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Scooter thieves slash victim

National Police have arrested two men who allegedly attacked a man with a knife when they stole his electric scooter in Alicante.

A taxi driver witnessed the robbery and followed the assailants along several streets while alerting the security forces until he finally lost them, a police spokesman explained.

A plain clothes patrol came quickly and interviewed the victim and witnesses at the scene.

The victim had several bleeding wounds, which he said had been inflicted when he confronted two men who were stealing the scooter he had left outside a shop.



Photo: National Police

One of the men pulled out the knife and slashed the victim several times until he fell to the floor.

The aggressor attacked him again and he tried to defend himself, in the end suffering cuts to his hands and one leg.

The attack was so ferocious that part of the blade snapped off and was found by the officers in the street.

The officers helped the victim and called for medical assistance, then took a description of the assailants and also obtained images of the incident taken by witnesses with mobile phones.

The suspect who allegedly used the knife was found within a few minutes on a nearby street, where the arresting officers had to be careful since he could still have

been armed and dangerous.

Another patrol managed to detain the second suspect, who tried to give them a false identity but was correctly identified thanks to the police database.

The suspects are a 34-year-old Moroccan and an Afghan citizen aged 19, who were both jailed on remand by a court in the city.

The victim required several stitches but it could have turned out much worse given the ferocity of the attack, the spokesman assured.

The prompt and successful arrests were once again thanks to collaboration by the public with officers, he added.

Hacks for gardeners



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Sniffer dogs deal a blow to drug pushers

The local police canine unit in Elche has helped officers in two recent cases which resulted in suspected drug offences.

A 49-year-old man was detained at a checkpoint in the bus station, where a sniffer dog marked a coach that was on the route from Murcia to Valencia.

The dog sniffed insistently at one of the suitcases in the hold so the officers got on board to ask who it belonged to.

A passenger said the luggage was his and while the officers checked it, he admitted there was hashish inside and that he was a smoker of the substance.

They found two lumps of what looked like hashish, weighing 10.25 grams and 62.5g.

The other incident occurred on April 1, when several calls reported a fight on Avenida Novelda.

A patrol found a man with a red face and swollen eyes, looking like he had been hit.

He told the officers he had told an acquaintance to leave the flat he was staying in, but this other man had refused, broke the door open by kicking it and threatened him with a large knife, while a second man he lived with used pepper spray on him.

The officers went up to the apartment, where the knife

and the pepper spray were on the floor by the door, and there were signs of a struggle in the lounge and the kitchen.

The victim claimed the person who had broken the door had demanded that he store a bag of drugs, and when he refused had tried to stab him in the abdomen, but he managed to dodge and escape.

The officers called another patrol and the canine unit, which searched inside and found a large bag containing nine smaller bags and 43 foil wraps containing a total of 67.67g of hashish.

The two men, aged 18 and 20, were arrested and taken to a police station.



Photo: Local police

Boy, aged 15, arrested for pensioner's mugging

National Police have arrested two youths, one of them only 15 years old, for violently mugging an elderly man and stealing a watch worth over €100,000.

The robbery occurred near Avenida de Maissonave in Alicante and was reported by several callers in the area.

Witnesses said three people had been assaulted by two men, one of whom

distracted the victims by asking a question and showing them a mobile phone, then the other shoved them to the ground and snatched the elderly man's watch off his wrist.

When officers arrived, they saw a group of people restraining a man they said was one of the attackers and had been stopped from escaping by a bystander.

Other officers soon caught the other suspect nearby, but witnesses said they had seen him hand the watch over to a third person, who had got into a motor vehicle and left.

Meanwhile, the victims, an elderly couple and their 55-year-old daughter, had to be treated at the scene for injuries they had suffered in the attack.

The suspects were identified as two males aged 15

and 20, who were Algerian and Moroccan respectively.

The 15-year-old was found to have escaped from a centre for minors in Murcia region, so prosecution service for minors ordered him to be sent to a juvenile detention centre.

A court in Alicante jailed the other man on remand.

The stolen watch, which has not yet been recovered,

is a collector's item which cost the victim €15,000 about 15 years ago but has increased in value since to €117,000.

The police spokesman added that the collaboration of the public had been crucial, not only by restraining one of the suspects, but also for the details they gave which enabled the second assailant to be caught.

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Griffon grandeur – Valencia vultures take off

Regional director for the environment, Raúl Mérida has highlighted how the griffon vulture has been brought back from the brink of extinction in the Valencia region.

He noted that in the 1970s numbers had dwindled to just three nesting pairs in the north of Castellón province.

However, successful conservation plans operated by the regional government have allowed the population of this emblematic bird to recover, he noted.

Full report in Friday's

Costa Blanca News



Photo: GVA

Going mobile in Alicante

Three new mobile recycling units, equipped with a computerised system to find out which items residents recycle the most, began their new routes this week to serve the 52 municipalities covered by the MARE Consortium which manages the urban waste of the Marina Alta and the Marina Baja, as well as the municipality of El Campello.

President of the MARE Consortium, José Ramón González de Zárate, accompanied by the mayor of Finestrat, Juanfran Pérez and provincial president Toni Pérez came to see how it works and to present the Marina Baja mobile recycling unit.

As a great novelty, the mobile recycling units will also be accompanied by two environmental educators, in addition to their operators 'to explain, inform and help residents to recycle better', according to the president.

"The town councils should know that these facilities are available to them and that they allow us to separate the most dangerous and polluting household waste and the most annoying for the municipalities, such as junk and household goods," said Sr González de Zárate.

In fact, the network of new mobile recycling units set up by the MARE consortium is

the only one in the Valencia region to have a specific module for the collection of bulky waste (junk and household goods) and even garden waste.

The main module is accompanied by a special module for depositing this type of waste.

Sr González de Zárate claimed: "Such sad events as the fire in Tárbenca could have been avoided if, instead of dumping pruning waste, rubbish and household waste all over the area, they had been deposited in facilities like this.

"It is a question of taking care of the cleanliness and tidiness of our towns, but



Photo: MARE

also of our natural environment."

The calendars of the eco-mobile's stops in the Marina Baixa are already available on the new website of the entity, www.consorciomare.es

These appear in the section 'ecomóviles', as well as on the social media of the entity and the town halls.

During their first visits, the

environmental educators will distribute the calendars, which also explain what waste is accepted.

In the near future, the MARE consortium plans to expand this network of recycling units from three to seven in order to have a greater presence in all the municipalities covered by the consortium.



Fast action prevents serious fire

The fire service in Benidorm was alerted on Thursday afternoon over a bush and cane fire, on the Camino Sogay in Altea.

