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for all English speakers

April 2009 monthly



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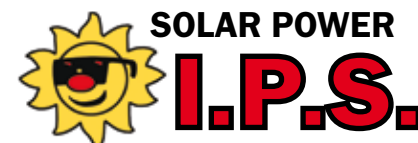


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EDITORIAL

MEET BOB THE EDITOR

WELCOME TO THE
APRIL ISSUE.

What did the grey rabbit say to
the blue rabbit? Cheer up!

Why does the Easter bunny have
a shiny nose? His powder puff is on
the wrong end.

What do you get when you cross a bunny
with an onion? A bunion

What is the difference between a crazy
bunny and a counterfeit banknote? One is
bad money and the other is a mad bunny!

Is it true that bunnies have good eyesight? Well
you never see a bunny wearing glasses, do you?

Why is a bunny the luckiest animal in the world? It
has four rabbits' feet

Why did a fellow rabbit say that the Easter Bunny
was self-centered? Because he was eggo-centric!

What do you get when you pour hot water down
a rabbit hole? A hot cross bunny.

How does the Easter Bunny say Happy Easter?
Hoppy Easter

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"NOT ALL APPEARS AS IT SEEMS" GLICEE
FOR APRIL FOOLS DAY 1945 BY

4

NORMAN ROCKWELL

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Seven Britons arrested in Spain for satellite TV fraud in the coastal area of Orihuela for distributing pirated television signals to more than 15,000 clients, most of them also British. The Guardia Civil made the arrests in several urbanisations on Tuesday, starting at 9.30am in Urbanisation Laguna III in the area of Punta Prima. Telecommunications and computer material was seized in such an amount that several vans were needed. The group distributed the signal from several national pay channels from Digital Plus as well as international satellite signals. It's estimated that they had made several million € in servicing at least 15,000 clients in the area. Several clients told the Guardia Civil that they were indeed customers of the group, but that they did not know the service was unauthorised. The seven arrested face initial charges of crimes against intellectual property and tax fraud. More arrests in the case have not been ruled out.

8 5-year-old has kidney removed through navel An 85-year-old woman with renal cancer has become the first Spanish patient to have a kidney removed through a single 4cm incision in the navel, yet another advance in keyhole surgery. The head of urology at the Hospital Clínic in Barcelona, Antonio Alcaraz, made a statement to the press today saying that the operation, known correctly as a transumbilical nephrectomy, had taken place on February 17th and that the patient, Severina, from Barbastro (Huesca) had been sent home just three days later. Alcaraz told the press that only a dozen similar operations had been carried out in the world, but that it was hoped that this method would be used more and more in the future for patients without complications as there was a much smaller risk of haemorrhage than with conventional laparoscopic surgery, there was little or no

scarring and it caused minimal pain. The operation lasted just over two and a half hours, with surgeons also removing an umbilical hernia, which was discovered during the course of the intervention. Last year, the same team of surgeons performed the world's first transvaginal nephrectomy (when a cancerous kidney was removed via the vagina), another minimally invasive procedure that requires only two 1cm incisions in the abdomen and another invisible one in the inside of the vagina. Since this first successful operation the team have extracted another 12 kidneys via the vagina, a route which is now being considered for transplanting live kidneys. For Dr Alcaraz, transumbilical surgery means another step forward in laparoscopic surgery and he added that whereas the transvaginal procedures only benefitted women patients, transumbilical procedures were an advancement for surgery on male patients too. Until laparoscopic devices were invented, removing a kidney involved making a 15-18cm incision in a patient's abdomen, which meant a much longer and more painful recovery period.

Fifty Percent Discount for Prompt Payment Motorists in Spain who pay traffic fines on the spot or within 15 days will be entitled to a 50% discount. The amendment to the law was due to come into effect at the end of March and will replace the current 30% discount. Those who pay before the cut off date will receive 40% off.

In search of eternal youth Epigenetics, the scientific discipline that involves reprogramming the genome without changing the underlying DNA sequence, is gathering weight in the investigation into a possible 'elixir of eternal youth', where 'quite encouraging' results have



been achieved. Epigenetics is already offering enormous possibilities in the fight against certain illnesses like cancer, and in the search for anti-ageing treatments. Various experiments carried out by IBIDELL-ICO in Catalunya on yeast, worms, flies and mice have shown that it is possible to increase their normal life-expectancy rates by as much as 50%, as Manel Esteller, director of the epigenetics program, explained. The challenge, he said, was to find a genetic 'equilibrium' which allows risk-free cell reproduction, i.e. achieve an increase in life-expectancy of cells without causing any irreparable genetic damage, like tumours. The possibilities offered by epigenetics to reprogram the genome without altering DNA form the basis of new technologies, with an enormous potential to increase cell-life expectancy and cure a wide range of illnesses, not only cancer, but also cardiovascular and



neurological illnesses. One of the areas being investigated is the genetic modifications caused by sirtuins, molecules that deacetylate histones, one of the proteins that regulate DNA. In cancer cells, these proteins are abundant, making the cells almost immortal. Sirtuins are also known to be implicated in

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calorie intake, which also has implications for longevity since organisms that eat less, live longer. A classic sirtuin activator is resveratrol, found in red wine, which has been shown to increase life-expectancy, and scientists are working to develop more potent forms of this molecule, which could then be administered in smaller doses with greater efficiency and fewer side effects. 'Our current investigations are centred on achieving an equilibrium between increasing life-expectancy without causing cancer, and the results so far have been very encouraging' said Esteller.

A new bridge over the river Guardiaro has been opened to link Spain and Portugal. The new crossing will save a drive of around 140 km for the inhabitants of the villages of La Granada and Pomarao, making them now only 12km apart.

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 465,000 Euros EXCELLENT nearly new VILLA of 230 m ² on land of 16,000 m ² with sea views, dining room with fireplace, kitchen, office, 4 bedrooms (one ensuite), 1 bathroom, garage air-conditioned, barbecue, swimming pool garden, well water electricity & totally fenced. Finca in full production and automatic irrigation	 Price: 420,000 Euros. EXCELLENT VILLA on land of 5,000 m ² with sea views, dining room with fireplace, large kitchen office equipped, 3 bedrooms (one ensuite), 1 bathroom, heating, terraces, garage, barbecue, garden swimming pool, water, electric plus 2 bedroom apartment.	 PRICE: 165,000 Euros PROPERTY OF 30,000 m ² of olive trees, totally flat with house of 140 m ² composed of dining room with fireplace, American kitchen, 4 bedrooms 2 bathrooms, legal own well, terrace, water, irrigation in all the property, & in full production. Good access and near to town.



Cava 'jelly' will go on sale in April. A SOLID cava designed to be eaten with a spoon rather than drunk has been created by two brothers who own a well-known wine merchant's in Catalunya. The Roca brothers, the brains behind Girona's El Celler de Can Roca restaurant and the Agustí Torelló Mata wine-merchant, have made a cava in jelly form. They say they use their existing, homemade cava and put it through a 'texturisation' process at a very low temperature to ensure it does not lose any of its qualities, properties or flavour. Adding what is referred to as Xantana gum to a bottle of cava, the sparkling wine eventually solidifies over the course of a few months. Its creators say the cava 'jelly' will probably go on sale on April 23, Sant Jordi's Day in Catalunya.

British Woman Wills All to Donaña. A British woman who died aged 90 recently left all her worldly possessions to Donaña National Park. The woman, who used to be a journalist in Britain, lived by the beach in La Cala del Moral near Velez Malaga.

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In 1957 the British news show Panorama broadcast a three-minute segment about a bumper spaghetti harvest in southern Switzerland. The success of the crop was attributed both to an unusually mild winter and to the "virtual disappearance of the spaghetti weevil." The audience heard Richard Dimbleby, the show's highly respected anchor, discussing the details of the spaghetti crop as they watched video footage of a Swiss family pulling pasta off spaghetti trees and placing it into baskets. The segment concluded with the assurance that, "For those who love this dish, there's nothing like real, home-grown spaghetti." Hundreds of people phoned the BBC wanting to know how they could grow their own spaghetti tree. To this query the BBC diplomatically replied, "Place a sprig of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best."

British Weather Machine. 1981: The Guardian reported that scientists at Britain's research labs in Pershore had "developed a machine to control the weather." The article, titled "Britain Rules the Skies," explained that "Britain will gain the immediate benefit of long summers, with rainfall only at night, and the Continent will have whatever Pershore decides to send it." Readers were also assured that Pershore scientists would make sure that it snowed every Christmas in Britain. Accompanying the article was a picture of a scruffy-looking scientist surrounded by scientific equipment.

