the barbecue, raising over €2,000 which will go into the Lodge charity account.

Before tucking in, mason Steven Fynn volunteered to have his 35 year-plus beard shaved off by hairdresser Tracy Pepper to raise additional funds, which amounted to around €300.



Steven Fynn with Tracy before and after his shave

Chefs for the day were Nick Carter, Nick Liddicoat, Bryan Green and Bob Alchin, who did a splendid job flipping burgers, turning sausages, ribs and chicken



The barbecue chefs

Photos: Freemasons

pieces - which all went down with gusto.

Entertainer Craig Smith got the afternoon into full swing, singing a medley of songs on the outside terrace, to great applause from all those present.

Ivan Beckett, Worshipful Master of Santa Faz Lodge 48 has chosen MABS Cancer Support as the chosen beneficiary

this year. So far, they have held a Burn's Night supper and still have a murder mystery night, which is taking place on May 17, plus a ladies night.

The Freemasons meet every second Monday of the month between February and May and October to December.

For enquiries please email sec48@glpvalencia.com

For full reports on social and cultural events see Friday's **Costa Blanca News**

RAF Association AGM

By Bob Hunt

On Thursday, March 14, members of the North Costa Blanca Branch of the RAF Association met at the Gran Sol restaurant in Calpe for their annual general meeting. Members were welcomed by the branch president, Cameron Gair, and the branch chairman, Bob Hunt. The dedication of the RAF Association was read by membership secretary, Jane Morley and the branch priest, Fr

Jim Booker read a short prayer for the guidance of the meeting.

This was a smoothly run meeting where committee members presented their reports on the 2023 activities, the annual accounts were presented and approved, and committee members were elected for the next 12 months. An excellent occurrence during the meeting was that Fr Jim Booker volunteered to take on the role of

branch welfare officer, filling an appointment that had been vacant for the past 12 months. This was an enjoyable meeting where all proposals were approved.

Following the meeting, branch members enjoyed an excellent lunch provided by the staff of the Gran Sol restaurant.

The photos show members of the committee during the meeting and members enjoying their post-meeting lunch.



Benitachell church Easter services

By Lorraine Henshaw

Join us this Easter at the English speaking Church on the Mountain, Cumbre del Sol, Benitachell for wonderful Easter worship, songs and free refreshments afterwards.

Easter services will be held Good Friday, March 29; and Easter Sunday, March 31 - both at 11.00. Everyone is welcome, including children and well behaved dogs! You can also join us every Sunday for our regular church service at the same time, 11.00.

A warm welcome will always be there for you!

We are an inter-denominational church, and you will find us at El Puig, the large, white and pale green building, home to the Protección Civil, just behind the Vapf sales office and right next to the Lady Elizabeth School.

For more information, further directions and map, visit www.benitachellcf.com, [Facebook.com/Benitachell](https://www.facebook.com/Benitachell) Christian Fellowship or call us on 678 980 151.

Arts society lecture

By Linda Cleary, TASMA

The next presentation by The Marina Alta Arts Society (TASMA) is entitled 'Zaha Hadid, architectural superstar' by lecturer Dr Helen Sijling.

Dame Zaha Hadid was a star architect, a teacher at many prestigious universities, an artist and a designer. She was born in Iraq and her reputation was global, but she made Britain her home. She died on March 31, 2016 at the age of 65, at the peak of her career, working on 36 projects.

However, her fame came late in her career and, for many years, she did not receive assignments though she won many competitions. She was a woman of extraordinary perseverance and courage who, in the end, smashed the crystal ceiling of the world of architecture. Historians of the future will recognise her as one of the most important architects of the early 21st century.

The Arts Society Marina Alta

(TASMA) will be presenting the story of Zaha Hadid's illustrious career on Wednesday, April 3 at two locations:

1. Teulada: Salones Canor, Cami del Assagador de Canor, 03725 Teulada.

Doors open at 10.00 with the presentation starting at 11.00.

2. Jávea: Casa de Cultura, Plaça de Baix 6, 03730 Jávea.

Doors open at 18.45. The presentation starts at 19.30.

Members have free entry for both events, while visitors pay €15 at each venue.

TASMA lectures are brought to you by our sponsors Blevins Franks, Inmobres Calpe and Currencies Direct. They provide benefits to our members and help us support children and young adults with learning difficulties at Colegio Público de Educación Especial Gargasindi, Calpe.

For more information on TASMA, please check our website: www.artsocma.org

What's on this Easter near you

Villajoyosa

Villajoyosa's 10 Easter brotherhoods (cofradías) will be parading their floats amongst the faithful and visitors leading up to Easter Sunday (March 31).

The streets of the town will relive the fervour and passion of the season, with the processions featuring different statues/sculptures on each float, in addition to liturgical celebrations organised by the board of brotherhoods and Holy Week brotherhoods, in collaboration with the town hall.

Following the parades of Palm Sunday and the Monday procession by the Nuestra Señora de la Caridad brotherhood, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Cristo de la Fe brotherhood are the main protagonists of today's (Wednesday) silent parade, which starts at 22.00. It will see devotees accompany a statue/sculpture of Christ on the cross from San Bartolomé hermitage through the centre of the town, where all lights are extinguished leaving just that of the one that illuminates the face of Jesus. Only the rhythm of a drum breaks the silence of the procession.

It is the turn of the Ecce Homo brotherhood on Thursday at 21.00, when they carry the float of the Senyor de la Canyeta from Camino Viejo de Valencia to the Virgen de la Asunción church.

On Friday at 06.00 the Santa Mujer Verónica brotherhood leaves from the Virgen del Carmen church and parades until Plaza de la Generalitat, where, with the first rays of the sun, the Verónica float will be the main protagonist of an

emotional encounter with the Nazareno float, which will have been brought down from Nuestra Señora de la Asunción church. The meeting of the two statues/sculptures represents Veronica's gesture of wiping Jesus' face whilst he was carrying the cross to Calvary.