In close collaboration with the local police of Altea and Guardia Civil traffic officers, they were able to extinguish the fire quickly.

A spokesman for the provincial fire service reported that their team was able to 'prevent the fire from spreading through the existing vegetation in several plots of land in the area'.

Photos: Fire brigade



Confusion reigns over Alicante airport 'expansion'

The announcement of an 'expansion' of Alicante-Elche airport has raised more questions than answers.

The words of Maurici Lucena – president of state airport operator, Aena – after a shareholders' meeting in

Madrid last Thursday, which were intended to clarify the situation of the airport, have only led to a storm of confusion.

President of regional confederation of business people (CEV), Salvador Navarro said:

"Aena has to say if this expansion is the enlargement of the terminal, or the construction of a second runway."

Full report in Friday's

Costa Blanca News

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Clampdown against gang suspected of laundering €10 million

A total of 20 members of an intercontinental criminal network engaged in drug trafficking and money laundering have been arrested following a large-scale operation in Spain and Portugal.

The suspects are accused of laundering more than €10 million using stolen identities of Colombian, Portuguese, Spanish and Venezuelan nationals.

They had also created an ad hoc network of companies capable of financing the network's activities and laundering ill-gotten profits.

The crackdown was the result of a long-running investigation led by the Spanish National Police and regional Catalan police, supported by Europol and also involving Portuguese authorities.

During the action days, law enforcement officers carried out 13 searches that led to the seizure of €156,000 in cash, gold bars worth €35,000, more than 50 ve-

hicles, jewellery and over 30 luxury watches worth a total of €500,000, electronic devices such as mobile phones, and a weapon.

More than 100 bank accounts and 10 real estate properties worth over €3 million were also blocked as a result of the operation.

Europol supported the investigation since September 2021 by providing operational analysis, technical expertise and operational coordination.

On the action days, a money laundering specialist with a mobile office was deployed in Spain.

The investigation began in 2018, when the police seized 1,400 kilos of cocaine hidden in a shipment from Brazil at the facilities of a company located in Sant Boi de Llobregat (Barcelona). The subsequent operation led to the arrest of several members of an illegal drug trafficking network in 2019 and 2020.

With the support of Europol, law enforcement authorities discovered that the seized shipment was part of an international drug-trafficking operation aiming at distributing the drugs not only in Spain but across the EU.

The high capacity for drug distribution uncovered the necessary economic network that made it possible to finance the drug shipments.

The investigation revealed that the shipments were carried out by a large group of people and companies based mainly in Almería, Andalucía, Cataluña and Madrid.

Authorities also uncovered that the criminals were using several complex methods to launder money, which allowed them to go unnoticed for years.

The most common of these was the use of money mules.

The gang divided large amounts of cash into multiple small transactions made by



several money mules (a practice known as 'smurfing').

The deposits made in this way were small enough to remain under regulatory reporting limits, thus avoiding detection.

The criminals also injected money into a network of companies they controlled, simulating business relationships to justify transfers of funds.

At the same time, they had frontmen for registering ownership of assets in South America and used cars with hidden compartments to transfer cash, usually on the

route Barcelona – Madrid – Lisbon.

The criminal organisation had been active for more than eight years.

Seven of the 20 arrested have already been imprisoned; one in Venezuela, another in Portugal and the rest in Spain.

Some of the criminals linked to the gang were already in jail for other drug trafficking-related crimes.

The operation is ongoing and law enforcement authorities have not ruled out more arrests in the future.

Photo: National Police

Advertising feature

Tasty temptations await!! At the HOMES GARDENS & LIFESTYLE SHOW Suitopia Hotel, Calpe

It's a tasty edition coming your way! For the 2024 edition of the **HOMES GARDENS & LIFESTYLE SHOW** on **Friday 10th & Saturday 11th May** at the **SUITOPIA HOTEL** in **CALPE**.

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JBC dementia charity day - 'May the fourth be with us'

By Tony Myles in association with Jávea Bridge Club - Bridge Centre for north Costa Blanca

It is a sad fact that various forms of dementia will affect a significant number of people and it will be unusual if you do not have a relative or friend who is a sufferer.

There are two local charities that provide constant support to the patient and their family. It is often the family who suffer most as the patient loses brain capability and recollection starts to diminish.

On 'May the fourth' the Jávea Bridge Club (JBC) will be holding a special all-day event in order to raise funds for the

Alzheimer's centre in Teulada and HELP of Marina Alta.

Please come and add your support.

What are we doing?

Our fundraising day starts at 10.00 and the doors are open to anyone who wants to pop in and have a game of whatever they prefer - backgammon, chess, dominoes, canasta, tid-dlywinks, etc. Several extensive surveys have demonstrated a clear connection between the active use of the brain and measurable reductions in the impact of these diseases. If you

don't want to play or are short of time, come and have a coffee and chat for 10 minutes. Then at 11.00 we will welcome Azahar County Line Dancers so there will be music and lots of whoops and hollers!

Valley FM - Live

At midday Valley FM will start a live broadcast from the club, featuring music and interviews all the way to 15.00. Visit www.valleyfm.es to listen live.

At 15.00 the club will be full of bridge players taking part in a tournament for the Jennifer Cunningham Trophy and a



Photo: T Myles

€100 prize voucher for Amazon.

At 18.00 we collapse in a heap and grab a beer. Give everyone a round of applause and count the donations.

Many people hope that this will become a major annual event, so much depends on

your support.

You can help us make a difference - send an email to may4th@javeabridge.com for more information.

JBC can be found at Avenida de Paris, Jávea, near the Arenal area.

'May the Fourth be with us'.

May Fayre in Jalón

By Peter Sockett

If you missed the Jalón Valley Help Easter egg hunt then please put their next event in your diaries - the May Fayre on May 19 at the Rastro site in Jalón. This annual event is a not to be missed fun day with all-day entertainment, by locally based groups and singers, starting at 10.00 and continuing until 14.00.

As you may recall from previous years there are lots of stalls selling a variety of craft items, several stalls with books, puzzles, games, clothes, shoes and accessories, and stalls with food and drink.

Do come along and join us at this event and help to raise money to support the charity's



Some young enthusiastic participants at the Easter egg hunt

activities, which include amongst many other things:

- helping those in need with the loan of medical equipment,
- support at times of medical emergency or after bereavement, and
- help at times of cancer diagnosis or after treatment.

If you would like your own stall at this event please contact JVH at one of their shops in Jalón, Alcalalí or Orba, by

telephone on 711 032 914 or by email at eventsjvh@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you there. By the way there will be a prize for the best scarecrow - perhaps I should come in my gardening gear!

