

NEWS4U! - THE SMALL ONE FOR DIAL-UPPERS.

- all the news from the newsletter , without file-consuming graphics. Jan 2012

Message from your President -

I was looking on the internet at some of the top resolutions for 2012.

- 1) Lose Weight! Could be a difficult one with so many dining events which are available within the U3A during the year. Let's pass on that one.
- 2) Getting organised. Could be useful knowing that the first Thursday of the month is always the general meeting .- We' ll go with this one.
- 3) Spend less, save more. Well with membership down to 5 Euros for 2012, that's a great start.
- 4) Enjoy life to the fullest. With over forty groups we'll go with this one.
- 5) Learn something exciting. What about joining a new group, meeting new people and stretching the mind! You might even like to start a new group.

I hope what ever you decide your resolutions are for 2012, that it is a good year for you, your family and friends.

I certainly thought five resolutions was enough, especially for me, who finds it very hard to keep one for longer than about 5 minutes.

Happy New Year to Everyone.

AND WHILE WE ARE THINKING ABOUT RESOLUTIONS ..

At the meeting this month, Carol Lockhart treated us to a reading of her wonderful new poem called "RESOLUTIONS". Unfortunately, space does not permit us to print it here - BUT YOU CAN READ IT ON THE WEBSITE! Our webmasters have published it under "Latest News" at the top of the home page. www.u3avalldelpop.com (Have you marked this page as one of your favourites yet?)

2011 U3A Christmas Party

By Pat Thorpe

December 15th saw the 2011 Christmas party and what a lovely evening it was!

Eighty five U3A members turned out for the event which was held at El Paraiso restaurant, Parcent. The restaurant was bursting at the seams, as was the car park. Many guests turned up in various items of Christmas wear including hats, waistcoats and tinsel

As usual with this venue, the food was of excellent quality and of superb value. How they could provide so many courses plus wine for so little a charge is hard to believe.

After the meal, a raffle was held much to the delight of the guests. After this the tables were cleared and there was a wonderfully nostalgic collection of songs from the sixties, performed by Barry Peters. This had the guests up on their feet dancing, until gone midnight.

All in all an excellent evening was had by all, although one partygoer had cause to wish she had bought a size large instead of a medium from Marks and Spencer!!

U3A Vall del Pop visit Benidorm. - by Sandra Welham

17 members enjoyed the Christmas spirit of Benidorm by staying in a local hotel over the Christmas period. Christmas day was celebrated with a 10 course gala meal which more than reached expectation. The weather was so pleasant that a number of members braved the Christmas morning with a paddle and walk along the beach. It was such a success that we hope to make this an annual event.

*We have had a lot of information about car parking at the airport recently ...
Graham Quirk has sent this email:*

“ The car parking firm that we use is Aquacar, and for our 4 day break next week they are the cheapest - without any special discounts.

I did however check the one week and 2 week rates and they do not seem to be any better than the ones that you quote.

Like some of the others they do wash the car before you return - hence their name, presumably.”

And at the same time - Coastline Alicante Parking and UK car rental, who are on our discount-providers list (see website) have written to say that they now have a "Price Match Guarantee". They say, "Show us a cheaper price for the same duration at Alicante, tell us who, and we match it. It's as simple as that!"

BEGINNERS COMPUTER CLASSES

The computer group are offering classes for absolute beginners, starting on Wednesday 25th January at Bar Creu, Alcalali, at 11am.

If you have anything you would like to share in the newsletter, let us have it in a Word document, about 200 words or less by the 6th of any calendar month. Send to pands_thorpe@hotmail.com.

Vernon Pearce (aka on radio as Big Vern) invites you to join him every Sunday afternoon between 2 -4pm on a new English-speaking radio station - BigFM. Given the difficulty of picking up radio signals in the Vall del Pop (BigFM broadcasts on 92.2FM in the north of the Costa Blanca), you may wish to listen on the internet by going to www.bigfm.es and clicking 'listen live'.

BEWARE! *A member has sent us this cautionary tale*

This morning I received a phone call from "a Woman" claiming to be calling me on behalf of Windows, who had "given" her my details. She called me by name etc . and then asked if I had an internet connection. Well, yes!! She said that she was calling to sort out corruption that had been passed into my computer through downloads and that my computer would shut down if it was not fixed etc. etc. etc. .

Anyway, she went on to ask me to turn on my computer and hold down the "Windows and R" key, which then brought up a box. At this stage I called a halt and started asking questions. She said that her company were from Barcelona and that they had the authority from Windows (NOT Microsoft) to help fix the computers as thousands were closing down all over Spain. So, she told me, in the box that came up I should type in

"www.logmein with numbers (123) after it and then .com". I am not putting the whole address just in case. Alarm bells started going off! . . . Cont.