Later at 19.30 there is a solemn and silent procession with the Santo Entierro, which passes through the streets of the town. This procession will feature the brotherhoods of Jesús Cautivo, Santa Mujer Verónica, Nuestro Padre Jesús Nazareno, Cristo de la Fe, Nuestra Señora de la Caridad, Santo Sepulcro and Nuestra Señora de los Dolores.

Easter Sunday's Resurrection parade will feature the Resurrección y Gloria brotherhood, who will leave the San Bartolomé hermitage at 11.15 with the Jesús Resucitado float, and, at the same time, the Virgen de los Dolores brotherhood will leave Nuestra Señora de la Asunción church with the statues/sculptures of the Virgen de Gloria, in preparation for the 'mother and son' encounter at the Barbera finca, situated at the junction of Calle Barranquet and Avenida de Benidorm.

La Nucía

Today, Wednesday, March 27 there will be a concert of 'Sacred Music' at the town's church starting at 20.00 with the participation of the choirs 'Coral de la Unió Musical La Nucía', 'Agrupació Coral de Benidorm' and la 'Coral Oscar Esplá de Mutxamel'. The concert will be conducted by

Román Lorente, choir director UM La Nucía and will be free of charge.

On Maundy Thursday (March 28) there is a theatrical staging of 'The Passion' at 23.00. The nocturnal open-air theatrical performance, which this year celebrates its 24th edition, is an interpretation of the 12 scenes of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ. As a novelty this year 2024 a new scene will be added - 'La Negaciones de San Pedro' (The Denials of St Peter).

With the stage of the steps of the Church and Calvari in the background 'La Passió' represents the last 12 scenes of Jesus Christ before being crucified, combining light, theatre, music and fire. Both the Plaça Major and Calvari are open to the public free of charge.

On Good Friday, March 29, the Procession of the Holy Burial will take place at 19.00. The procession on Easter Sunday, March 31, will take place at 11.00.

In the Plaça Major one of the traditional acts of La Nucía's Holy Week will take place, "l'Ambaixà", (Easter Sunday embassy), which will be carried out this year by María Porcel Fernández, accompanied by two angels.

Albir

The Easter craft fair on the Albir beach opened last Friday, and will remain open until April 7, from 12.00 to 19.00. In this fair there will be different crafts, such as jewellery, costume jewellery, ceramics, textiles and painting. There will be articles of



all kinds. A wide range of products, most of them made by craftsmen from the region, which cannot be found in traditional shops. The aim of the crafts fair is to promote local crafts among the public, highlighting their quality and exclusivity.

Benitachell

Easter celebrations include free activities organised by the town hall youth department. They take place on Wednesday, April 3 with the Pasqua Jove (youth Easter) activity, where youngsters aged eight and over can enjoy games such as Laser Combat or Bubble Soccer at the municipal football ground from 10.00-14.00. Prior registration is required at www.omegawg.com/pascua jovebenitachell/

On Sunday, April 7 there is a free guided walk of a route taking in the Puig de la Llorença, Cala Llebeig, Los Acantilados and the Moraig viewpoint.

This medium difficulty walk is 8.5 kilometres in length and expected to last around two and a half hours. It will leave from El Puig building at 09.00 and will finish with a snack for all the participants. Registration is essential at <https://tinyurl.com/566acb5n>

Rojales

Rojales has also held its own Easter and Holy Week parades which began on Palm Sunday.

Here is the schedule of parades for the rest of the week:

Wednesday, March 27

21.00: General procession, featuring many of the town's Easter brotherhoods and their floats, following a circular route through the town centre, leaving from and finishing at Plaza de la Iglesia

Thursday, March 28

21.30: Silent procession leaving from San Pedro Apóstol church on Paseo Joaquín González and covering a circular route through the town before returning to the church

Friday, March 29

19.00: Christ's burial procession, featuring all of the town's Easter brotherhoods and their floats, starting from San Pedro Apóstol church on Paseo Joaquín González and covering a circular route throughout the town before returning to the church

Sunday, March 31

11.30: Encounter procession with the San Juan y la Purísima floats arriving at Plaza España via Calle San Antonio, and the resurrection float arriving via Calle Rafael Aráez

Torre Vieja

Torre Vieja will also be busy this weekend with Easter processions, They begin with a parade leaving the Inmaculada Concepción church at 22.00 on Thursday night. For full details see Thursday's

Costa Blanca News

English language Holy Week and Easter in Torre Vieja

By Father Richard A. Seabrook SSC

A full traditional programme of Holy Week and Easter services in English will be shared between churches in La Siesta and Lago Jardín urbanisations, Torre Vieja.

Father Richard A. Seabrook SSC, the priest at the two churches, introduced the programme by saying: "It is a privilege to be in Spain for Holy Week and Easter with the wonderful and moving proces-

sions which bear witness to the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ. Our two churches complement these celebrations by offering special liturgies in the English language for those who would like to share in them."

On Maundy Thursday, March 28, the Mass of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated at La Siesta at 19.00. "It's the start of the great three

days we call the Triduum. We recall the night when Christ instituted the Eucharist and washed the feet of his disciples. We also ring bells – please bring some to ring if you have them. Then the mood changes, we pray in silence in what is called the Watch of the Passion."

Father Seabrook continued: "Good Friday is the most solemn day of the Christian year. We recall Christ's crucifixion

and venerate the cross. At 15.00 at La Siesta we celebrate a liturgy that is both moving and contemplative."

The church's Easter celebrations begin on Saturday – Holy Saturday, March 30 at 19.00. "We light a fire, bless the Paschal candle and proclaim that the Lord is risen. It is the start of our celebration of Easter joy! Please bring your bells again," he said.