If you would like to find out more about Jalón Valley Help, check our website www.jalonvalleyhelp.com.

Photo: JVH

Moftag prepare for spring fair

By Anita Becker

With the spring fair on Saturday, May 4 at Pub Delfin, Calle Delfin, Calpe, the MOFTAG ladies will have their stalls up and running between 10.00 and 13.00 with the grand raffle draw taking place at 12.30.



There will be stunning food hampers, gifts and vouchers to be won. There are many games at which to try your luck, including the famous treasure

hunt and bottle tombola. To tempt you further there is a top class bric-a-brac

stall, handmade greeting cards, and knitted goods. Round off the morning with some lovely homemade cakes, marmalades and chutneys.

Another good reason to come is all the money raised at the fair goes to support local charities in Calpe.

MOFTAG looks forward to seeing you there.

All town hall articles are also in English, French, German and Dutch.

Go to noticias.calp.es and select a language from the drop-down menu. You will be able to read the news in the selected language.

noticias.calp.es



AJUNTAMENT DE CALPE

Pajama Game

The talented musical theatre group Studio 32 is presenting the musical comedy *The Pajama Game* at the Cardenal Belluga theatre in San Fulgencio from Thursday, May 2 to Saturday, May 4, inclusive.

Based in a pajama factory in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, it follows the story of the workers who, led by their union rep Prez, are seeking a seven and a half cent pay rise from their miserly boss, Mr Hasler.

Featuring memorable songs such as *Hernando's Hideaway* and *I'm not at all in love*, the production also captures the blossoming romance of grievance committee chairman Babe Williams and the new factory superintendent Sid Sorokin (played by Doris Day and John Raitt respectively in the 1950s film version).

Final preparations are now underway and tickets are selling fast. Do not miss out on a fun evening.

Tickets are €12 each and available online from studio thirtytwo.org or by telephone on 679 062 272.

They are also available in person from the fol-



Cast members rehearsing the number **Steam Heat**

lowing outlets: The Post Box, Doña Pepa, Rojales (96 671 71 56); Cards and More, La Marina urbanisation, San Fulgencio (96 679 09 54); Con Amor, Ciudad Quesada, Rojales (86 548 16 01); Elipacrafts, Ciudad Quesada, Rojales (86 575 63 20); The Post Room, Benijófar (96 671 23 82); and Bob's Bar, La Marina urbanisation, San Fulgencio (641 992 164).

Photo: Studio32

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

U3A Jávea thanks the heroes

"The Bomberos and all of the emergency services are heroes," says U3A Jávea president, Claude Grealy.

No one could deny that living in Jávea, with its dramatic scenery, beautiful blue sea and wonderful weather, is a fantastic privilege.

But when disaster threatens our community, we are also blessed with the protection of Jávea's finest - the men and women of the fire and emergency services of Jávea and the Marina Alta.

The fire on Saturday, April 13 in the Valls was a huge threat. That no one was injured and damage to property was kept to a minimum was entirely due to the heroes from the fire brigade and other emergency services.

Congratulating the professionalism of the emergency services, U3A Jávea president



Claude Grealy said: "During the day, at least three helicopters, two planes and 11 ground-based teams worked tirelessly to fight the fire and protect the lives and homes of Jávea residents."

"But, unnoticed by many, volunteer and retained bomberos continued to be deployed throughout the night to dampen down hot spots and to make sure that the fire could not return to threaten our homes.

"These people were nothing short of heroes. Their

bravery, commitment and sheer hard work should be an inspiration to us all. To each and every one of them, on behalf of all of the members of the U3A Jávea, I would simply like to say a huge thank you."

Claude went on to remind everyone of the need to take care: "The dry weather of the last six months and the rising temperatures of summer only increase the risk of fires. Please play your part by not burning rubbish in your garden, disposing of your cigarette butts safely and don't have barbecues in the campo."

See <https://u3ajavea.com/info/about-us/what-is-the-javea-u3a/> for more on Jávea U3A.

Photos: Stephen Young

Fascinating, fearless and focused, females at their finest

By Lorraine Henshaw

THE WOMEN of the European Union of Women are everywhere, or so it seems! The grand opening of their art exhibition at DAR Social and Community Centre, Jávea, which takes place today (Friday) at 11.00, starts four weeks of celebration of women artists of the Marina Alta. Their subsequent spread of events and activities is most ambitious.

"We are delighted that seven of the 21 artists are going to chat about their work and respond to questions and comments.

"Now is your chance to find out how that first brushstroke is placed on an empty canvas," said exhibition curator Emma Lawton.

Don't forget to pop into the little cinema room to admire the artwork of female students from the Lady Elizabeth School. You will find young talent already flowering with passion!

Following is a list of events, all starting at 10.30 at the DAR Community Centre, Jesus Pobre Road, Jávea.

April 26. Informal chats with artists

May 2. Arts and crafts group open morning

May 6. Artists demonstration and cream tea. Booking needed on 648 052 911 or via email at euwma.treasurer@gmail.com

May 10. To construct a better future we need to remember the past. Photos and short film by Jake Abbott and José Gayà

May 13 at 12.00. Classic and modern feminine voices in contemporary art

May 14. Informal chats with artists

May 16. Last day and close of exhibition

Meanwhile, at Jávea golf club on April 24 at 10.00 (after coffee and cake) there will be presentations and discussions with three of the area's charities. President Margaret Hales commented: "This is an expression of appreciation for those working in our community as volunteers and carers. We welcome Guardian Angels, Cancer Care Jávea and Help Denia and Marina Alta, and look forward to sharing, learning and networking. All are welcome!"

To join this great group of women please email euwmari-naalta@gmail.com

For further information see Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/euwma or Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/euwma/> or email us on euwmari-naalta@gmail.com



Setting up the artwork ready for the exhibition Photo: EUW

TM Lions bring classic jazz to town

The Teulada Moraira Lions will be bringing some classic New Orleans jazz to the auditorium on May 9 at 19.30.

Tickets for the Bourbon Street Stompers featuring

Betty Berent are €20 available from the Lions Den, open Monday to Saturday, 10.00 - 12.00 and 14.00 - 16.00 or at the door on the night.



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U3A Marina Baixa

By Joan Flint, press officer

We do like to be beside the seaside! This month's picnic saw a return to the Varadero beach at Villajoyosa, where 11 members of the group were able to spend a peaceful and relaxing afternoon beside the sea. Despite a slight sea fret affecting the views it didn't dampen the spirits of those attending. Thanks to Susan and Garry Bell for hosting the picnic.