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This is a REMOTE ACCESS CODE to your computer and if this is put in they have TOTAL access to your information etc. THIS IS A SCAM. DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES FOLLOW THIS WOMAN'S INSTRUCTIONS.

When I asked more questions and suggested that I would like more information regarding her and her company eg: phone number email address etc., she got really stroppy and not very pleasant. I told her I was not prepared to do this and hung up. She tried to call back but I did not take the call - it is a blocked number.

THE EASIEST WAY TO GET RID OF HER IS TO SAY THAT YOU DON'T HAVE INTERNET ACCESS, AND THAT WOULD END THE CONVERSATION. OR YOU DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER. BUT WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT LISTEN TO HER OR DO ANYTHING WITH YOUR COMPUTER - SHE IS TRYING TO GET INTO IT AND STEAL ALL YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION, BANK STUFF, ANYTHING THAT WOULD GIVE HER ACCESS TO YOU. ONCE SHE IS IN THEN SHE CAN DO IT ANY TIME.

CARD-MAKING GROUP VISIT JAVEA

The card-making group organised their own Christmas celebration in December. The 3-hour workshop at ArtyFacts in the Arenal area was a great way to spend a morning. Husbands were distinctly un-impressed by the *one* single card produced in all this time ! But just how many NEW techniques went into it ? Vast numbers !! And it certainly had the WOW factor ! After all this work, refreshment was definitely deserved and was partaken at the nearby Wok. Untraditional for Christmas maybe - but wonderful.

YOUNG AT HEART ??

Several U3A members also belong to the English Pensionista Group which meets every week in Jalon on a Wednesday Afternoon for a game of cards, perhaps a raffle and quiz. Every few weeks they choose a local restaurant to have lunch, and when luck is on their side, they join the Spanish Pensionistas for subsidised outings. New members are needed! If you are interested, ring 652584272.

" THANKS " - from Paul Whitfield

Thanks to all who brought food to the Christmas meeting. It was distributed to families in the Valle Del Pop area and very much appreciated. Christmas has passed but the recession is very much with us and the needs of those families are on-going. Therefore we are going to provide containers for the collection of any non perishable food items, that any members care to donate, at all future U3A meetings. It is worth mentioning that many of our U3A activities are carried out in rooms provided by the local authorities free of charge, and the helping of local families, who are very much in need, is a meaningful way of showing our appreciation.

Jalon Valley Help Charity Shops

The Charity would be very pleased to receive your used Christmas cards and any other occasion cards for recycling to make the wonderful cards which are sold in both shops for 1€. You can take them to either shop from 10am to 1pm Monday to Friday in Jalon and Monday to Saturday in Alcalali.

Could YOU replace Eve ?

Can YOU do numbers?

Treasurer Rod Waspe is on the lookout for an Assistant Treasurer, to replace Eve Fisk when she "retires" at the AGM in March. Both Eve and Rod agree that the task is not at all onerous or very time-consuming, but Rod does need someone with an aptitude for figures and a love of organised "books". If you are interested, speak to him on 965734209

NEW! TREATMENTS IN CALPE AT DISCOUNTED PRICES FOR MEMBERS OF OUR U3A

This month, we have added two new discount opportunities to the list on the website. Leaflets with more details will be available at the General Meeting in February. Both have clinics in the Vidāsana Therapy Centre in Av Gabriel Miro.

OSTEOPATHY

Tonia Sheriff D.O., Registered Osteopath and Craniosacral Therapist, offers a wide range of treatments for everything from back pain, herniated disc, whiplash injuries, allergies, insomnia, etc. - both acute and chronic. See www.osteopathyinspain.com. Discount of 10%. Ring. 965834799

ACUPUNCTURE & REFLEXOLOGY

Janet Brownrigg Lic Dip Ac C Ac China CAUK, specializes in Traditional Chinese Acupuncture, Cosmetic Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture, Reflexology, etc.. 10% discount. Ring 649076612

CAUTIONARY TALE NUMBER 2 - by Pat Thorpe.

On Tuesday 20th December, my wife and I decided to have a drive out and visit Pego. It was a pleasant day and we strolled around the town before coming to the Plaza by the Ayuntamiento. We stopped to look at, and photograph the Nativity scene there and just as we turned away, we were approached by two young girls in their early twenties. Each had a clipboard and they informed us they were collecting signatures for something to do with the handicapped. We didn't quite understand what it was all in aid of, but as they assured us they did not want money, but simply a signature we obliged. One of them then queried my name and I took my wallet out from my inside jacket pocket and showed her my driving licence. I never let the wallet out of my hand at any time and I swear I never felt her take anything. However, later, when leaving a bar and going up to pay. I discovered that I had no money in my wallet. I had had approximately €150!!

I send this warning to others to be especially aware if approached by a pair of young, attractive, decent looking, Spanish looking and Spanish speaking girls armed with clipboards. I feel angry with myself for my stupidity rather than for the loss of the money, but at the same time, I must own up to some admiration for the slick way in which it was done. The girl should go on the stage!!