In 1965 BBC TV featured an interview with a professor who had just invented a device called "smellovision." This miraculous technology allowed viewers to experience directly in their own home aromas produced in the television studio. The professor offered a demonstration by cutting some onions and brewing coffee. A number of viewers called in to confirm that they distinctly experienced these scents as



if they were there in the studio with him. Since no aromas were being transmitted, whatever these viewers thought they smelled coming out of their tv sets must be chalked up to the power of suggestion.

Viagra for Hamsters. In 2000 The Independent reported that Florida researchers had developed a Viagra-like pill to treat sexually frustrated pets, including hamsters. Veterinarians were said to have greeted the news with derision, but the article pointed out that there are few things as sad as a pet suffering from feelings of sexual inadequacy, noting that "It's not unknown for a guinea pig to sit in its cage thinking, 'I haven't had sex for months. Am I so unattractive?'" Owners were instructed to simply grind the pills up and sprinkle them in the pet's food. Laying some newspaper down on the floor once the pills began to take effect was also advised. The pills were to be marketed under the brand name Feralmone.



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BUDGET airline Ryanair is to introduce the overwhelming stench of bodily waste to its 145 routes across Europe.

The company said that by removing the toilets, adding extra seats and transforming its planes into flying cesspits it was simply keeping pace with customer expectations.

Chief executive Michael O'Leary said: "Passengers should feel free to urinate on their seats or into a cup which they can then hand to the cabin crew who will be going up and down the aisle with a couple of buckets.

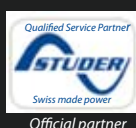
"Inevitably, given the nature of air travel, there will be some spillage, but the whole point of this policy is to make sure the aircraft is awash with as much human waste as possible.

"Anyone who has to expel solids can either turn round in their seat and try and squeeze it into the little magazine pocket, or they can take the magazine and squat in the aisle for a few minutes if that's more comfortable."

He added: "As always, Ryanair's first priority is the health and safety of our staff so we will be giving them climbing boots and crampons so they don't keep slipping in all that fresh dung."

Tom Logan, a frequent flyer from London, said: "I'm really looking forward to loading up on curry and Guinness and then going off like a muck spreader the next time I fly to Bratislava."

A spokesman for rivals easyJet said: "Letting people shit and piss all over the plane... no, I don't think we'll be doing that."



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CAPRICORN Dec. 22 - Jan. 20 Your intuition is powerful this month, particularly for financial and domestic matters. It is a month for setting goals and visualizing instead of taking aggressive action. The 17th is strong for work, communications, and mental output. Spending time, and possibly money, on the home and family is likely this month.



AQUARIUS Jan. 21 - Feb. 19 Friends and connections figure strongly in your month, dear Aquarius. Friends may even be of practical benefit in addition to spiritual. April is also notable for attracting money, rewards, or gifts. Your intuition for making money is topnotch.



PISCES Feb. 20 - Mar. 20 - April brings financial matters to your attention, dear Pisces. You are busy thinking about, discussing, and organizing your personal finances. However, be sure to put off major financial outlays until after the 17th. Take this time to budget.



ARIES Mar. 21 - Apr. 20 - Dear Aries, your demands and needs in love continue to remain strong in April, but may not be answered as you'd like for the time being. Matters improve after mid-month, however, and by May, you're getting exactly what you want, when you want!



TAURUS Apr. 21 - May 21 -You continue to lay low this month but come out of your shell from the 10-19, when others show more interest in your needs & wants. Love is tricky until the 9th, & could require you to make some personal sacrifices but this easily and naturally attract others' attention.

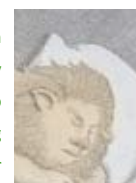


GEMINI May 22 - Jun. 22 -After a busy month of attention to career goals and professional matters, you're feeling more sociable. It's a strong month for social affairs, group contacts, and friendships in general. It's not without its complications, however, but you take pleasure in ironing out problems, particularly when it involves others' issues!



CANCER Jun. 23 - Jul. 22 Professional matters are especially important in your life in April, dear Cancer. While complicated, towards the end of the month, great satisfaction from business affairs is likely to lift your spirits. The fruits of your labour are rewarded.

LEO Jul. 23 - Aug. 23 -Some truly magical moments are likely to occur in the areas of partnering and love this month, dear Leo. Some of you may be meeting creative or spiritual people with whom you find much in common. The 10-16 is great for fun, creativity, entertainment, good humour, and adventure.



VIRGO Aug. 24 - Sep. 23 -Your connections with other people, and your dependence on them, are brought to your attention. Shared finances, power plays, and other "give and take" matters are in strong focus now. You are focusing on your close personal relationships. The 4-7 brings intense interactions.



LIBRA Sept. 24 - Oct. 23 - Relationships continue to feel complicated until the 20th, dear Libra, after which you are more able to enjoy your social life. Your goals are clearer and you are less likely to give off confusing or mixed signals to others. The 20-22 brings stellar opportunities for love.



SCORPIO Oct. 24 - Nov. 22 -Romantic and creative excitements are in store for you this month, dear Scorpio, particularly on the 14-15 and 20-22. Nevertheless, there is a lot of work that needs to be done, and you fortunately are in the right frame of mind to take care of business. The 23rd brings golden career opportunities.



SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Plenty of opportunities for extra-curricular activities arise in April for you. Playful activities, enjoying hobbies, getting out and about, and generally finding pleasure in life are themes this month. Towards the end of April, work needs more of your attention.



BY DR. RONALD ROSENFELD D.V.M.

RABIES THREAT

A group of veterinarians from the provinces of Cádiz and Malaga have issued a rabies alert! Thousands of dogs in the area around Gibraltar, within an area of an approximate radius of about 80 kilometres, have

been certified – with properly stamped and signed rabies vaccination booklets – as having been vaccinated against rabies without ever having seen a veterinarian or having been vaccinated! These are primarily hunting dogs, as the hunters have the misconception that the vaccine against rabies alters or destroys the dogs' sense of smell! This is a particular danger because it is at the centre of an area of high transit to and from North Africa, Ceuta and Morocco, where there are cases of Rabies. There is a veterinarian in the Algeciras area presumably implicated in this fraud who sells vaccination books signed and stamped without vaccinating the dog cited in the book.

Rabies is a fatal infectious disease transmitted in the saliva of an infected carrier, most often by biting a healthy non-infected individual. At the present time, it is eradicated in Spain but not in Ceuta, Melilla, or Morocco. In 2004 preventative measures were stepped up due to a case of infection in Morocco of an Austrian citizen, and an outbreak was detected in France, caused by a dog that came from Africa via the area around Gibraltar.

The complaint against the implicated veterinarian supposedly perpetrating this fraud is under investigation. It was first brought to the attention of some authorities as far back as 1993, however, the Prosecutors Office of Algeciras has only recently taken the matter under more serious consideration, and some headway is finally being

made through the bureaucratic and legal quagmire. This hopefully will put an end to the fraud and thereby avoid the potential threat of a Rabies outbreak at best or an epidemic at worst!

Animal Protection Laws

Last December a dog was found near death, in a plastic bag in a dustbin in the San Cugat area of Barcelona. According to a local judge, armed with the Catalan Animal Protection Statutes, this is a serious crime and not just a minor offence.

The dog, Buc a 5-year-old Boxer, was diagnosed with an incurable open sore over its rib cage and was suffering. The veterinarian told the owner that euthanasia was the only solution and would cost 180 Euros. The owner being a pensioner felt that was more than he could afford and took Buc home. A neighbour offered to help by killing Buc and burying him, to which the owner agreed, despite the sorrow of losing his companion. A few days later and due to Buc's microchip, the town police were able to locate the owner to inquire how Buc was in a dustbin in such a state. The neighbour confessed to his part and took responsibility for the 350 Euro cost of treating and finally euthanizing Buc. The prosecution is seeking proper application of the animal rights laws for the trial scheduled for 27 April. A guilty verdict could mean 3 months to one year in prison.

The owner insists that he really loved his dog. It was not his intention that Buc suffer, but that he felt that the solution offered by his neighbour was the only realistic one for him and for Buc, he felt betrayed by his neighbour.

Ronald Rosenfeld D.V.M.

A. M. P. A. R. E. The society for the protection of animals Ebro region. Based

in Mora La Nova. We desperately need to re-home dogs to make room for more!