On Easter Sunday, March

31, there are Masses in both churches: La Siesta at 09.30 and Lago Jardín at 12.00. "On Easter morning we meet Jesus in the garden, risen from the dead. The victory celebrations begin," commented Father Seabrook, "It is the great day of Easter triumph. The Lord is risen indeed. All are welcome to come and journey with Christ in Holy Week and celebrate his resurrection."

How to look after your health

By Liz Connor PA

A healthy lifestyle is always important – but do your needs change at different ages?

Living well is important at any age, but experts say our health priorities can change as we get older.

While the principles of exercising regularly, eating well and managing stress will always be relevant, there may also be specific things you can do – at each milestone decade – to make sure you're harnessing your full healthy potential.

So, what are they? We asked health experts to share their tips for happy, healthy aging, and looking after yourself at different stages of life...

In your 20s you should... support your bones and set good habits

Our bones carry on developing into our late-20s, so it's important we continue to get plenty of calcium and vitamin D during these years, says Dr Naveen Puri, a lead physician at Bupa Health Clinics (bupa.co.uk).

As well as taking eating a good diet and taking supplements where necessary, he adds that resistance-based exercise, like weight training, can help strengthen bones, as well as repetitive activities such as hiking, jogging and playing tennis.

"Once your bones stop growing, they typically stop getting stronger and can slowly weaken in the longer term," warns Puri. "As such, helping them develop in your 20s will set good foundations as you get older."

Your early adult life is also a great time to avoid too

many unhealthy lifestyle choices. "When we're young, we might not notice the impact of drinking too much or smoking, but now is the ideal time to minimise these habits," says Puri.

"Drinking too much on a regular basis is linked to a host of long-term health conditions, from high blood pressure and heart disease, through to liver disease and certain types of cancer. Similarly, smoking is heavily linked to issues like cancer, heart and lung disease, strokes, and diabetes."

In your 30s you should... eat well and protect your mental health

As you move into your 30s, you might start noticing some subtle body changes as your metabolism slows down. "This is perfectly normal, but does mean it becomes more important to eat well," says Dr Puri.

Although it's tempting to find a quick-fix for those stubborn extra pounds, don't turn to fad diets. "Instead, look at making smaller, sustainable changes, as these are often healthier and easier to maintain," he advises.

"Try to avoid grazing and stick to three meals a day, including high-fibre foods like wholegrain bread or brown rice, and protein like chicken or tofu. Also aim to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day to make sure you're getting a range of vitamins and minerals.

"Elsewhere, try and avoid foods that are high in sugar or saturated fats. If you want to snack, have a piece of fruit or a small handful of nuts and seeds."

At this time of life, many people may find themselves in more stressful situations, with greater demands on their time. This can come from lots of different sources, like our growing career responsibilities or family life.

"There are many methods to help manage stress, and it's about finding what works for you," says Puri. "Relaxation therapies – like meditation, yoga or mindfulness – may be helpful, and it's also important to know where to turn if pressures are mounting."

In your 40s you should... maintain a good diet

It's believed that almost one in 20 people are living



with diabetes. While type 1 diabetes can occur at any age and is not linked with weight or lifestyle, generally speaking, type 2 is more likely to develop in over-40s, and this form of diabetes is often associated with factors like weight and diet.

Maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle may help prevent type 2 diabetes, as well as being important if you are diagnosed.

"Maintaining a good, balanced diet and exercising regularly is key to managing both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. In some cases, you can reverse type 2 diabetes with the right diet and exercise," says LloydsPharmacy pharmacist Anshu Kaura (lloydspharmacy.com).

Kaura advises to "always consult your GP before making any diet or lifestyle changes, especially if you have an underlying condition."

In your 50s you should... check your breasts and prostate regularly

Giles Davies, lead surgeon and director of breast surgery at Cromwell Hospital (cromwellhospital.com), says it's really important for women to check for the signs of breast cancer in their 50s.

"Women should check their breasts from a young age – ideally in their late-teens or 20s – but it becomes even more important as you get older," he notes. "Around 80% of breast cancers happen in women over 50, so it's important you attend your screenings."

"It's also vital you know the signs of breast cancer, so you can act on any concerns. One of the most common signs is a new lump in the breast area or armpit, though women may also experience nipple dis-

charge, skin changes, or a change in size or shape to either one or both of the breasts."

Men should also get regular prostate checks. Professor Hashim Ahmed, consultant urological surgeon at Cromwell Hospital, says: "Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer amongst men in the UK and mainly affects those over age 50.

"Problems with urinating can often be one of the first signs that something is wrong, especially if the cancer is pressing on, or growing near the urethra. Other common indications may include needing to pee more frequently, often during the night, or finding it more difficult to start or stop urinating."

These symptoms don't always mean you have cancer. However, getting things checked out quickly is always sensible. And in some cases, cancer doesn't cause any symptoms so it's important to keep you with regular health checks.

In your 60s you should... look after your joints

Joint pain is very common as we get older, and it's often caused by osteoarthritis, or wear and tear. Lifestyle

measures may help prevent these problems worsening, as well as helping ease flare-ups.

Keeping physically active can still be very important. If you are concerned about joint pain and exercise, speak to your GP and perhaps a physiotherapist for tailored advice.

Kaura adds: "In winter, many individuals with joint conditions find their sensations of pain can become more frequent. For those experiencing heightened joint pain in winter, a cod liver oil supplement may help."

"Research has shown that omega-3 fatty acids help support the body's anti-inflammatory response, which can in turn help to prevent joint conditions such as arthritis from deteriorating. There has even been research that cod liver oil can help reduce the number of painkillers those with arthritis take."

In your 70s and beyond you should... keep active

Experts say even people in their 70s should look to undertake some form of exercise every day, but it doesn't need to be anything as intense as marathon running.