Inaugural Members win fabulous Mediterranean Cruise.

By Carol Lockhart

Eddie and Mary Wood from Alcalali, who joined the Vall del Pop U3A when it first started in October 2006, are really excited to have won this lovely prize. They had forgotten that their names were in the draw as a result of them signing up with the RTN for provision of their telephone and internet access, so it was a wonderful surprise to receive the phone call telling them of their win. Gandia Tours, a travel agent used by U3A for the holidays arranged for our members, is the travel agent also sponsoring the prize. The cruise will be in May and is on the MSC Orchestra, a huge 97,000 ton cruise ship, and will sail from Valencia and take Mary and Eddie to Ibiza, Tunisia, Italy and France before bringing them home again.

Mary and Eddie moved to Spain about ten years ago and love the Spanish way of life. They originally joined the Calpe U3A and participated in several trips with them. However, they were delighted to become inaugural members numbered 11 and 12 when the local U3A branch was launched, enabling them to get involved with far more activities. They have seen the Vall Del Pop U3A grow considerably since 2006 with it now having in excess of 500 members. The activities available have also increased of course and the couple get involved in lots of things. Eddie enjoys bowling and the IT Group while Mary likes photography, card making, the dining group and Tai Chi. They also go on trips and went to Barcelona last year and more recently Mary went to Murcia on a shopping trip.

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Originally from Staffordshire Mary taught domestic science before they started a family and Eddie was involved with the potteries, although his other main interest was tropical fish. He had 200 tanks in a special building in his garden and was a judge, breeder and lecturer. They moved to Penzance in the early seventies where they were hoteliers, following which they took semi-retirement and ran a pub before making their move to the Costa Blanca.

Eddie enjoys gardening and growing his own vegetables from seed while Mary continues her cookery skills today making and icing celebration cakes. She is also very active with the Jalon Valley HELP and, in addition to working in the two shops in Jalon and Alcalali, can always be seen at their fairs selling tickets and cheering everyone with her infectious smile.

Our congratulations to Mary & Eddie and when the time comes we wish them Bon Voyage.

..... AND NOW - 60 NEW MEM- BERS SIGN UP !

Queues snaked through the plaza on Thursday morning before the *General Meeting* - some wanting to pay their dues and to re-join for 2012, but 60 people wanting to join us for the first time! **WELCOME!** We hope your stay with us will be hugely enjoyable!

NEW GALLERY NOW ON THE WEBSITE !

Webmasters Mike and Heidi are constantly working to improve the website. Now, they have added a "Gallery" section where you can see (and add) all those photos of U3A activities.

Trip to commercial centre and Ikea.

On Tuesday, 53 members emerged from their homes to a balmy 1 degree to make their way to Murcia.

Mostly ladies, but a few men, (someone's got to carry the shopping) We shopped til we dropped for 3 hours and judging by the Primark bags being put on the bus, we now have shares in the company!

We then proceeded to Ikea where armed with various methods of conveyancing we managed to continue the trend. At 5 pm we made our way, fully loaded, back to the coach, where our ever-patient driver Vicente, spent half an hour packing and unpacking the luggage department trying to accommodate our shopping and a mobility scooter .

We arrived back in Jalon at 7pm to be greeted by many anxious husbands, tired but elated after our retail therapy.

Sharlotte

PLEA FROM THE TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Subs are now due at the special birthday rate of 5€ for the year. Pay at the door at the next meeting at 10.15am.. Please download the renewal form from the membership section of the website if you can, and fill it up before you come. OR - you can sit comfortably at your computer and pay by bank transfer to "U3A Vall del Pop" (account 2100-6033-21-0200038126), stating your name and membership number. Pick up your membership card at the general meeting.

Derek Stublely died on Dec 22nd after a short illness. He was very much part of the theatre scene both at Careline and Monte Pego. Derek was a kind and gentle man. He will be sadly missed by his wife, and all who knew him.

2010 CRUISE NEWS

Those who attended the meeting last Thursday were treated to an entertaining talk from Dennis Arthurs, about the cruise which Derek and Anne Martyr so efficiently organised for members last year. There are loads of photographs on the website in the "Gallery" too - well worth a look!

Deirdre Stewart was one of the 55 members cruising to the Canaries, and has penned us a poem

THE SUPERIOR LADY

“Well” she said “So you are going on a cruise”
“Aren’t they all non-stop eating food and booze”
“Oh no!” I said “This one’s really nice
There’s climbing walls and skating on ice
There’s a cinema and a shopping mall
There’s dancing and jogging – a large swimming pool
There’s also shore trips by coach, taxi or mule
There are saunas and facials and hairdressers too
So we will fit in some eating and having a drink
And go to the show or the Ice-Skating Rink.