We have over 200 dogs for adoption. Lynn 638 731434 English Isabel 977 404720

Spanish/ Catalan Donations always appreciated.



A.M.P.A.R.E.
PROTECTORA D'ANIMALS
DE LA RIBERA D'EBRE
Based in MORA LA NOVA

CONTACT | Lynn : 638 731434 English
Isabel: 977 404 720 / 657 905 465 Spanish/ Catalan
www.naturahumana.com/ampare



Reading Dr Rosenfeld's article in the March 2009 issue has just once again highlighted the problems we all experience in this beautiful area, the spring sun has only just started to warm up and already the mosquitoes (mosca Negra) and other unwelcome bugs have already made their appearance.

Having moved to the area just on 5 years ago, I enthusiastically started clearing our land just to be confronted with so many bites from the mosca negra, that I could hardly see out of my eyes on occasion. My father also found that he was allergic to the bites which were swollen red and extremely itchy, if you dared scratch the itch would just get worse and drive you crazy. My cat also came in every day covered in ticks and fleas. Asking in the village what can be done to resolve this problem, I was continually told to use chemical products that were so offensive to use that I had to find something that would solve this massive problem.

Being a Medical Microbiologist, I knew that there must be a product that can be used which will deal with the insects and yet be more animal and human friendly. After lots of research I came across a product which is completely natural and yet is extremely effective to control the ticks, fleas, flies, mosquitoes, mosca negra and other unwanted insects.

These products are a combination of fossil shell flour, a selection of herbs and essential oils. There is a spray to use around the outside of the house which kills off the flies, mosquitoes & mosca negra and makes outdoor living a joyful experience again. Then there is a powder which is sprinkled in the animal kennels, stables or pens, this kills off the fleas, lice, red mite etc. This powder can also be rubbed into the coats of the animals or put into their sand

baths. There is also a powder which can be fed to your animals on a regular basis which will help control internal parasites and improve the condition of the animal. As all these products are completely natural they will not harm your pets, animals or yourselves and truly make living in this beautiful area a pleasure again.

I also came across an Anti-Bite preparation which is a combination of essential oils in an alcohol base, which when sprayed onto the bites of the mosca negra or other insects, reduces the swelling and the itching within minutes.

All these products have been thoroughly tested by numerous people over a full season and all have found it very effective and easy to use. Armed with these products, my life in the Spanish summer has once again become a wonderful experience.

For further information on any of these products please contact Charlotte on 622 553446 or email me sin_moscas@yahoo.com .



Easter Travel

Easter break is nearing and with it some good news for pet owners. The British low cost hotel chain Travelodge is making it possible for clients at its hotels in Spain to ask for a pet bed! According to the chain the pet beds are available at its hotels in Las Rozas and Torrelaguna, near Madrid as well as L'Hospitalet near Barcelona. These have been available since last year at a supplemental cost of €14.

"HELLO, I AM ENCARNA THE ANIMAL REFUGE TERRES EBRE, PLEASE HELP ME!!!!!! I HAVE 20 PUPPIES AND 70 DOGS, 40

CATS PLEASE

I NEED

FOOD FOR

DOGS AND

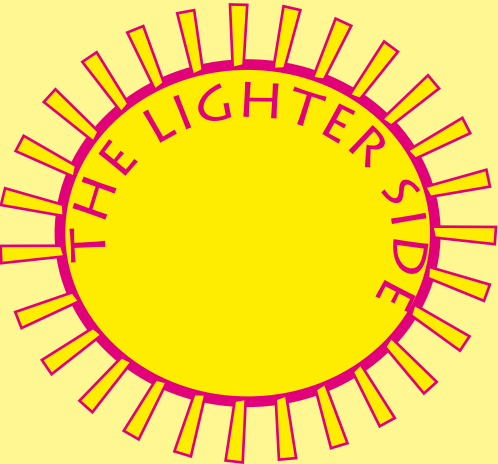
CATS....."



CALL ARCA TODAY TO PROVIDE A HOME TO ONE OF 200 DOGS NEEDING A LOVING HOME or IF YOU CAN



VOLUNTEER ANY ASSISTANCE WITH THE DOGS



What do you mean
—
You Fooled Me?!



TOP 20 REASONS WHY CHOCOLATE IS BETTER THAN SEX.

1. You can always have chocolate.
2. "If you love me you'll swallow that" has real meaning with chocolate.
3. Chocolate satisfies even when it's gone soft.

4. You can safely have chocolate while driving.
5. You can make chocolate last as long as you want to.
6. You can have chocolate in front of your mother.
7. If you bite the nuts too hard, the chocolate won't mind.
8. Two people of the same sex can have chocolate without being called nasty names.
9. The word "commitment" doesn't scare off chocolate.
10. You can have chocolate on your workbench/desk during working hours without upsetting your workmates.
11. You can ask a stranger for chocolate without getting your face slapped.
12. You don't get hairs in your mouth with chocolate.
13. With chocolate there's no need to fake it.
14. Chocolate doesn't make you pregnant.
15. You can have chocolate any time of the month.
16. Good chocolate is easy to find.
17. You can have as many kinds of chocolate as you can handle.
18. You are never too young or too old for chocolate.
19. When you have chocolate it doesn't keep your neighbors awake.
20. With chocolate size doesn't matter: it's always good.

Actual call centre conversations Continued!!!!

On another occasion, a man making heavy breathing sounds from a phone box told a worried operator:

'I haven't got a pen, so I'm steaming up the window to write the number on'.

Tech Support: 'I need you to right-click on the Open Desktop'.

Customer: 'OK'.

Tech Support: 'Did you get a pop-up menu?'

Customer: 'No'.

Tech Support: 'OK. Right-Click again. Do you see a pop-up menu?'

Customer: 'No'.

Tech Support: 'OK, sir. Can you tell me what you have done up until this point?'

Customer: 'Sure. You told me to write 'click' and I wrote 'click'.

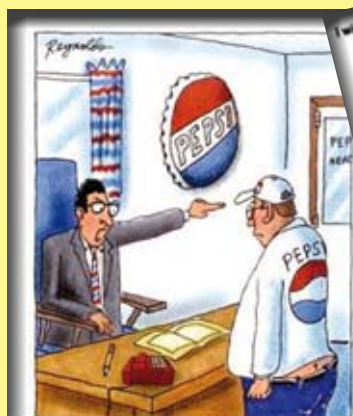
--Tech Support: 'OK. In the bottom left hand side of the screen, can you see the 'OK' button displayed?'

Customer: 'Wow. How can you see my screen from there?'

Caller: 'I deleted a file from my PC last week and I have just realised that I need it. If I turn my system clock back two weeks will I have my file back again?'

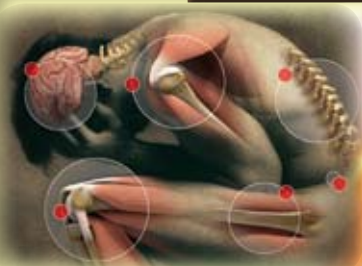
The QBuild Awards - 2007 Winning Designs and Construction

THE Nominees are...



"You're fired, Jack. The lab results just came back, and you tested positive for COKE."





flexibility, clears Damp Heat

Gall Bladder GB20: under the skull, on either side of the spine in the hollows that lie 2-3 inches apart

- *relieves neck pain & stiffness, clears Wind*

Triple Warmer TW5: 3 finger-widths above the wrist on the outside of the arm in the dip between the 2 bones - *tendinitis, wrist pain*

Large Intestine 11: by the elbow where crease ends when you bend it

- *clears Heat, elbow pain*

Large Intestine LI4: (Note: don't use this point if pregnant, as it can start contractions) in the web between thumb and 1st finger, at the highest point when you squeeze them together

- *analgesic, anti-inflammatory*

Stomach ST36: on the outside of the leg just out from the shin bone, 4 finger widths below the base of the kneecap - *knee pain, helps Blood & Qi circulation*

Liver LIV3: between the 1st & 2nd toes, run your finger up to where it can go no further & press in - *boosts the Liver for flexibility of tendons*

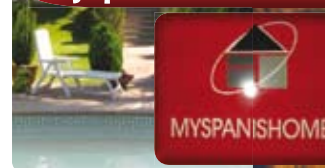
Next month I will outline more of the local points to treat specific joint problems to add to these core muscular-skeletal support points. The local area acupoints help increase circulation, reducing inflammation & gradually increasing joint movement & comfort.