Lin Seeley, wellbeing co-ordinator at Bupa Sandhills Court care home, says: "Light activity, such as a brisk walk or a bike ride, will still provide good benefits, and people should try to clock up about two-and-a-half hours of this a week."

"I always recommend that older people work on strength and balance training. This is really important, as it can help keep us mobile into old age, while also preventing falls."

"Some great exercises for this can include gentle weightlifting or aerobics. Yoga and Pilates are also great options and can easily be adapted to suit anyone's ability."



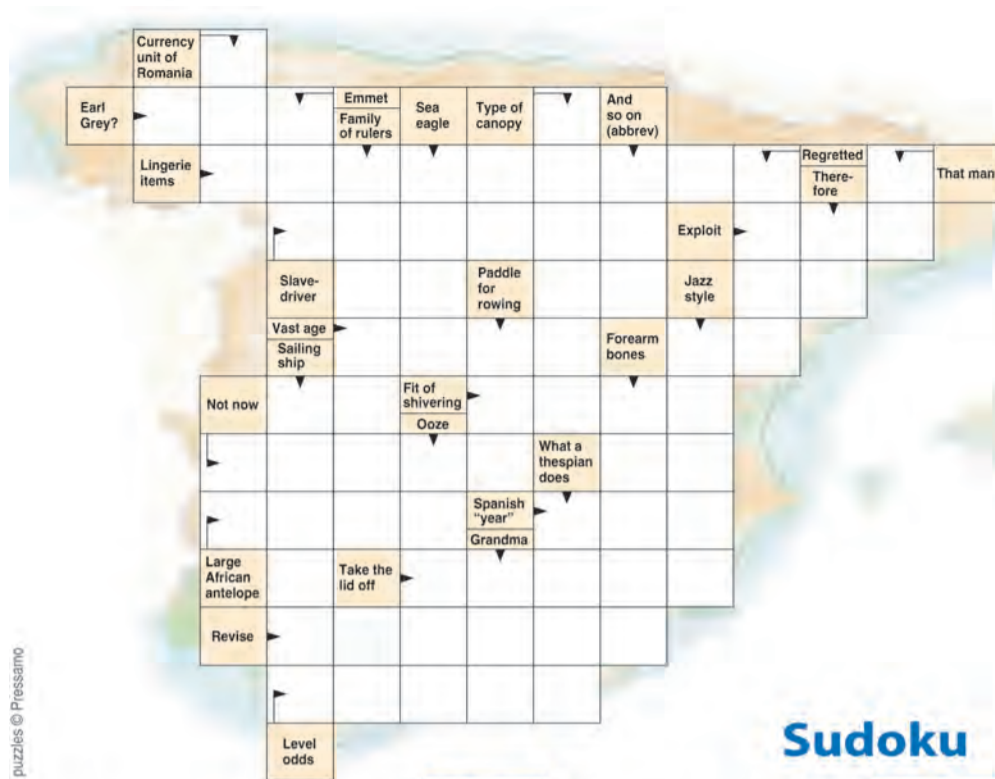
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All puzzles © Pressimo

The idea is to place a number into each box so that each horizontal row, each vertical column, and each small 9-box square within the larger square, contains all the numbers 1 to 9 just once.

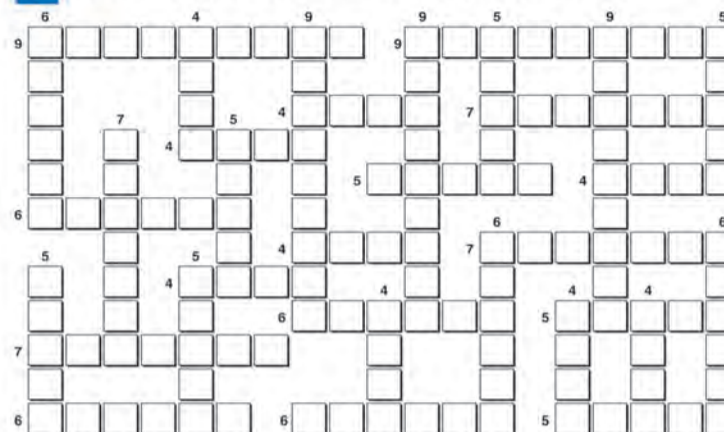
Easy								
		3			5			
	2	5		3		7		8
	8		1	7				4
2				1		8		
5	7						6	3
		4		8				7
4				6	8			1
8		2		5		4	7	
			7				9	

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

Sudoku

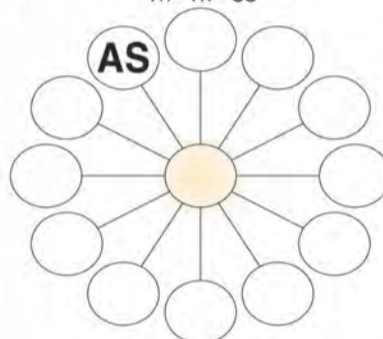
KrisKross

- 4 Letters: CAÑI, CRIO, ENTE, ERRA, ERRO, MACH, OSLO, ROMO, UNIR
- 5 Letters: ADOBO, BASAR, BOZAL, ERROR, LIBRO, MUARE, OTONO, RANDA
- 6 Letters: ABRIGO, ACUNAR, CARIBA, ERGUIR, JARANA, LLOVER, RINCON
- 7 Letters: CANCION, COCHERA, SOPRANO, ZANCADA
- 9 Letters: ABOLICION, ALBONDIGA, CUCARACHA,



Couplets

Write the listed pairs of letters into the outer circles so that each line running through the centre circle produces a word with an unlisted pair of letters.
 AB - AS - AS - AS - BI - CT - DE - NT - NT - RT - RT - SS

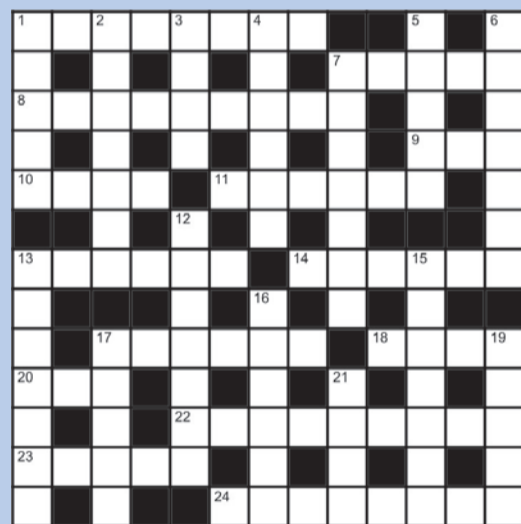


Step by step

Convert the word at the top of the grid to the word at the bottom, by changing one letter at a time.