On Friday, April 5 the trip to Valencia was hailed as a big success. Members had a choice of visiting the Oceanographic centre, Valencia's historic quarter or the Bioparc, and it provided a wonderful chance to meet new friends and to embrace a new experience. Thanks to Liz Potter and Paul Heaps for organising a most enjoyable trip.

The Sunday Strollers had a leisurely three kilometre walk along Altea promenade before turning off the seafront to the little San Antoni de Padua hermitage, which is hidden among the fruit trees. The boards along the way provided information about local history, geography and nature. The walkers returned by way of the seafront to the chiringuito near the Club Náutico for drinks and chat, providing a perfect end to the afternoon. The next walk – a strollie plus – will be this Sunday, April 21 at La Cala, Finestrat. It was a longer and steeper walk than usual, requiring sturdy footwear, although the tracks are good

along the 5km trail ascending to 170 metres. Thanks to Kaithe Green for planning and organising these interesting walks for members.

Finally, the Solo Amigos group met for a lovely meal at Namaste in Albir on April 10. The event was well attended at what was a new venue for this group. It provided an opportunity for those living alone to spend time with friends. If you would like more information on this group, please contact Jane Goode on 636 410 858.

U3A Marina Baixa meet on the fourth Monday of every month, with the exception of August and December. Meetings are held at the Casa de Cultura, Alfaz del Pi at 11.00. It can be reached by the local number 10 bus if you do not have transport. Membership costs €10 for the year, and provides access to all the events and activities organised by the association.

Photos: U3A MB



Alcoholics Anonymous

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Pantomime proceeds donated to Alzheimer's association

Rojales Pantomime Group (RPG) recently made the first of four charitable donations from the proceeds of their 2023 pantomime, Snow White and the Seven Christmas Elves.

Torre Vieja Alzheimer's association (AFA) was the grateful recipient of a generous €2,000. Director of the show, Dee Braiden and RPG chairman, John Fagg handed over the donation that was accepted by the AFA president.

Preparations have already begun for this year's Christmas pantomime production of Dick Whittington. Auditions have taken place resulting in a full cast for the show that will be performed at the Cardenal Belluga theatre in San Fulgen-

cio on December 5-7. Further details to follow later in the year.

In addition to rehearsals, we meet on a regular basis for a range of social events. Although we have made a positive start, the group is still looking for volunteers to help

with props, scenery, backstage, etc. If you think you may be able to help or would just like to join this friendly, sociable group, contact Alison, the director of this year's panto at dw2024rojalespanto@gmail.com

Photo: RPG



AFA receiving donation from Dee Braiden and John Fagg

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

Chicas enjoy inaugural lunch

Chico's cafe, shop and bar at Sanet y Negral was the venue for the inaugural Chicas Lunch Group (CLG) on Wednesday, April 14, when 21 women were welcomed with a complimentary bucks fizz.

Group organisers Adele Fellows and Sarah Froome created the group for ladies in the Marina Alta to network and meet new friends. Their aim is to regularly bring people together whilst raising money for local charities. The benefitting charity on this occasion, chosen by the attendees, was Project 4 All, an organisation who help and supports the homeless and those in need.

The lunch was hailed a success with great food, excellent company and the Chicas raised €160 for their chosen charity.

The Chicas Lunch Group will meet every second Wednesday of the month at Chico's in Sanet y Negral.

For more information, visit the Facebook page, Chicas Lunch Group, or email chicaslunchgroup@gmail.com

Photos: CLG



Group founders Adele Fellows and Sarah Froome, with Michiel from Chico's restaurant



Thrilling lecture at arts society

The Arts Society Marina Alta is thrilled to present 'Master of suspense: Alfred Hitchcock' on May 8 presented by lecturer, John Francis.

Master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock, created masterpieces of cinema, to include Vertigo and Psycho, and this

Arts Society Marina Alta presentation explores his dark films about human obsession.

Join us behind the shower curtain for thrills and spills on May 8 at the new morning venue: Espai La Senieta, Moraira at 11.00 and evening

venue: Casa de Cultura, Jávea at 19.30.

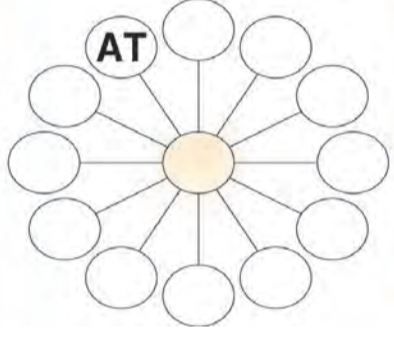
Admission is free for members and €15 for day-members (prepaid).

For more information please see our website www.artsocma.org or email marinaalta@heartssociety.org

Krisscross
 4 Letters: DUMA, ERRA, LORD, LUIS, ROYO, RUIN, SACA, SAIN, SCAT
 5 Letters: ARDUO, COGER, ESTOR, GALAN, OTOÑO, PAPEO, SALUD, SECTA
 6 Letters: AIRBAG, CHACHO, INDIGO, MARACA, MUSICA, OBRERO, SONIDO
 7 Letters: ARRABAL, CANGURO, COLIBRI, PILOTAR
 9 Letters: AMSTERDAM, LAGARTIJA, MONOLOGAR, PANTANASA, PISTOLERO

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.
 AT - AT - BO - BU - CH - CH - CK - DE - DE - IL - NE - NY



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.

Sudoku

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

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.

Crossword

- 24 Checks diplomats outside a junction (8)
Down
 1 High jinks strictly for the birds (5)
 2 Buddhist starts up off on a fool (7)
 3 Row from Tierra del Fuego (4)
 4 The people not already mentioned from the Marx Brothers (6)
 5 Nasty rash obtained from national archives (5)
 6 Beginner with a gun (7)
 7 A pamphlet with or for a farm vehicle (7)
 12 Firm custom is to live together (7)
 13/19 Rough ale bars cost nothing in outdoor markets (3,4,5)
 15 Get four in a trial, that's hardly worth bothering about (7)
 16 A lion goes round very quietly in Syria (6)
 17 Be a good man, or quite the reverse (5)
 19 See 13
 21 Weapons held by Neil Armstrong (4)

Complete the puzzle using the Cryptic or Regular clues - the answers are the same.
Cryptic clues
Across
 1 Wine ceremony alibi not right (8)
 7 Spoil a spoilt Titan (5)
 8 Update course about a first-year student (9)
 9 Stray from the proper road (3)
 10 A drink from the clumsy host (4)
 11 A scarf spoils a row (6)
 13 Cannot change a country district (6)
 14 Weapon that can demolish, or rebuild (6)
 17 Be Silver, the French hound (6)
 18 Fail to spot the young woman (4)
 20 An extra farewell (3)
 22 Having no favourites, although it seems I say I have (9)
 23 In the beginning, it's where a working actor should be (5)