So, good luck & here's to dancing when we are 80!

Taru Burstall, M.A.
Psychology, Dip.
Massage, Licensed
Acupuncturist.
Call 629 301 509



Gallbladder 34 (Master Point for the tendons & muscles): below the knee, one inch below and in front of the head of the Tibia, which runs up the side of the leg
- *helps Liver maintain*



www.myspanishhome.com



M1062 - L'Ampolla
138m2 Country House
3 beds, 2 baths,
Sea Views!
5.600m2 parcela
Price: 160.000 euros



M1036 - Aldover
100m2 Country House
3 beds, 2 baths, pool
2.000m2 parcela
Price: 180.000 euros OFFERS!



M1072 - Tortosa
Country House
3 beds, 2 bathrooms,
9137m2
Price: 157.500 euros



M1076 - Jesus i Maria
m.² 2000
Garden, 5 Bedrooms
1 Bathroom
Kitchen, Electricity
Water, Parking
Price: 149.000 euros



M1090 - Roquetes
Chalet for finishing
7 rooms,
Electricity, Well
3,500m2 parcela
Price: 145.000 euros



M1081 - Jesus
Riverside 3 bedroom
bed and Breakfast plus
2 bed self Catering
cottage for sale!
Direct River Mooring -
Furnished.
3000m2 parcela
Price 275.000 euros



M1084 - Bitem
150m2 Casa/Furnished
Immaculate!
3 bedrooms
2 bathrooms, GARAGE
Price: 155.000 euros



M1088 - Vora Parc / Tortosa
Piso of 116m.² Terrace
Bedrooms 4
Bathrooms 2. Furniture
Swimming Pool
Califaccion (Central
Heating) Air condition-
ing. Elevator Parking
Price: 189.000 euros



M1045 - Roquetes
Country House
2 beds, bath, well.
25.000m2 parcela
Price: 115.000 euros



M0053 - Tortosa
Superb country
property
2 beds, shower room,
fantastic automatic
power system!
Fenced & gated!
Price: 150.000 euros

Av. Generalitat 70, 43500, Tortosa,
Tarragona, Spain
email: info@myspanishhome.com

+34 977 446 655 office
+34 639 041 277 mobile Stephanie
+34 679 499 316 mobile Steve

'THINGS THAT STICK UP!'

By your celebrity DJ, you can listen to hime live on www.futureradio.co.uk Wednesday mornings 10..00-13.00

"Very flat, Norfolk", was a remark made by a character in Noel Coward's "Private Lives". Well, that's not strictly true, there are some bumpy bits, and around some of the edges it is getting dangerously close to disappearing below sea level. In fact it has already been proposed that some parts of the Broads area, a popular tourist destination, should be turned over to the sea and flooded.

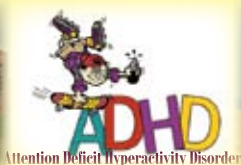
Norfolk folk, obviously want to conserve their flat landscape, and seem to have an aversion to anything that sticks up more than a few feet off the ground. When a proposal is

made to erect a mobile phone mast the natives will certainly rise up in anger. Previous objections to these necessities of modern life where previously focussed on the "it will

fry our brains" argument. There was an apparent belief that people would be rendered insensible and their children, in particular, would become mindless zombies and bump into the furniture. Now there are a significant number of kids like that already having been dosed on a regular basis with drugs to combat ADHD. Or "naughty kids disease" as I prefer to call it. Nevertheless, either to dispel the theory or out of necessity, mobile masts appear on the top of council flats and hospital buildings because no real scientific evidence of "brain frying" exists. Campaigners have had to resort to other methods of protest in order to rid their area of this supposed "evil".

Having failed to make any headway on the dangerous "rays" theory the next argument to be put forward is about the physical appearance of things. Although many are little more conspicuous than your average streetlight it has to be agreed that they do stick up in the air. Such goings-on are not in line with the Norfolk flat-earth theory. Although they can be disguised as other things, like trees for example, they are still objected to on a regular basis even though we now seem to live in a society with one ear glued permanently to a mobile phone and therefore have to rely on the things being built somewhere.

But a far greater evil has arrived to



besmirch the landscape. The world energy crisis has brought about the need for alternative energy sources and with this has come the innovation of the "wind farm". The introduction of the first wind generator to Norfolk was seen as a novelty. It was the centre attraction of the Ecotec Centre, a well-meaning theme park designed to educate people about the benefits of recycling. However the joys of discovering that you could grow vegetables in recycled human 'poo' somehow failed to equal the attractions of Alton Towers and the centre closed leaving only the major exhibit which was a large wind generator. Not only could the natives go to point at this magnificent piece of engineering, but they could ascend the tower and point down. I should explain that Norfolk people like things to point at. "Look Mummy, the lights are changing colour all on their own, red, amber and green, is it magic?," "Hush my child, they are called traffic lights and are powered by dark forces". When the M25 was opened they even ran coach trips to enable local people to gaze upon it, and point.

But I digress. Having one wind generator to point at was one thing but "farms" of them was quite another. Now I have seen the forests of turbines on Spanish hillsides and I can assure you that plans for developments locally are on a much smaller scale. Probably ten machines at the most. Nevertheless planning applications are opposed on a regular basis. The noise will be a disturbance, is one argument. What about the birds? Won't they fly into them? Another fear was they would disturb the radar system which scans the skies over Norfolk. Now I'm left to wonder what kind of air security system we have that fails to determine

the difference between a moving 747 and a stationary windmill, but there you go. Plans are submitted by individual farmers trying to scratch a living from their land to major industrialists like Lotus and Bernard Matthews. Obviously the turkey powered generators are not up to the job. All these applications are met with disapproval at some point. The benefits of saving the planet do not come into the argument at all. The overriding objection is that they



will stick up in the air and spoil the view. The view of what? For the most part there is little view to spoil, and actually I find these windmills quite elegant.

The only exception to these objections is the construction of wind farms off the coast. The Scroby Sands development is comfortably placed a mile offshore. The turbines are seen more as a tourist attraction rather than a major contribution to minimise the effects of global warming. Something you can easily point at, and from a safe distance well out of reach of plummeting seagulls!

Now you may agree that the locals have a point. Maybe they want to preserve the landscape as

it has always been. But you would be missing one factor here. For hundreds of years the Norfolk landscape has been dotted with windmills of all kinds. They ground the corn, and pumped the water into the dykes to keep huge parts of the landscape dry which are below sea level. Without

them the North Norfolk coast and the productive fenlands of the Cambridgeshire borders would not exist. The ruins of these mills still stand, and in some cases have been rebuilt as holiday homes. Of course they are a lot smaller than the megaliths that generate today's power. The uses to which windmills are put may have changed, but the need to harness the power of nature still has its uses; this time to help save the planet.

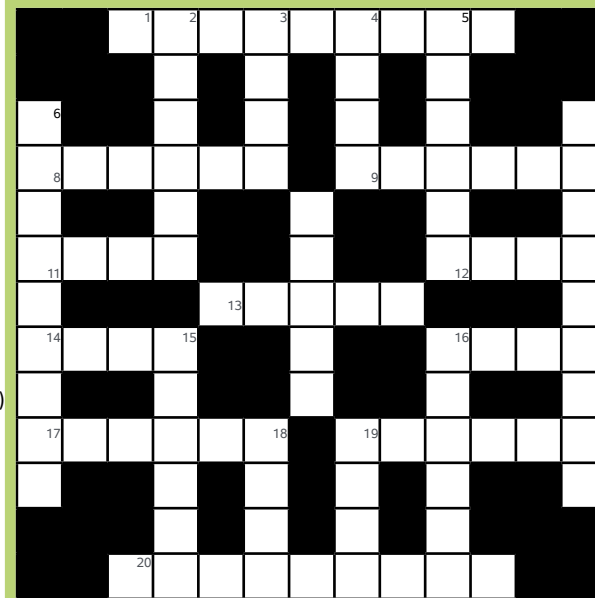
© Mike Stevens 2009



SPANGLISH?-ANSWERS NEXT MONTH

ACROSS

1. identify
8. she forgot
9. idle
11. dribble
12. U.F.O.
13. to go past
14. nothing
16. alquilar (E)
17. peculiarity
19. hut
20. to hire (someone)



DOWN

2. adrift
 3. trunrip
 4. en (E)
 5. coat
 6. sweetbox
 7. masterly
 10. backbone
 15. approval
 16. pink
 18. lindar (E)
 19. sparkling wine
- BYSARAH (E=translate to english otherwise to spanish)**

ANSWERS TO THE MARCH ISSUE OF SPANGLISH

ACROSS:	9. manga	18. ardent	27.add	DOWN:	5. clam	14. sty	20. teach
2. tulipan	10. tramp	21. hen	28. zinc	1. mofa	9. mochila	15. art	22. manta
6. solo	12. amp	23. alter	29. tome	2. tough	11. poetico	16. rey	24. lair
7. ugly	17. habito	25. carro	30. hermana	3. idioma	13. ebb	19. seldom	26. ramp



"While many around the world give roses on Saint Valentine's Day, in Barcelona they've been exchanging them on April 23 since the 15th century. Today being rescued from dragons is rarely required, so 21st-century men retain their hero status by buying 6 million long-stemmed roses in one day. It's a rare señora or señorita who strolls the streets without a bouquet."