Crossword



Complete the puzzle using the Cryptic or Regular clues - the answers are the same.

Cryptic clues Across

- 1 Traps returning Spanish terrorists involved, but not part of the group (3,5)
- 7 A fuss about love (5)
- 8 Chairman's position in the drink? (9)
- 9 King Canute uncovers a crackpot (3)
- 10 Pat's confused about what's gone on (4)
- 11 It's definitely off to be so rude, anyway (6)
- 13 Offer that leaves one feeling sore (6)
- 14 As his head is able to become an American rubbish bin (6)
- 17 At Thailand the Italian-American will turn into a barbarian (6)
- 18 For a start the river is magnificently well kept (4)
- 20 Cassius Clay boxes this pompous fool (3)
- 22 Dispatched men in it, with some feeling (9)
- 23 A cooked tart and a sweetheart is certainly a pleasure (5)

24 Agreed, it's like it was posted to the editor (8)

Down

- 1 Sailing vessel goes down when the waters rise (5)
- 2 The first motive for betrayal (7)
- 3 Drink up but keep a note of the taverns (4)
- 4 It is why one has intelligence (6)
- 5 A song that may be asked for in 3D (5)
- 6 Get a word in? No, it's up to the men (7)
- 7 Tackle today's clothing (7)
- 12 It tends to confuse one involved in oral examination (7)
- 13 They aren't in form (7)
- 15 Present dog with the payment (7)
- 16 Chucks out old weapons (6)
- 17 Seats are arranged for advantage (5)
- 19 It's subdued when a Greek character meets little Edward
- 21 This pit belongs to me (4)

Regular clues

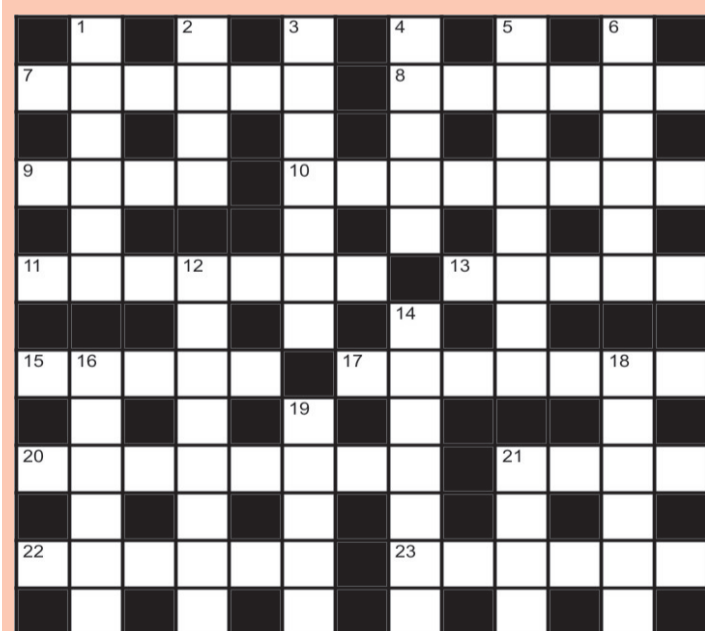
Across

- 1 Detached (3,5)
- 7 Love (5)
- 8 From a ship into the water (9)
- 9 Seed (3)
- 10 Yesteryear (4)
- 11 Fermented (6)
- 13 Affectionate (6)
- 14 Trash bin (6)
- 17 King of the Huns (6)
- 18 Clip (4)
- 20 Donkey (3)
- 22 Opinion (9)
- 23 Extravagance (5)
- 24 Acquiesced (8)

Down

- 1 Sailing ship (5)
- 2 Betrayal (7)
- 3 Saloons (4)
- 4 Argue (6)
- 5 Circular (5)
- 6 Note (7)
- 7 Lecture to (7)
- 12 Tooth doctor (7)
- 13 Non-attenders (7)
- 15 Stream (7)
- 16 Catapults (6)
- 17 Plus (5)
- 19 Hushed (5)
- 21 Excavation (4)

Spanish-English crossword



Improve your vocabulary with our Spanish/English crossword. The clues are in Spanish and the answers are in English.

Across

- 7 Viaje (por mar, el espacio) (6)
- 8 Hojas (6)
- 9 Lago (4)
- 10 El más dulce (8)
- 11 Primos (7)
- 13 Habas (5)
- 15 Dormir (5)
- 17 Escritores (7)
- 20 Acera (8)
- 21 Arena (4)
- 22 Antes de (6)
- 23 Puesta del sol (6)

Down

- 1 Patata (6)
- 2 Jaula (4)
- 3 Campesino (7)
- 4 Pegamentos (5)
- 5 El más salado (8)
- 6 Lección (6)
- 12 Esqueleto (8)
- 14 Británico (7)
- 16 Líder (6)
- 18 Corredor (6)
- 19 Fiebre (5)
- 21 Hijos (m) (4)