Regular clues
Across
 1 Wine pouring (8)
 7 Spoil (5)
 8 Stimulant (9)
 9 Make a mistake (3)
 10 Blast (4)
 11 Quarrel (6)
 13 Region (6)
 14 Big gun (6)
 17 Breed of dog (6)
 18 Overlook (4)
 20 Farewell (3)
 22 Neutral (9)
 23 Start (5)
 24 Discusses with (8)
Down
 1 Silly games (5)
 2 Clown (7)
 3 Layer (4)
 4 Things not already mentioned (6)
 5 Skin complaint (5)
 6 First course (7)
 7 Farm vehicle (7)
 12 Be roommates (7)
 13/19 Outdoor exchanges of goods (3,4,5)
 15 Unimportant (7)
 16 City in northern Syria (6)
 17 Monster (5)
 19 See 13
 21 Weaponry (4)

Spanish-English crossword

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

- Across**
 1 Gafas (7)
 5 Desagüe (5)
 8 Garra (de ave) (5)
 9 Intento (7)
 10 Frases (9)
 12 Esquí (3)
 13 A través de (6)
 14 Aburrido (6)
 17 Hacha (3)
 18 Cuadros (pintura) (9)
 20 Conductores (7)
 21 Filo (5)
 23 Narices (5)
 24 Calles (7)
Down
 1 Puertas (de jardín, ciudad) (5)
 2 Todo (3)
 3 Cantantes (7)
 4 Escaso (6)
 5 Fechas (5)
 6 Entrada (9)
 7 Nada (7)
 11 Guarderías (9)
 13 Abandonar (7)
 15 Octubre (7)
 16 Besos (6)
 18 Prensa (5)
 19 Semillas (5)
 22 Edad (3)

Do I have a cold or hay fever?

By Abi Jackson, PA

A pharmacist talks us through the tell-tale differences.

Struggling to shift a pesky cold again? Wondering why your eyes are also feeling irritated, along with endless sniffles?

If this sounds familiar, it might be that you don't actually have a cold at all, but hay fever is causing your symptoms – especially now we're well into spring.

Symptoms can overlap but it's helpful to know which one you've got, so you can manage it appropriately. So, how can you tell whether you've got a cold or hay fever?

What is the difference between a cold and hay fever?

They're caused by different things, firstly. Colds are caused by a virus that's spread from one infected person to another. Hay fever, meanwhile, is not contagious, as it's an allergic reaction some people have to pollen.

"Pollen is a fine dust that disperses in the wind to reach other plants for pollination and start new plants," explains Claire Nevinson, Boots superintendent pharmacist.

"Tree pollen counts are highest between late March and mid-May, while grass and weed pollen counts are highest between mid-May and September. If you have

hay fever, you're most likely to experience symptoms when the pollen count is high."

When are your symptoms happening?

Noticing patterns with the timing of your symptoms can also help indicate whether it's hay fever. Do symptoms usually appear during pollen season, and get worse you go outside? However, viruses are still around during spring and summer, so the time of year doesn't rule out a cold entirely.

"Colds can still occur during warmer months, and usually involve sneezing and coughing, along with a sore throat, headache and sometimes a loss of taste and smell," says Nevinson.

fever, Nevinson adds, include: "Sneezing, a runny or blocked nose, itchy red watery eyes or an itchy throat."

Coughs are generally more associated with colds than hay fever, as well as general aches and pain, possibly a fever and a sore throat.

Both colds and hay fever cause runny nose and sneezing. Both can also cause people to feel more tired and fatigued than usual.

But with a hay fever, you are also likely to experience itchy, red and watery eyes, Nevinson points out. In some cases, hay fever may also be associated with feeling breathless, especially if you also have asthma.

Do you need to treat them differently?

Yes. There's no cure for the common cold, so here it's about symptom management, depending on how unwell you feel.

"For a cold, you should rest and drink plenty of fluids," says Nevinson. "You could also consider taking a cold symptom relief product – these often include medicine for pain relief to help with aches, alongside a decongestant to help ease a blocked nose. If the product contains paracetamol, make sure you don't take any other paracetamol-containing products at the same time."

With hay fever, taking steps to help keep pollen at bay is also key.

"Consider putting a barrier balm, such as petroleum jelly, around the nostrils to trap pollen, and wear wraparound sunglasses to help keep pollen out of your eyes," suggests Nevinson.

Are there differences in symptoms?

Many of the symptoms can be similar, but there are also tell-tale differences between a cold and hay fever. "Hay fever doesn't cause a high temperature," says Nevinson, "and most people do not feel unwell."

Some people's hay fever can be quite severe though, so how badly affected you are can vary.

Another key indicator is duration of symptoms. "A cold usually lasts one to two weeks, while hay fever can last for weeks or even months, depending on the pollen count," notes Nevinson. "The higher the pollen count, the worse the symptoms are likely to be."

The key symptoms of hay



Photos: Alamy/PA

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Learn about your heart health

By Yolante Fawehinmi, PA
Do you know the symptoms and the risks?

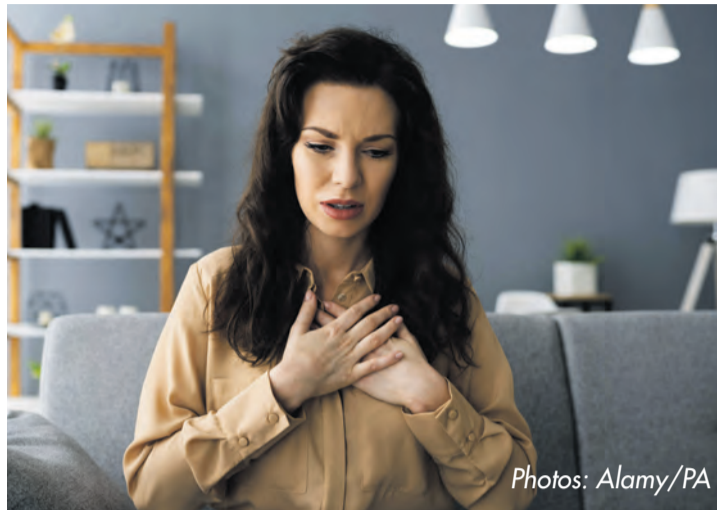
A GP has urged women to learn more about their heart health, as new research suggests 94% of women are not aware that polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) has an effect.