Saint George is one of the most venerated saints in the Anglican Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodox Churches, and the Eastern Catholic Churches. He is immortalised in the tale of George and the Dragon and is one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. His memorial is celebrated on 23 April. He is regarded as one of the most prominent military saints.

St. George is the patron saint of Aragon, Catalonia, England, Ethiopia, Georgia, Greece, Lithuania, Palestine, Portugal, and Russia, as well as many cities.

The Life and Death

George was born to a Christian noble family during the late third century between about 275 AD and 285 AD, in Lydda, Palestine. His father Geronzio was a Roman army official from Cappadocia and his mother was from Palestine. They were both Christians and from noble families of Anici (which means "can not be defeated"), so by this the child was raised with Christian beliefs.

In the year AD 302, Diocletian (influenced by Galerius) issued an edict that every Christian soldier in the army should be arrested and every other soldier should offer a sacrifice to the Pagan gods. But George objected and with the courage of his faith approached the Emperor and ruler. Diocletian was upset, not wanting to lose his best soldier and the son of his best official, Geronzio. George loudly renounced the Emperor's edict, and in front of his fellow

soldiers he claimed himself to be a Christian and declared his worship of Jesus Christ. Diocletian attempted to convert George, even offering gifts of land, money and slaves if he made a sacrifice to the Pagan gods. The Emperor made many offers, but George never accepted.

Recognizing the futility of his efforts, Diocletian was left with no choice but to have him executed for his refusal. Before the execution George gave his wealth to the poor and prepared himself. After various torture sessions, including laceration on a wheel of swords in which he was miraculously resuscitated three times, George was executed by decapitation before Nicomedia's city wall, on April 23, 303. A witness of his suffering convinced Empress Alexandra and Athanasius, a pagan priest, to become Christians as well, and so they joined George in martyrdom. His body was returned to Lydda for burial, where Christians soon came to honor him as a martyr.

Saint George and the Dragon

In the Western version, a dragon makes its nest at the spring that provides water for the city of "Silene" (perhaps modern Cyrene) in Libya or the city of Lydda, depending on the source. Consequently, the citizens have to dislodge the dragon from its nest for a time, in order to collect water. To do so, each day they offer the dragon at first a sheep, and if no sheep can be found, then a maiden must go instead of the sheep. The victim is chosen by drawing lots. One day, this happens to be the princess. The monarch begs for her life to be spared, but to no avail. She is offered to the dragon, but there appears Saint George on his travels. He faces the dragon, protects himself with the sign of the cross, slays it and rescues the

princess. The grateful citizens abandon their ancestral paganism and convert to Christianity.

St George's Cross

The "Colours of Saint George", or St George's Cross are a white flag with a red cross, frequently borne by entities over which he is patron (e.g. England, Georgia, Liguria, Catalonia etc). The origin of the St George's Cross came from the earlier plain white tunics worn by the early crusaders.

Patronage and remembrance

With the revival of Scottish and Welsh nationalism, there has been renewed interest within England in Saint George, whose memory had been in abeyance for many years. This is most evident in the St George's flags which now have replaced Union Flags in stadiums where English sports teams compete. St George's Day is celebrated each year in London with a day of celebration run by the Greater London Authority and the London Mayor. The City of Salisbury holds an annual St George's Day pageant, the origins of which are



believed to go back to the thirteenth century.

Spain

In Spain: San Jorge, in Catalunya: Sant Jordi, in Aragon: San Jorge).

In Spain, Saint George also came to be considered as the patron saint of the medieval Crown of Aragon and the territory of four current autonomous communities of Spain: Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands. Nowadays Saint George is the patron saint of both Aragon and Catalonia, as well as the patron saint of historically important Spanish towns such as Cáceres or Alcoi.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE BOOK

Legend has it that Saint George, Patron Saint of Catalonia and international knight-errant, slew a dragon about to devour a beautiful Catalan princess. From the dragon's blood sprouted a rosebush, from which the hero plucked the prettiest rose for the princess. Hence the traditional Rose Festival celebrated in Barcelona since the Middle Ages to honor chivalry and love. At the end of the 19th century, Sant Jordi became a Catalan symbol as it was felt that his struggle against the dragon was similar to the Catalan struggle for freedom. In 1923, this lover's "fiesta" became even more poetic when it merged with "el dia del llibre", or The Day of the Book, to mark the nearly simultaneous deaths of Miguel de Cervantes and William Shakespeare, the two giants of literary history, on April 23, 1616. (the rose as a symbol of love and the book as a symbol of culture)

It became traditional to give a rose and a book to a loved one and annual literary competitions were held to stimulate young people to cultivate, respect and take a delight in the Catalan literature and language, a tradition which inspired UNESCO in 1995, to declare this date the International Day of the Book.

Offer your lady a rose, buy your man a book. For those ambling readers, choosing from overwhelming hardcover and paperback options may be the most strenuous challenge. Not every book on display is great literature, but since this fiesta is also known as the Day of Lovers, women shop for the perfect books for the men they love.

Catalan proverb

Si plou per Sant Jordi les cireres en orris !

If it rains on St. George's day, there will be no cherries!



LIFE IN A CATALAN GARDEN

COMPOSTING IS EASY



- **Garden prunings, lawn clippings and weeds** – try soaking troublesome weeds in a bucket of water for a few weeks first to go all sludgy.
- **Paper and cardboard** – just remove all plastic windows and any laminated products first.
- **Kitchen scraps** - even meat and fish will compost down into lovely goodness for your soil. Just ensure your compost pile is pet proof and put these items deep into the pile. Bones can be a problem as they can become brittle and dangerous if swallowed by the dogs.
- **Manure, 'humanure' & dog waste** – is controversial but hey what else will you do with it? Make sure it is always buried within the compost. If you have space for a dry composting toilet you can reduce your water usage and improve your compost creation in one step. Manure is full of bacteria that love to break down organic items. Commercial, organic compost activators are usually dry manure.
- **Urine** - probably best left to the boys!
- **Wood ash and sawdust** – will add potash and bulk to your compost.
- **Pet or livestock bedding** - from a gerbil cage or the contents of a hencoop

- **Other natural fibres** - old woollen sweaters, cotton socks, hair or pet fur.

We all now have to separate the organic matter from our rubbish before setting off to the municipal bins so why not start your own compost heap and keep all the goodness you're sorting out, for your own garden?

Anything that was once alive will break down into organic components. So if an item was comprised of 100% natural materials it can be composted, that's what nature would be doing anyway.

Here are some common items we could compost but do whatever is practical for your lifestyle - not everyone wants to give up on the flushing toilet just yet!



Remember! Anything once alive will break down into compost.

Your finished compost will smell like rich woodland soil, crumbly and dark. But before things are completely composted they can be a bit wiffy, so cover up or bury within the heap, all the smelly stuff!