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SENIJA VILLAGE HOUSE. Needs renovation. Situated in centre of village. Consists of, Grd floor; Entrance hall, lounge/dining room +fireplace very light, old kitchen with dining room & adjoining room used as laundry room, family bathroom + bathtub & inner courtyard half covered with 2 storage rooms. 1st floor large outside terrace, 2 single bedrooms + fitted wardrobes & the master bedroom + fitted wardrobe & window to the street. Property has original flooring throughout, wooden windows + single glazing, wooden beams on both floors & a solid wooden front door. A visit is recommended to appreciate the charm of the village as well as its proximity to nature & the beach. Ref-1250 -Price-110.000€ Tel: 609 211 710 https://karnaproperties.net

TOWNHOUSE IN CAMPPELL (La Vall de Laguar). 142m2 Lovely stone townhouse well renovated maintaining charm & tradition. Consists of; Grd floor: Entrance hall, Lounge +cast iron cooker, Dining room, Bathroom +shower, fully fitted Santos kitchen with Fridge, Oven, Vitroceramic hob, Dishwasher & Washer/Dryer. 1st flr: Large bedroom + wardrobe & ensuite bathroom withbathtub, dressing room, large living room, wood burning stove & large windows, loft that could be a bedroom or study. Original stone walls & arches. All the carpentry is Mobila' wood, dble glazed windows & terracotta floors. La Vall de Laguar is 29 km from Denia & 17 km from the Valencia-Alicante motorway. Standing out for its landscapes & famous hiking routes (Barranco del Infierno) & is only 30 mins away from the beaches of Denia & all its services. Ref-1238. 174.900€ Tel: 609 211 710 https://karnaproperties.net

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Animal world

IF THERE IS anyone looking for a puppy or a dog that is in desperate need of a new home please contact the facebook site " costa blanca dog homing" We are always in desperate need of foster homes, short and long term, and if anyone can offer this please call 965 698 052

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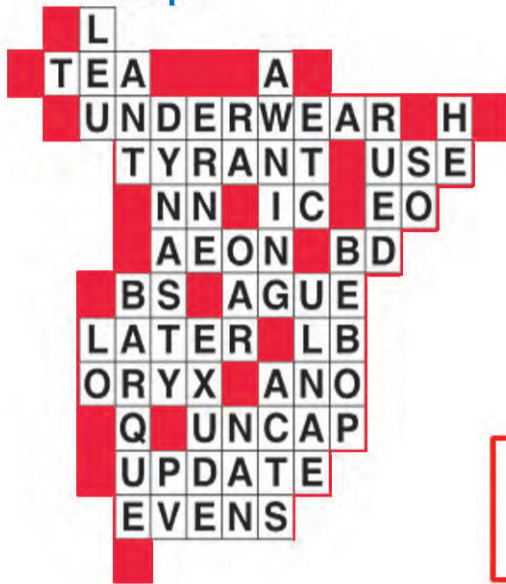
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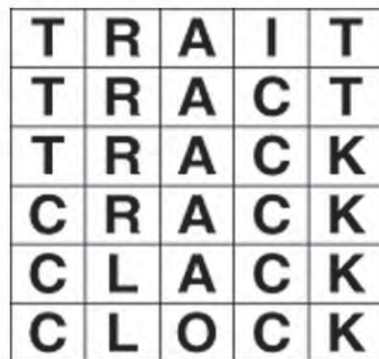
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Shape



Step by step



Couplets

ASSENT, ASSESS, ABSENT, BISECT, DESERT, ASSERT

KrissKross



Crossword

Across: 1 Set apart, 7 Adore, 8 Overboard, 9 Nut, 10 Past, 11 Soured, 13 Tender, 14 Ashcan, 17 Attila, 18 Trim, 20 Ass, 22 Sentiment, 23 Treat, 24 Assented. Down: 1 Sloop, 2 Treason, 4 Reason, 5 Round, 6 Mention, 7 Address, 12 Dentist, 13 Truants, 15 Current, 16 Slings, 17 Asset, 19 Muted, 21 Mine.

Sudoku easy

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

Sudoku fiendish

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

Spanish-English Crossword

Across: 7 Voyage, 8 Leaves, 9 Lake, 10 Sweetest, 11 Cousins, 13 Beans, 15 Sleep, 17 Writers, 20 Pavement, 21 Sand, 22 Before, 23 Sunset. Down: 1 Potato, 2 Cage, 3 Peasant, 4 Glues, 5 Saltiest, 6 Lesson, 12 Skeleton, 14 British, 16 Leader, 18 Runner, 19 Fever, 21 Sons.

Pets' Corner

APASA THAI Male. Shelter since 19.02.19. Podenco mix, DOB 01.08.16 – 40 cm

Meet Thai. He is just a small podenco mix, who struggles to build courage around humans. He loves to be around other dogs, that is where he is most comfortable. He arrived at the shelter in February 2019 and has been here ever since. When you see him, he will run away and bark, but some days he feels strong enough to have courage and enjoy some attention from humans. We would really like to find a special home for Thai, where he is understood and given lots of patience, preferably a home with other dogs too.

If you would like to meet Thai or find out more please contact APASA - 96 646 3976.



Animal Angells

BUSTER is two years old and has a lovely temperament. He enjoys playing with toys and sitting in boxes. He gets on very well with other cats but longs for some human attention. A new friend and owner would make his dreams come true!

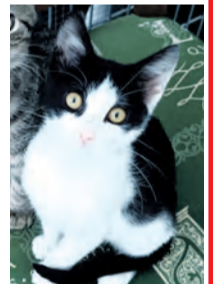
Animal Angells have many incredible cats and kittens that are in need of loving homes. All cats / kittens are vaccinated, blood tested and will be neutered (once old enough).

So, if you or someone you know would like a new little friend then please call Sue from Animal Angells on 696 103 092. Please make 2024 a better year for these lovely cats and kittens.



BARC MR PICKLES is approximately 14 months old, he's sterilised, fully vaccinated and treated for fleas and worms. He's a friendly boy but isn't too keen on being handled. This would probably improve a lot in a home environment.