Women who suffer from PCOS are more likely to suffer future cardiovascular issues, including a stroke or a heart attack, many studies have found.

A survey of 2,000 women, commissioned by My Health Checked, conducted by Censuwide, found that 92% also aren't aware that experiencing preeclampsia – a condition that causes high-blood pressure in pregnancy or postpartum – can put them at risk of heart issues later on in life.

While 87% had no idea that going through menopause is a risk factor too.

GP Dr Dave Nichols said: "It's so important for women to understand what can lead them to an increased risk of heart issues, as there's so



Photos: Alamy/PA

much interplay with their hormones.

"Historically, heart disease has been considered as a disease which predominantly affects men, so increasing awareness for how it presents in women and the risk factors is crucial."

Whilst many of the risk factors for heart disease are the same for both genders including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, smoking, lack of physical activity, and diabetes – there are female-specific risk fac-

tors such as hormonal changes, pre-eclampsia or gestational diabetes.

"The symptoms of heart disease can be vague, so speaking with a medical professional is important if you are experiencing new or unusual symptoms," he says.

Symptoms could include neck, jaw or abdominal discomfort, indigestion, nausea, dizziness or lightheadedness, sweating, unusual fatigue, headaches, numbness or burning in your arms or fingers or a sudden feeling of

anxiety that can feel like a panic attack.

"It's crucial to speak with a medical professional if you're concerned, particularly as every woman's body and heart are different," said Nichols.

Although, many women surveyed were willing to make the necessary lifestyle changes to improve their heart health, with 62% saying they would increase the amount of exercise they do and 53% said they would reduce the amount of salt in their diet.

Reducing alcohol intake and less caffeine can also reduce the risks.

"Walking more is an easy way to increase your fitness, as is using the stairs and starting to incorporate body-weight exercises into your fitness routine," he added.

"I'd encourage any smoker, whether they be a cigarette or cigar smoker, to stop smoking to reduce this risk."

Nicotine replacement products are often used to support patients in their journey.



"Increase the amount of Omega 3 in your body to help improve your blood lipid profile and reduce your risk of cardiovascular diseases," advises Nichols. "Oily fish is the best source of Omega 3 fats and consuming more is the easiest way to increase your uptake." But if you can't eat enough, supplements are recommended.

"Having a high-sugar diet, for example, by drinking large amounts of fizzy drinks, can have significant effects on your health, especially when consumed long-term."

Health Premium Card patients get an exclusive heated terrace

The Quirónsalud Torrevieja hospital expands the space of its Premium Lounge with the aim of offering a more personalised, preferential, and exclusive treatment to international patients holders of their Health Premium Card.

The new Premium Terrace is a large and bright glazed space with all the maximum amenities and comfort to enjoy a quiet environment while patients are in the hospital. This new space, fully air-conditioned to preserve its temperature in winter and summer, has an area for coffee, drinks, and healthy snacks, as well as a rest area designed for relaxation and rest during waits. This space also has a coworking area equipped with Wi-Fi, plugs and furniture for work and enjoyment with electronic devices in comfort.

Advantages of the Health Premium Card

Users of the Health Premium Card have a **personal health advisor, priority access for medical appointments, a plan adapted to achieve personalised health goals that includes a check-up to know the initial condition of the patient**

as well as an exclusive Premium Lounge within the hospital where they can carry out all the procedures related to their health.

In addition, the Quirónsalud Torrevieja hospital provides you with a team for free interpretation and translation of English, German, French, Dutch, Flemish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Russian, among other languages, trained in medical terminology and cultural approaches of international patients.

Among the benefits of Health Premium Card users are:

- An initial check-up.
- Priority access to appointments.
- Three free-choice consultations with specialists.
- Six ambulance transfers.
- Fourteen home nursing visits .
- Free dental cleaning.
- Tests for the detection of major diseases.
- 10% discount on private treatments.

International reference hospital on the Costa Blanca

Hospital Quirónsalud Torrevieja is an international hospital of excellence, with a team of highly qualified professionals and state-of-the-art technol-

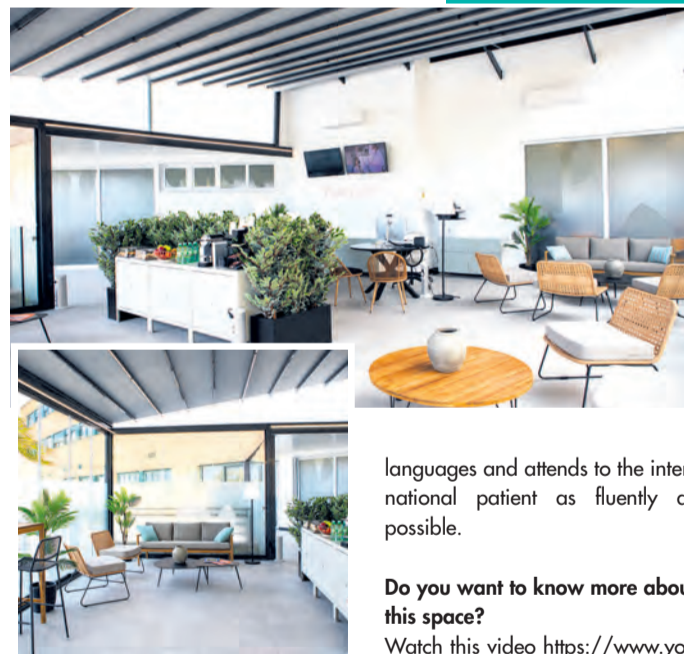
ogy. It offers a multitude of medical specialties, making it a prestigious multidisciplinary centre both in the field of oncology and in the rest of the medical and surgical specialties. It is the private hospital with the most cutting-edge technology in the Valencian Community. In its more than twenty years of experience, more than 400 people work daily to care for its patients. Due to its location, located in the city of Torrevieja, it is a benchmark for health tourism and for foreign citizens looking for their new residence on the Costa Blanca.

International Admission

The hospital has its own international admissions department, whose sole task is to process authorisations with national and international companies. All authorisation formalities are carried out on a daily basis with national and international insurance companies directly and immediately. The patient does not have to worry about these procedures, this department is exclusively in charge.

International Inpatient Ward

The hospital has an international inpatient ward created to ensure the maximum convenience, comfort, and well-



languages and attends to the international patient as fluently as possible.

Do you want to know more about this space?