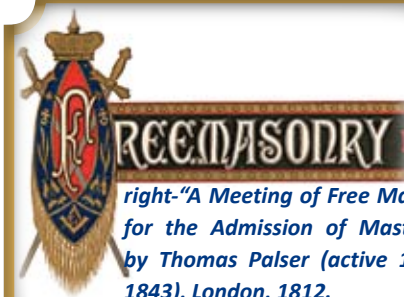
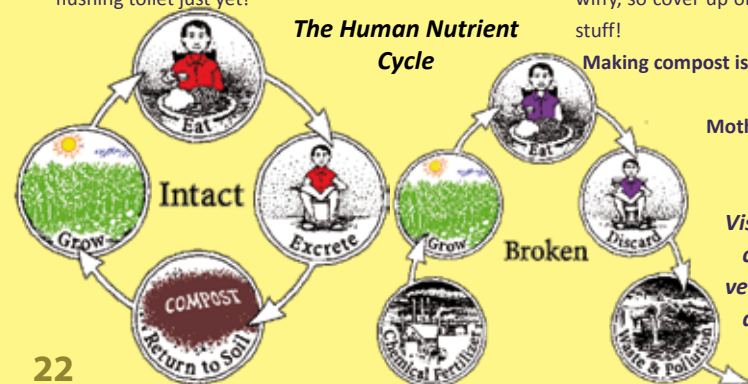
Making compost is the most basic method of reducing waste and recycling.

Mother Nature's always done it and now so should we.

The Catalan Gardener

Visit me at www.catalangarden.com for more information on vegetable gardening, preserving and rural living in Catalunya.

The Human Nutrient Cycle



right-"A Meeting of Free Masons for the Admission of Masters," by Thomas Palser (active 1799-1843), London, 1812.

NEWS RELEASE

NEW MASONIC LODGE PLANNED IN THE COSTA AZAHAR

A group of British Freemasons who now live in Spain is planning to start a new Masonic Lodge based in Vinaros later this year. They are inviting Masons and people who might consider joining to get in touch so they can join the development from its beginning.

In Britain, Freemasons have adopted an open door policy in recent years to demonstrate that many myths and suspicions about the ancient brotherhood are unfounded and ill-informed. Modern Masonry in Spain is still relatively new, having been re-instated in 1987. The first English speaking lodge was formed a year later in Javea.

Two years ago, White River Lodge – which carries out its ceremonies in English – was established in Valencia and some masons from Vinaros and further north enjoyed the opportunity of continuing an affiliation they had to leave behind when they moved from Britain to Spain.

Now, with encouragement from their colleagues in Valencia, a venue has been found in Vinaros for monthly meetings once the new Lodge is formally consecrated at the end of this year.

Edward Ward, who



lives in Riba Roja is to be the first Master of the new lodge and says he is delighted to be actively involved in the movement again. Edward had enjoyed sharing in a number of lodges in the Bristol area before he and his wife moved to Calatunja.

Mr Ward says; "I am delighted that we have a nucleus of people who share the same aspirations and enjoy their membership of Freemasonry. Many people who might consider joining us are reassured encouraged by the fellowship we enjoy and heartened to see sums of charity money raised to help worthy and needy causes in Spain. It is a sure sign that masonry is international."

The new lodge will be recognized by the governing body of freemasons in Spain, the Gran Logia d'Espana, which means that fellowship will be shared with existing Spanish speaking lodges in Castellon and Tarragona. Many of their members are looking forward to the dedication of the lodge in Vinaros.

The new group is looking for Masons, former Masons and would-be initiates (new members of Freemasonry) to join them during the coming months. They are willing to answer any questions about what is involved and to welcome people to this new and exciting project.

Contact for more information:-

In Cataluna – Edward Ward

977 416 476

teddy.edward2@virgin.net

In Vinaros and Costa Azahar

– Les Beech 678 357 713

lesbeech@hotmail.co.uk



REFORMING A PROPERTY IN SPAIN: 7 COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Whether they're rebuilding an old stone barn or transforming a Catalan townhouse into a Spanish dream home, somehow property

owners don't always take into account that they may need to sell in the future.

As a real estate agent, I naturally get to see a wide range of reformed resale properties. Sadly, lack of attention to common sense basics at the planning stage can create obstacles to a sale a few years down the line.

This becomes acute when the supply of properties exceeds demand of course, so if you've bought an old house to renovate or are building new, be sure to think things through carefully before you hire an architect or start building—especially if you will be doing the work yourself.

1) How many bedrooms??

Spacious, exquisitely converted rural properties with just one or two huge bedrooms and price tags to match...

Ideal for a couple, they won't be an option for well-heeled families with children, looking for a holiday home.

Tip: try to include a small third or fourth bedroom, or an office/study that can easily be converted to one.

2) Keeping it on the level

A crucial point: buyers planning to retire in Spain are always alert to how stairs, steps and changes in level will affect them in the future. In particular, stairs in old village houses can be too steep to qualify for the *cédula de habitabilidad* certificate, needed in Catalonia for sale, rental, mortgage, and supply of mains services.

Tip: plan carefully to avoid or minimise changes in level, in and outside the house, and make sure all stairs are safe.

3) Use logical layouts

Older Spanish properties often feature strange labyrinths of tiny window-less rooms and endless corridors. While it sounds obvious, it's worth taking extra care to achieve a logical layout of well-proportioned rooms.

Tip: if possible, avoid having a WC or bathroom connect directly on to a living room.

A good combination: light interior and neutral tiles



4) Natural light: get the right balance

Natural light is an key factor



While planning regulations mean enlarging or adding windows is not always possible in rural house reforms, natural light is a key appeal factor: no-one likes gloomy interiors. But

don't go over the top—Spanish windows are traditionally small to keep out the fierce summer heat.

Tip: do everything possible to create light interiors, and don't forget to use double-glazed windows and shutters.

5) Max headroom

For resale properties, the *cédula* requirements set a minimum ceiling height of 2.20 metres for bedrooms and living rooms, and 2.10 metres in kitchens, bathrooms and passages.

Tip: watch headroom on stairways and above all, avoid low doorways: they are a major turn-off for most buyers.

6) Plan ahead for central heating

Anyone who's spent a winter in the *campo* will know that it can get pretty damn chilly at times! A single wood burner may work for you, but savvy buyers will be looking for central heating.

Tip: have pipes installed for central heating when you have your reform work done. That way, you —or a potential buyer— only need install radiators and a boiler at a later date.

7) Avoid the patchwork floor effect!

Use the same type of flooring throughout a home to achieve a seamless effect. Integrating small areas of old or decorative tiles into the mix can work very well, but needs to be done skilfully. Avoid different tiles in every room! It

looks bitty, and buyers will factor the replacement cost into any offer.

Tip: use flooring in keeping with the type of property. Shiny ceramic tiles look fine in modern interiors, less so in a reformed *masia*. Good quality terracotta-type tiles always seem popular with buyers.

More information about the *cédula*

The Generalitat has a simple document with basic information about the requirements for the *cédula de habitabilidad*. At the moment it's available in Catalan only; if you would like a copy please email me on info@fincasdirect.com.

Property of the month

Property of the month

15 minutes' drive from Mora la Nova in an idyllic valley setting, this property has good access, 2 hectares of land with mature, recently-pruned olive trees, an 80m2 stone house to rebuild (registered on the deeds as a *masia*), a stone well and irrigation water, all for 32.000 euros. Photos available soon, email info@fincasdirect.com.



Jeff Greensmith runs www.fincasdirect.com and is a registered estate agent and experienced Spanish/Catalan translator and interpreter. He has lived in Catalonia since 1986. While the points contained in this article are true to best of our knowledge, they do not constitute legal advice on the part of Fincas Direct or The Olive Press. Please use this information responsibly and seek professional legal advice if in doubt.

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"WHENCE PROCEEDS THE CUSTOM OF MAKING APRIL FOOLS?"

In 1708 a correspondent wrote in to the British Apollo magazine to ask, "Whence proceeds the custom of making April Fools?" The question is one that many people are still asking today.

In the April 2nd, 1698 edition of Dawks's News-Letter (a British newspaper) reported that "Yesterday being the first of April, several persons were sent to the Tower Ditch to see the Lions washed." Sending gullible victims to the Tower of London to see the "washing of the lions" (a non-existent ceremony) was a popular prank.



It became traditional for this prank to be played on April Fool's Day.

The most widespread theory about the origin of April Fool's Day involves the Gregorian calendar reform of the late sixteenth century.

The theory goes like this: In 1582 France became the first country to switch from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar established by the Council of Trent (1563). This switch meant, among other things, that the beginning of the year was moved from the end of March to January 1. Those who failed to keep up with the change, who stubbornly clung to the old calendar system and continued to celebrate the New Year during the week that fell between

"EASTER SUNDAY FACTS-APRIL 12TH"



In medieval times a festival of egg throwing was held in church, during which the priest would throw a hard-boiled egg to one of the choirboys. It was then tossed from one choirboy to the next and whoever held the egg when the clock struck 12 was the winner and retained the egg.