If you feel you could take this lovely boy out of an enclosure and into your home please call Yvonne at BARC on 647 048 943.



PEPA MAMI was born approximately June 2021. She's sterilised, blood tested and vaccinated.

She enjoys going for a walk with her rescuer and their own two cats and two dogs!

If you have place in your family for Mami please contact Pepa on 650 304 746, send an email to p.e.p.a.animalcharity@gmail.com or see the website www.pepaspain.com



AKIRA IRIS

This sweet-heart, five years old, has been with us for far too long She is a little timid at first but, when you engage with her, she is very affectionate and loves a cuddle. She gets on well with other dogs, cats, chickens, children and humans, walks well on the leash and is clean in her kennel. Iris waits sadly at the shelter for a family to love.

Please call 657 689 567 or send an email to akirashelter@aol.com



APAD LUNA is a charming bull terrier mix who is looking for a new home. Unfortunately, Luna had to be given up by her previous owner due to health reasons. As an only princess, she was always pampered and now she longs for the company of people who will give her affection and love.

Luna is a calm and gentle dog who loves to snuggle on the couch and provide comfort on bad days. A peaceful and reflective life with a warm bed, security and care is her dream. She is housebroken and familiar with living in a household. Luna is a wonderful companion who will bring you joy and affection. She is ready to win your heart and enrich your life.

Please contact APAD on 966 427 678, send an email to info@apad-apad.org or see www.apad-apad.org



K9 Club

TRIGGER is a seven-year-old large dog. He is so af-

fectionate, good on a lead and very obedient and would make a great companion. He is house trained and has come from a loving home. Trigger has a passport and is fully vaccinated

Can anyone please give Trigger another safe and loving family home? Contact us at the shelter if you would like to come and meet him. Call or WhatsApp on 711 075 305.





Photos: Jonathan Buckley/PA

How to style your garden pots like a pro

By Hannah Stephenson, PA

Expert Sarah Raven offers tips on how to colour-match for the best effect in your outdoor space.

It's safe to say that gardener, teacher, nurserywoman and broadcaster Sarah Raven loves pots.

She and her team have trialled thousands of container plants, working out design rules for planting combinations in the process.

Now, she'd shared her knowledge in a beautiful new book, *A Year Full Of Pots*, which covers pots for every season and palette, from bulb lasagnes to jungle joy, climbers and insect-friendly combinations.

The most common mistake gardeners make is picking up random plants in garden centres which they think look pretty, but they don't have a design in mind, she observes.

"I'm very strict. I just give you the recipes and I say, ignore them at your peril. It's like if you know what you are cooking for supper, you buy the right amount of food and don't forget anything. It's the same with creating a pot garden when you are doing the changeover from spring to summer."

Here are some of Raven's top tips for perfecting your pot game...

Colour palettes

Raven uses four colour palettes for her pots.

1. Dark and rich

"I use crimsons and mahogany, deep purple and bronzes." They suck up the light and she thinks of them as the velvet colours you envelop yourself in. They might include deep red dahlias, or tulips in shades of burnt orange and almost black.

"The dark and rich have to

be in quite a well-lit place because otherwise they can form a bit of a black hole and be a bit on the sombre side," she adds. "They need to be front of border or front of yard space, and be quite well lit, or backlit or planted with something sharp in colour behind them, like a euphorbia, so they are highlighted."

2. Boiled-sweet brilliant

"This includes really radiant, stained glass colours," she explains, incorporating blackcurrant, strawberry, raspberry, orange, lemon, lime and cobalt blue. It might feature everything from zingy orange gerberas to raspberry red tulips and acid green euphorbias.

"I use this in one particular part of the garden that I walk through a lot and I want it to be stimulating and cheerful. Again, it needs good sunlight."

3. Soft and warm

"I call these the cashmere jersey colours, so it's pastel but in the warm palette." Think peach, milky coffee, ivory, faded coral and apricot.

"I love this palette in spring, particularly in my rose garden because the rose foliage when it first emerges in spring is copper and bronze and it really is beautiful with either the dark and rich or the soft and warm (colours) growing through it with pots of tulips."

4. Soft and cool

"These include mauves and pale blues." Blue-pinks, primrose yellows and off-

whites which get paler until you reach the pure white flower, could also feature.

"I tend to stick with one palette. I tend to grow three ingredients in a bigger size pot together, or if they're smaller pots, I'd have them in three neighbouring pots," she says. "These are fantastic for shining a torch into dark



areas, so we have those all the way along the north face of our barn. We use this palette out into the view, so where we have a garden that tumbles off into the distance, I would always use the soft and cool. It's very calm."

Choosing plants

Raven likens her choice of plants to wedding attendees – the bride, the bridesmaid and the gatecrasher.

"I'd go for what I call my bride, which is the dominant, most sumptuous one, then I would go for the bridesmaid, which is the same colour as the bride but a little more recessive, and more back-

ground. Finally, I would use a bit of colour contrast for the gatecrasher, but often sticking to the same palette, so I might use orange and orange for the bride and bridesmaid and blue or purple for the gatecrasher.

"Or if it was in dark and rich palette, I might use crimson (bride), crimson (bridesmaid) and then a bronze as the gatecrasher. I always use two-thirds to three-quarters of one colour and a third or quarter of another colour. Gatecrasher is not as dominant as the others. I think of it as a squeeze of lemon over smoked salmon."

Looking ahead to summer

"With summer pots, it's not just about colour – it's also about how they behave and grow. Obviously you've got to be really careful to com-

bine things that have similar vigour," says Raven. "You can't, for instance, grow something that's quite delicate, like a fuchsia, next to something really strong-growing, like a petunia. Rather like the bride, I have a thriller in terms of form. The filler is like the bridesmaid, so it fills (the space around) the big flowers.