Watch this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8HTIjgfp74>

More information about the Health Premium Card Service through its website:

www.healthpremiumcard.com



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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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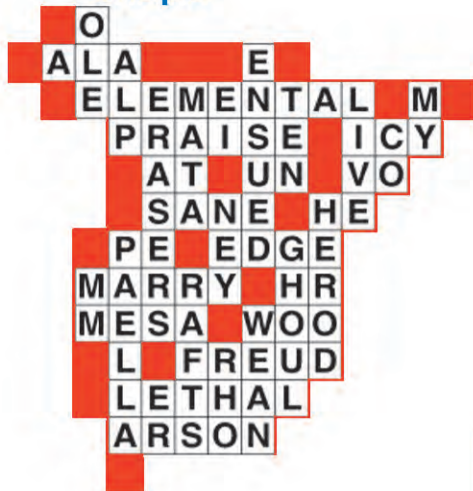
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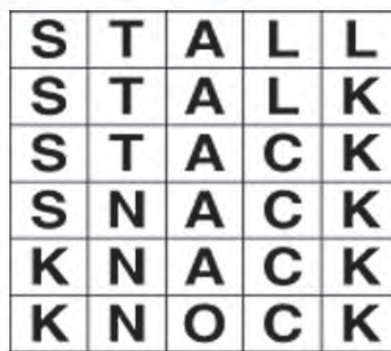
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Shape



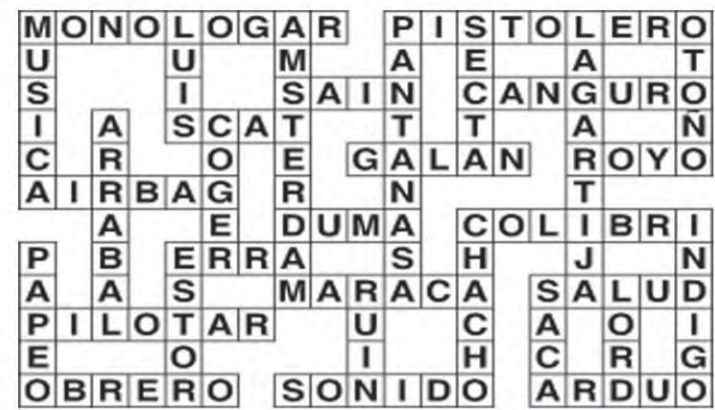
Step by step



Couplets

ATTACH, DETAIL, BOTANY,
DETACH, ATTACK, BUTANE

KrissKross



Crossword

Across: 1 Libation, 7 Taint, 8 Refresher, 9 Err, 10 Shot, 11 Fracas, 13 Canton, 14 Mortar, 17 Beagle, 18 Miss, 20 Bye, 22 Impartial, 23 Onset, 24 Consults.

Down 1 Larks, 2 Buffoon, 3 Tier, 4 Others, 5 Hives, 6 Starter, 7 Tractor, 12 Cohabit, 13/19 Car boot sales, 15 Trivial, 16 Aleppo, 17 Beast, 21 Arms.

Sudoku easy

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

Sudoku fiendish

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

Spanish-English Crossword

Across: 1 Glasses, 5 Drain, 8 Talon, 9 Attempt, 10 Sentences, 12 Ski, 13 Across, 14 Boring, 17 Axe, 18 Paintings, 20 Drivers, 21 Blade, 23 Noses, 24 Streets.

Down: 1 Gates, 2 All, 3 Singers, 4 Scarce, 5 Dates, 6 Admission, 7 Nothing, 11 Nurseries, 13 Abandon, 15 October, 16 Kisses, 18 Press, 19 Seeds, 22 Age.

Pets' Corner



Animal Angels These lovely cats are brothers and called Tom & Jerry. They are approximately nine months old and have been spayed and fully vaccinated

A new friend and owner would make them so incredibly happy.

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

If you or someone you know would like a new little friend then please call Sue from Animal Angels on 696 103 092.

Los Infiernos

This is **FIONA** she is 3 years old and weighs 12kg. Fiona came to us with seven pups who have all been adopted. It's clear that she has suffered from trauma as she is highly anxious. She has been in a foster home for six weeks and has made progress and is starting to show how affectionate she can be, however, this ends middle of May and she'll be returned back to Los Infiernos protectora, a noisy environment where all this good work could be undone very quickly. She needs a special adopter who can offer her patience, kindness and a calm environment.

Contact by email to losinfiernosdogs@gmail.com or see Facebook - LosInfiernosProtectora SupportersSPAIN

We have 300 more dogs waiting for loving homes



AKIRA **CARMEN** came to us as her owner has had to return to his home country to care for a sick family member - it is heartbreaking for both of them, Carmen is nearly two and selective about who she likes, including other dogs and cats! She loves children and walks well on the leash.

Contact Akira on 657 689 567 or you can send an email to us at akirashelter@aol.com



Aldea Felina

Denia Cat Protection League (Aldea Felina) <http://www.aldeafelina.es> Many loving, playful and cuddly

cats are at the shelter. Like the cute little **OZA** Most have gone through their health checks and are ready for adoption. They urgently need a real home and are looking forward to your visit.

To adopt Oza or any of our other cats, please call or send a WhatsApp for an appointment to 669 376 113 or email to aldea@aldeafelina.es



APAD

PIRATA is a cuddly giant who was handed over to us without hesitation. Pirata is a people-oriented dog who adores extensive cuddles and affection. He already knows a few basic commands but he needs a bit more practice with leash manners. He will undoubtedly master this with a bit of guidance and patience. We are determined to find a new home for this lovable big-hearted dog, where he can thrive and bring joy to his future family.

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



K9 Club

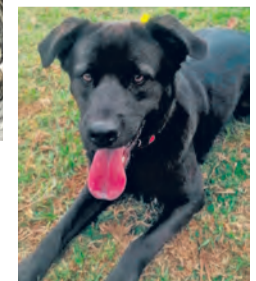
ARENA is a beautiful girl found near El Pinet beach. She has been in our care with a temporary foster family but will be coming back to the shelter if we cannot find a forever home.

Arena is around two years old and did not have the best start in life so can be a little scared when you first meet her. She needs someone with the patience and confidence to help her learn to trust. She is good with the other dogs in her foster home and at the local dog park. She just wants lots of cuddles and attention. Arena is vet checked, spayed, fully vaccinated and chipped with a passport.

For more info or to meet her please call or WhatsApp on 711 075 305 or email k9clubinfo@gmail.com



Pets in Spain



VERSO is a two-year-old labrador cross, he is good with other dogs and cats and loves children. Verso is chipped, vaccinated and neutered.

Please call the shelter on 645 46953.

Simple money-saving and sustainable hacks for gardeners

By Hannah Stephenson, PA
Eco-conscious influencer Filip Johansson offers seven easy tips and tricks.