The first Easter baskets were made to look like bird's nests. Easter Bonnets are a throw back to the days when the people denied themselves the pleasure of wearing finery for the duration of Lent.

The traditional act of painting eggs is called Pysanka.

To Egyptians, the egg was a sacred token of the renovation of mankind after the Flood.

The egg has always been a symbol of the Resurrection to Christians.

The date of Passover is variable as it is dependent on the phases of the moon, and thus Easter is also a movable feast.

March 25th (known in England as Lady Day) and April 1st, had various jokes played on them. For instance, pranksters would surreptitiously stick paper fish to their backs. The victims of this prank were given the epithet Poisson d'Avril, or April Fish.

Thus, April Fool's Day was born.

April Fools' Day or All Fools' Day, although not a holiday in its own right, is a notable day celebrated in many countries on April 1. The day is marked by the commission of hoaxes and other practical jokes of varying sophistication on friends, family members, enemies, and neighbors, or sending them on fool's errand, the aim of which is to embarrass the gullible. Traditionally, in some countries, the jokes only last until noon: someone who plays a trick after noon is called an "April



Fool". Elsewhere, such as in Ireland, France, and the USA, the jokes last all day. In Scotland - April Fools' Day is actually celebrated for two days and the custom is known as "hunting the gowk" (the cuckoo), and April fools are "April gowks". The second day is devoted to pranks involving the posterior region of the body. It is called Taily Day. The origin of the "kick me" sign can be traced to this observance.

The custom of giving eggs at Easter time has been traced back to Egyptians, Persians, Gauls, Greeks and Romans, to whom the egg was a symbol of life.

Every year at Easter Pope John Paul sends his "Urbi et Orbi" to the world.

Easter is now celebrated (in the words of the Book of Common Prayer) on the first Sunday after the full moon which happens on or after March 21, the Spring Equinox.

Some Churches still keep up the old tradition of using evergreens - symbolic of eternal life - embroidered in red on white, or woven in straw, but most now prefer displays of flowers in the spring colours of green, yellow and white.

In the United States Easter is celebrated with a large Easter Egg Hunt by children on the White House Lawn.

To the Jews, the egg marked the time of their departure from the land of Egypt.

By tradition, it was obligatory (or at least lucky) for churchgoers to wear some bright new piece of clothing - at least an Easter bonnet, if not a complete new outfit.



Welcome to Olives & Popcorn, your monthly guide to great Spanish based films that in my opinion should not be ignored.

Any comments are welcome. Also if you want to know more about a particular film and how to get a copy again get in touch via my email below.

This month I am going all out intellectual and present a fairly new Spanish 'whodunnit' film that like many others I hope will leave you wondering what monkeys Hollywood pays to write their so called big blockbusters that so often pollute our silver screens. This is one hell of a brain teaser in more ways than one....



Fermat's Room (Thriller) / Habitación de Fermat, La (2007)

Directors: Luis Piedrahita /

Rodrigo Sopeña

Writers: Luis Piedrahita /

Rodrigo Sopeña

Four mathematicians who do not know each other are invited by a mysterious host on the pretext of resolving a great enigma. The room in which they find themselves turns out to be a shrinking room that will crush them if they do not discover in time what connects them all and why someone might wish to murder them. That's the starting point of this gripping suspenseful Spanish film filmed in Barcelona.

By fusing several elements, the director brings it all back home: the enigmas are borrowed from the "saw" saga (but without any of the pointless gore and with special effects kept to the minimum); the place reminds me of another Indy classic "Cube"; there are also elements taken from Agatha Christie's classic "Ten little Indians" aka "And then there were none" (guests are invited to a remote house, where the host is to kill us but actually he is one of us; and of course they have all done something wrong before).

Mathematics of course comes centre place to the essence of the film. Some of them are classics, as the young math genius points out: the three children and the story of the shepherd, the wolf, the sheep and the cabbage. All the actors are excellent, and the fact that Lluís Hornar resembles just a little the late great Laurence Olivier cannot help make you think of "sleuth".

The ending is borrowed from "Le Theoreme du Perroquet" (by Daniel Guedj) another book which blends a detective story and the history of maths. In that book, they tried to prove a theorem which Andrew Wiles, an English mathematician finally proved in 1993.....that in conclusion was Fermat's **conjecture**.

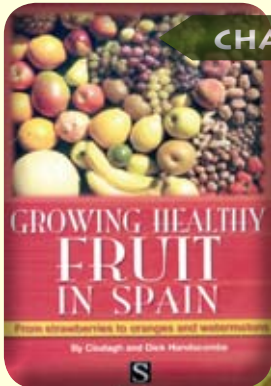
Jason.M.Berry 14/02/2009 Contact e-mail:

gatchajay@hotmail.com



CHALLENGES OF GARDENING IN CATALUNYA

MAR MENOR MARCH 2009 PRODUCTIVE GARDENS
by Clodagh and Dick Handscombe. productive gardeners, authors and broadcasters gardening in Spain for over twenty years. Their books include 'Growing Healthy Fruit in Spain –From strawberries to oranges and water melons'.



FRUIT TREES FLOURISH IN SPAIN IF!!

Spain is a fantastic place to grow your own fruit. The climate allows one to consider growing a wide range of fruit and it is possible by careful selection to harvest one or more fruits on every day of

the year – even from apartment terraces. Indeed some of the easiest fruits to grow can be grown in various types of containers. For instance strawberries in a strawberry barrel or window box, a grape vine in a tub trailing along a balustrade or supported on an end wall and a perpetual flowering/fruiting Lunar lemon and early season white fleshed peach tree in large pots. With the latter not only do you get the benefit of picking perfectly ripe tasty juicy peaches for immediate eating but also the early blossom. Our tree in a tub started to flower in the middle of January while the almond blossom in the garden below was still out and the blossom has survived the recent gales.

With a garden one can obviously expand and plant fruit trees in containers on terraces, trained on walls or as spring flowering/summer or autumn fruiting trees anywhere in the flower beds. Naturally if you have a large property one can develop a dedicated orchard.

So much is possible but there are a number of important success factors each covered in detail in our book.

Firstly do plant fruits that you like. Over seventy are described in the book including tropical/subtropical fruits

for the frost free coastal plain and temperate types that need inland frosts to fruit well. The former include citrus fruits, mangoes and avocados and the latter cherry and pear trees.

Secondly choose strong plants and if oranges or mandarins check out when they will be ready to harvest. In both cases there are early, mid season and late season varieties to choose from – some ripening in October and others as late as early June. We list some of the most popular varieties in the book.

Thirdly prepare the ground and planting holes in advance and ensure that the young root ball is spread out when planting. If not, strangled roots can develop that result in stunted poorly fruiting trees.

Fourthly spray with ecological insecticides and fungicides to ensure that the garden is safe even when spraying for the family, pets and wildlife. Luckily such products can be made up at home or purchased from gardening shops and agricultural cooperatives. Look out for the Seipasa and Trabe brands.

Sorry space has run out to say more but the book is there to tell you all you need to know. You will find 'Growing Healthy Fruit in Spain' in local book shops and it can also be obtained from www.santanabooks.com or 952-48-58-38 from 10.15 until 14.00 daily.
© Clodagh and Dick Handscombe February 2009.



YOGA FOR ALL



Spring has finally sprung and we're turning our thoughts to spring cleaning our homes, and perhaps our bodies. The benefits of yoga such as weight loss and toned muscles are available to us all.

There are however three keys to enjoying yoga's undisputed benefits. They are **100% under your control**, and affect not only your enjoyment of your practice, but just as importantly, the benefits you receive from each practice.

1. Challenge yourself

One of the purposes of yoga, like every exercise regime, is to incrementally improve your body's physical capabilities. Yoga of course has the added advantage that it also helps to improve many aspects of your health and well-being that general exercise cannot.

Even with these increased benefits, yoga is not a magic cure-all. Achieving these benefits requires your commitment and effort each time you practice. Achieving incremental improvements to your capabilities requires (and allows) you to further challenge your own physical limitations. Over time improvements result in large gains in your yoga abilities and the health and weight loss benefits of your practice.

In every posture you should be looking to make sure first that you are stable and comfortable in the posture. You should then be aiming to slowly and smoothly deepen the stretch as far as it remains pain free for you to do so. In all postures you should feel the stretch in the relevant muscles and deepen into the stretch in a controlled manner to avoid damaging your muscles and ligaments. You should challenge your own abilities in order to achieve new yoga abilities, but also listen carefully to your body to know when to stop.