"So I might have Dahlia 'Molly Raven' as my thriller, and then a Zinnia 'Queeny Red Lime' as my filler and then

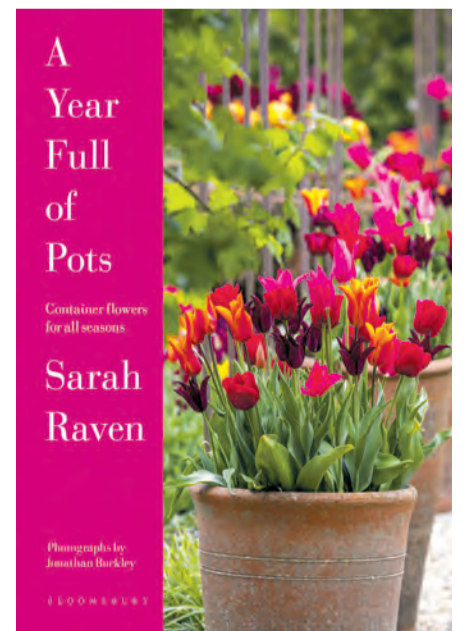
go for something tall, which I call the pillar, something like a thunbergia, which is a climber. Finally, I would also grow something like a calibrachoa or a petunia to cascade down the side of bigger pot, which is what I call a spiller. So you have a thriller, filler, pillar and spiller – it rhymes so it's easy to remember."

How many plants do you need for a pot?

"We really cram things in, planting almost half the distance that we would in the garden. For instance, in a 30cm pot we plant 30 tulips. You have to look after them much more but you get incredible impact very quickly."

You have to water plants which are crammed into pots more and feed them more than you would if there weren't as many plants in the containers, she agrees. It's important to deadhead frequently, too.

A Year Full Of Pots: Container Flowers For All Seasons by Sarah Raven is published by Bloomsbury. Available now.



A race through Benitachell

This year, a total of 263 people registered for the fourth edition of Benitachell 'women's charity race'. On Saturday, March 25 an orange tide filled the streets of El Poble Nou de Benitatxell for the solidarity race to raise money for Aprosdeco - a non-profit association of mothers, fathers, relatives and guardians of people with intellectual functional diversity.

Since 1974, Aprosdeco has been committed to promoting and making available to people with functional diversity all the resources and support necessary to improve their quality of life. El Poble Nou de Benitatxell maintains a close relationship with this association, of which several people from the municipality are users.

The boys and girls of Aprosdeco actively participated in the race, not only running and walking, but also in its organisation. Over the last few weeks, they have been creating and disseminating videos through their social networks to encourage

people to participate.

A raffle with gifts from local businesses, stretching and dancing and a 360° camera completed the day. Medals were also handed out to all participating girls and boys.

The total amount of money raised on the day was €700.

"We want to thank all the women and men who participated in this race and helped to make it bigger. It has been an incredible day. And of course, we would like to highlight the great collaboration of Aprosdeco, which does an immense amount of work, the Club Multiesport Benitatxell, the Associació de Dones, the department of social services, the municipal brigade, the police, Protecció Civil, DYA Valencia, and around 30 local businesses for participating. Everyone has worked hard to make the event a success," said councillor for equality, Isa Garrido and the councillor for sports, Javi Cabrera.



Photos: Town hall



SACC meet Goose Green

Last weekend Sporting Alfas Cricket Club (SACC) took on Goose Green CC a great family orientated club from Wigan, England.

The SACC skipper was invited to bat first on this rather warm and pleasant day. Occasionally you wish you had followed the gut instinct and today was one. The skipper hadn't got his whites on, no rush batting at six, what a false sense of security he was in. With five overs gone and 19 runs on the board, the number six batsman was required. A disaster with Crompton (2), Ashraf (5), Iqbal (0) and Walker (8) all back in the cabin. Number three batsman Hafiz was on three, and the skipper needed to slug it out against the pacey Goose Green attack. With a little bit of luck and an awful lot of courage, the

pair took the score to 100 in the 21st over. However, Hafiz (70), who had been given the freedom of playing in his more usual flamboyant style, hit the ball straight to deep square leg and was caught nicely by A Ward. Laundon, after playing out a very boring 21 runs from 50 odd balls, left one from Wallace that nipped back more than expected and took a deviation of the bat, caught by the keeper. The same bowler removed Overbury (6) and the last four batsman were left to get the score up to the 150 mark - Wajid (12) Byrne (20) Ahmed (6) and Martis (0*) on his return carrying his bat, the much needed 6 extras gave the home side a very low total to defend, 156. Tea was taken and the match reconvened after 30 minutes.

Sporting Alfas were in danger of losing this match very quickly. Wajid and Ahmed were given the honour of bowling first, both men playing the first match of 2024 for their club. A maiden from both, basically no runs from the first two overs, gave hope that SACC might take the game deep. Which indeed happened, although a couple of chances fell to the fielders, the pair bowled out the 14 overs that they were allowed for only 44 runs but, sadly, no wickets were taken. Goose Green won the tournament. Man of the Match was given to Josh Ward for his fiery bowling spell, three for 23 and equalling the SACC extras column, also ending on 29.

The visitors toasted the win with a few amber nectars before heading into Albir for yet an-



Photo: SACC

other night of entertainment, boosting the local businesses weekend.

There was more cricket on Sunday as Goose Green enjoyed their second win on this tour, celebrating 40 years since the forming of the club. Being asked to set a score, SACC received great news during the post-match analysis - Goose Green, who in the past only toured five-yearly, enjoyed this tour so much that they have

booked for 2025 and intend to make it an annual trip.

This is why Sporting Alfas Cricket Club remain at the top of the destination list, welcoming teams from all over the world to our facility. Without the backing of Alfaz del Pi's town hall this would not be a possibility. See full report in Thursday's