Swedish gardener Filip Johansson ditched his job in IT when his love of gardening took off, after he and his brother commandeered a free plot of land where they started growing flowers and vegetables.

Today, his passion has gone viral, with nearly 63.2K followers on Instagram alone, who he encourages to try his money-saving, sustainable hacks to successful gardening.

He has now written his first book, *Garden Hacks*, which features 70 tips for gardeners to shortcuts, offering step-by-step instructions on ideas while recycling, saving money and thinking sustainably.

Here are a few of his ideas:

1. Make a cardboard weed barrier

Cut out a piece of cardboard, cutting through it to

the middle to create a hole, then place it around the plant.

"It stops weeds from competing with the little seedlings or the plants you have just planted. It works as a collar around the stem of the plant and also helps deter slugs from eating little seedlings."

The cardboard will disintegrate in a few weeks and if you don't like the look of it you could top it with grass cuttings or mulch, he suggests.

2. Harvest herbs quickly

Save time tearing off lots of leaves from herbs by running the stems through the holes of a colander from the inside and tugging, which should remove the leaves, which will remain in the colander for you to use. Good herbs for this include sage, mint and oregano, or anything else that won't benefit from the stems being put into your dishes.

3. Save water rinsing your harvest

"I use a basket from my bicycle as a harvest basket, picking the vegetables and then rinsing them in the basket over a bucket, so I save the water, which I then use to water plants. It's a good way to not waste water. And in the summer months you need to save every drop."

4. Revitalise old potting soil

Think again if you're planning to chuck out all your old potting soil in the spring, he advises.

"It may not have a lot of nutrients, it may be hard and dense and doesn't look so

good, but you can recondition it, as I call it, and just add some nettle water, or some coffee grounds, mix it around and let it sit for a while.

"Probably worms will start to work with the soil, so instead of composting, which takes one or two years, this takes a few weeks." You could also use comfrey water to feed to revitalise the soil, he suggests. Don't worry if it is root-laden because coffee grounds and other additions such as barbecue charcoal (not briquettes or ash) will give it structure, he says.

Don't plant the same plants in the old soil, he advises, because it will lack the nutrients which those specific plants like. He uses old rejuvenated soil as a topsoil layer for his vegetable beds when he plants new seed and mixes it with new compost to plant other types of plants.

5. Make your own seed tape

Small seeds such as carrot seed are difficult to space evenly, but you can make your own seed tape out of toilet paper to do the same.

Mix flour with water to create a sticky 'glue', lay out the toilet paper and fold it lengthways to make a crease in the middle. Lay a tape measure along the length of the paper so you can place the seeds at an even distance, then dip a pencil into the flour mixture and place it into the seeds so that one gets picked up. Twist off the seed on to the toilet paper midway between one long side and the crease.

Repeat using even spacing for the seeds, and when you're done, apply some

flour 'glue' along one edge of the paper. Fold the paper along the original crease, roll it up and let it dry, ready to lay out in a garden bed in spring when you can put some soil on top of it and water it in.

6. Stop ants in their tracks

If you have problems with ants on your patio, use coffee filters or insect netting and put them in the bottom of patio pots, to prevent the ants entering the soil. "It hinders them from starting their colony," he says.

"The other thing is keep watering, because if it's damp they don't like it. So try to always keep the soil moist."

He also recommends using cinnamon to deter them, sprinkling ground cinnamon in the bottom of your pot or pot saucer or along the lines that ants form in between paving stones or near the patio door.

7. Use corks to make perfect spacings for seedlings

"I use corks which are already uncorked from the bottle and screw them into a wooden board or plank with the spacing I want."

"So for peas or beans, you could space them 10cm, then you just push the long board with all the secured corks down into your garden bed and you have perfect holes all the way along, where you can drop in the peas or beans or small seedlings, perfectly spaced."

Garden Hacks by Filip Johansson is published by Murdoch Books, Available now.



Photos: Peter Carlsson/PA



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Jubilant Huesitos-La Vila reach final four

By Joyce French

On April 14 Huesitos-La Vila finished third in the play-off division table by beating RC Getxo. This enabled them to qualify for the semi-finals in their quest to return to the highest echelons of Spanish rugby.

Although the score line (32-12) may not suggest it, the game was tough and competitive. The Huesitos team's confidence, perseverance and good performance in the second half saw them win and qualify.

The match didn't start well for the home side. Getxo scored their first try in the third minute and another on the 15-minute mark, this time converting the kick for an extra two points (0-12). The first points for the home side came from a penalty kick by Javi Carrión in the 25th minute (3-12). It wasn't until the 34th minute that Fede scored Huesitos-La Vila's first try, with Carrión making the conversion (10-12). He subsequently punished the visitors further by putting the ball between the posts following a penalty (13-12).

In the second half, knowing



Photo: La Vila rugby club

that Valencia were ahead of Zarauz and Bilbao were beating San Cugat, Huesitos began to play their best team rugby, showing great teamwork, commitment and solidarity. Adrian scored in the 45th minute and Carrión converted, furthering the lead to 20-12. Meyer went over the line in the 57th minute, but Carrión was unable to convert (25-12). Joan sealed the victory in the 75th minute, with Mauri adding the two extra points to make it 32-12.

At the end of the match, coach Oveja expressed his team's satisfaction, thanked the fans for their support and prom-

ised to go all out in the semi-final.

After the day's results, which saw San Cugat lose 34-31 to Bilbao and Valencia Rugby beat Zarauz 87-6, Huesitos-La Vila finished third in the standings. They will meet Valencia rugby club in the semi-final at the Cuatre Carreres stadium in Valencia on Saturday, April 27 at 18.00.

The other semi-final will be a Madrid derby between Las Rozas and Liceo Francés on April 28 at 13.30 at the El Cantizal stadium.

The final will be on the weekend of May 11-12.

On the up at climbing championship

The first Elche speed climbing championship takes place this Saturday, April 27.

It takes place at Multiaventura Elche (Avenida de Travalón, 31) from 11.00 to 13.30 (approx.) and is open to climbers of all levels of experience aged eight years and over, with a minimum height of 1.35 metres.

Participants will ascend a 22-metre-high climbing wall, with the descent being via a zip line.

The organisers explained that timed climbing is a discipline that combines the excitement of ascending Multiaventura's Elche Triaction Tower with the adrenaline rush of competing against the clock.

Racing against the clock, climbers follow a pre-determined route as quickly as possible,

with different levels of difficulty and obstacles.

Registration can be done via the event's website at multiaventuraelche.com and costs €5, but be fast as places are limited and registration closes today, Wednesday April 24.

Photo: Multiaventura Elche



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