2. Breathing

There is a lot of discussion and research into the importance and health benefits of yoga breathing. While these may well prove to be real benefits, adopting relaxed, controlled yoga breathing definitely helps to improve your overall yoga practice.

The natural tendency, when practicing an asana (yoga posture) that tests your physical abilities, is to shorten

your breath and in some cases, to start breathing through your mouth. This stressful breathing technique encourages you to tense your muscles and fight against the asana and the stretch. This is the opposite of the desired state for practicing yoga.

Instead it's important that you concentrate on your breathing, completing a long, controlled inhale exhale cycle that fills your lungs to capture the maximum amount of oxygen for each breath. Focusing on your breathing in this way, helps you to remain relaxed and allows you to be more aware of your physical condition enabling you to better feel the stretch, be aware of tension in your muscles and concentrate on releasing that tension and to loosen the muscles you're working on. Through this increased awareness of what your body is telling you and by noticing and releasing tension in your muscles, it's easier to accept each stretch and go deeper into each asana and hold it for longer without injury.

3. Practice, Practice, Practice.

As with all exercise, the benefits only come with a commitment to *regular practice*. Only through regular practice of exercise does the body start to develop, strengthen, adapt and change according to the physical demands you are placing on it. Practicing yoga is no different. Regular practice helps to build the muscle strength required to hold asanas. More than that, you'll develop increased lung capacity and provide the regular stimulation to the internal organs that helps balance chemical and hormone levels. Frequent practice helps to learn any new skill or ability and yoga is no different. In particular, repetition helps your body learn the correct position balancing postures, to the extent that it becomes second nature - just like riding a bike. Another area where frequent practice is highly beneficial is learning how to slow and calm your mind, to purge your thoughts of the worries and stresses of the day. This increased serenity, along with welcome weight loss benefits, can be taken 'off the mat' and into the rest of your life.

Sarah Good is a Sivananda trained yoga teacher offering weekly drop-in yoga classes. Please call 663 140 297 for further details.



MICHAEL Jackson's London concerts will be his last public appearances before he is broken down into his constituent parts and auctioned off for scrap, it has been confirmed. The singer's management said the cost of repairing the 50 year-old had become prohibitive and that he had now been rendered obsolete by newer, more efficient pop stars.

Jackson pictured bringing terror to the streets of London yesterday



Experts say the latest version of Pharell Williams can produce four times the amount of falsetto- based pop-funk but with fewer outward signs of total insanity.

Producer Quincy Jones has placed a \$9m reserve bid on the singer's feet so he can finally learn how to moonwalk, while a Japanese businessman has bid an undisclosed sum for Jackson's hair, which will be placed in a private collection alongside Nat King Cole's larynx and the knees of James Brown.

Jackson will combine his O2 arena concerts with an enormous carboot sale, selling what is left of his unhinged, 35 year-long shopping spree.

The singer's spokesman said: "There's eight thousand bags of out-of-date monkey feed, a thirty foot statue of Macauley Culkin touching his toes and a lifesize watercolour portrait of Michael doing the 'Thriller' dance with the Elephant Man's skeleton." Meanwhile queues are already forming outside the venue as hundreds of middle-aged virgins with self-printed Jackson t-shirts mill about, comparing buttock tattoos of the singer that look like someone wearing a 'Scream' mask and one of Elizabeth Talyor's old wigs.

An O2 spokesman said: "It's easily the biggest collection of obsessive fruit-loops to hit the UK since the funeral of Princess Diana."

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Winning hearts and minds with a round of golf

NAJAF - Iraq - According to the Iraqi Ministry of Sport and Culture, Golf has been adopted by the Iraqis as the countries most popular game.

The Americans brought many things to Iraq after the invasion. They not only introduced Iraqis to the wonderful delights of depleted uranium, random shootings and waterboarding amongst many other delights but also the wonderful sport of golf.

"By Allah this golf game is the best thing in the world. There is nothing I like more than to relax after a hard day dodging suicide bombers, IED's, VBIED's, murder squads, tanks and mortar shells than with a nice relaxing round of golf," Mohammed Rashid Juba, a member of Baghdad's world famous golf club said from the fifth hole.

Golf club membership has gone through the roof in Iraq, especially in the last few months. Local businessman, Ali bin Abdullah, has said that he is struggling to keep up with the high demand for golf gear. Just last month, turnover in his tiny shop in Baghdad's Sunni Triangle district quadrupled.

"I am getting mostly Jihadis coming into the shop and ex-Baath party members. They are not interested in rocket launchers and mines as much as a good iron or putter. As you know we have some of the finest golf courses in the world here even though 96% of the country is sand and desert."

One thing that has taken the Iraqis by storm is that women are now major players in the sport across the whole of Iraq despite Mullahs and religious leaders condemning the exodus from the home and on to the green.

"I blame the infidel dogs who have come to corrupt

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our women. What's next? Pole dancing? I mean this is ridiculous, three of my wives are out on the course as we speak. My fourth wife, Layla, can now complete the whole course and finish off with a double bogey average for all twenty holes. I mean this insane, they should be at home pleasing me and not in the desert hitting balls around the dunes," Sheik Badr al Din, a religious leader based in Mosul told the Iraq daily newspaper, Al-Hayat.

There is even talk of an Iraqi yearly tournament being organised and everywhere across the country golf courses are springing up like oasis'.

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Welcome to this month's computer guide. In these articles I will be giving some advice on how to make windows behave in the way you would prefer. This makes using your PC more enjoyable and efficient. These tips are for Windows XP, and although some of them are relevant, I will provide specific advice for Windows Vista in the future. Continued from last month:

6. Show Control Panel as a Menu

For quicker access to the Windows XP control panel's assortment of applications, you can set the control panel to appear as a submenu in the start menu, similar to the existing 'accessories' submenu.

To do this Right click on the 'start' button and choose 'properties.' Select the 'customize' button to the right of the 'start menu' option. Choose the 'advanced' tab and then in the 'start menu items' box, find 'control panel' and select the 'display as menu' option.

7. Associate and Un-Associate Applications from certain file types.

File associations are what tells Windows XP which applications should open which type of files. Every file type has or will acquire a default program to open it (as long as one is available on the machine) and will then use this program every time. Since many programs will change these file associations when they are installed (to make themselves the default software), it's quite possible to end up with an application you do not want opening your pictures or documents.

To change this, you will need to open an explorer



window such as 'my computer' then go to 'tools\folder options.' From the folder options, select the 'file types' tab, and wait while Windows builds the list of file types present on your PC

Scroll through the 'registered file types' box until you find the file extension of the file type you wish to change; JPEG, JPG or JPE for JPEG graphic files, for example. Highlight it and hit the 'change' button below to select a new application to open this file type by default.

As an alternative, you can also right click any file; go to 'properties.' And click the 'change' button to choose your application. Scroll through the 'registered file types' box until you find the file extension of the file type you wish to change; JPEG, JPG or JPE for JPEG graphic files, for example. Highlight it and hit the 'change' button below to select a new application to open this file type by default.

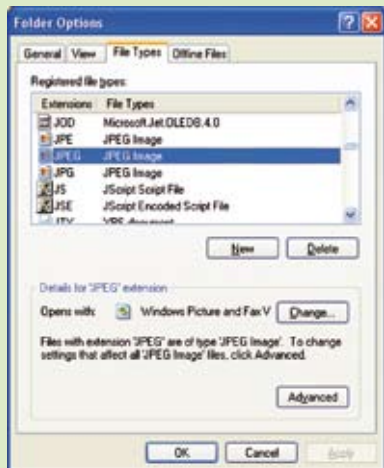
As an alternative, you can also right click any file; go to 'properties.' And click the 'change' button to choose your application.

I hope this provides a useful introduction to configuring Windows XP. If you have any questions on this or any other technical matters please feel free to contact me.

Colm Blake Tel: 660 600 636

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•FRIENDSHIP CLUB for all nationalities meeting 1st, sunday of each month near Tortosa free stalls for those that have wares to sell, food & drinks available. contact Brian Parkin at 660-990-422 or 977-059-911 for more info •CAR BOOT SALE ↓ first sunday every month C/Garcia Restaurant Braseria Can Palomo MORA LA NOVA •C OF E CHURCH SERVICE last Wednesday of every month starting January 28th. at 12.30p.m. in Ampolla village church, all welcome. Followed by Menu del dia lunch (optional) Enquiries: 977 593 219.

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