You could see she was fighting her rage
At not belonging to the Uni of the 3rd age
“So you have to belong to go on this cruise
And it isn’t over-eating and lashings of booze ?
And are all the members really nice ?
And there’s definitely shows taking place on ice?”
“Some of our members“ I said “Are climbing up walls”
Some are in Libraries, some in dance halls
That is the charm of the one in Vall de Pop
Frankly the choice is well ... over the top
Nearly 500 people can’t be wrong
Why there’s even choirs to sing you a song
So another member is on her way
I’ve told her the date of joining day.

Deirdre R Stewart

Thank you Deirdre ! Don’t forget that Derek and Anne have organised another cruise starting on 1st September this year. Details, as always, on the website.

Once again, the HELP charity offer an opportunity to take a walk amongst the beautiful Jalon Valley Almond Blossom. This walk takes place on Monday 13th February. If you would like to join in we meet at 9.30am at the Tourist Info Office in the Rastro Car Park in Jalon. The pace is easy, the walk taking about 3 hours on mainly good tracks. There is a slight incline for the first 3/4 hour leaving Jalon.

Please wear suitable footwear and bring water and a snack. There will be plenty of stops for photo opportunities and rests. Well behaved dogs are allowed but on leads and are to walk at the back of the group only . A collection will be made for our funds.

FOR SALE ...

Reclining wooden chair with detachable foot rest ['Teak' type] in good condition 60€.
Matching trolley 50€.

Sewing machine 100€. Also in good condition
Contact details: 965732529
E-mail:

brigred27@gmail.com

TENNIS NEWS

It’s taken a while to organise, but at last the U3A tennis group is well on its way ! Play will begin this month at a court locally, so anyone who is interested in keeping fit in 2012 in this exhilarating way should contact Rod Waspe straight away. Ring him on 605 231 331

The Terrace Bar in Jalon are holding regular monthly Live Music evenings in support of Jalon Valley Help. The first one will be held on Friday January 27th at 8pm. The ticket price of 9.50€ includes a hot /cold buffet and live entertainment from John Curtis plus guests. Tickets are available from The Terrace Bar, 96 648 2514 or 626 817 062, Bar Olè and the Help Charity Shops in Alcalali and Jalon. You are promised good food, good music and a great evening out and you will be helping the charity to support those in the valley needing help in times of need.

My Jalon Valley.

*Tis night, the serried lines of vines sleep in their ranks.
The pollen-seeking bees have fled the citrus trees.
The almond orchards seem to float in mist,
And the pomegranates rich red skins are yet to come.
Fig trees, their huge green leaves are bending, whilst
Carobs their unending fruits protected, seem gnarled
And ancient beside the stunted trunks of olives.
Lemons nod profusely on their boughs and wait
For the sun,
For this is Jalon.*

*Dark red the sun which o'er the mountains creeps,
With purple mountain tops in shadows where the fox now
sleeps.
Bright daggers of light and shadow seem to fly,
And the valley wakes.
Grey wisps of smoke show where small fires burn,
Small birds flit here and there on busy errands,
A drone of sound now shows the town's awake,
The church bell loudly tolls the hour,
And Jalon wakes.*

*At noon the drowsy summer heat fills all the valley,
Dark shadows deepen on the grey-green hills.
New vistas now appear across the ripening almond trees.
And an eagle slowly flaps its way in search of prey.
Old ladies with their packs herb-filled turn now for home,
Siesta calls, all sound has gone,
save for cicadas' humming,
And Jalon rests.*

*At eventide the cooling breezes blow,
Bats whirling here and there seek out their food.
Cicadas drone, and distance hunters guns sound in the
hills.
The mournful cry of hoopoes sound out from afar.
New views appear across the valley floor,
As a reddening sun paints o'er the dimming clouds,
To change the valley pictures yet again,
Whilst owls cry, and warm Spanish darkness falls,
Then Jalon sleeps*

Roger Davis

Wine Tasting in the Valley

On 13th December a group of ten U3A members visited Finca Sonrisa for a drop of wine tasting at Les & Lorraine's private bodega. We were greeted by Les who showed us around his vineyard and explained how many different types of grapes he grows on his land.

It is obviously a labour of love for Les who tends his grapes and processes all the stages of the wine making himself, ably assisted by Lorraine. He prides himself on the wine being natural with no added chemicals. We toured the cellar where we tasted the latest batches of wine, not ready yet for drinking but as an example of how they start out. Les makes one white wine, some rosé but mainly concentrates on red. We were all amazed by the number of barrels, bottles, racks and equipment required to make the wine in the quantities in which they are produced.

After the tour of the extensive wine cellar we were ushered into Les's den where we all sat round a large table while Les explained the processes to us. He had seven wines on display for us to try starting with a very young wine and ending with his reserva.

In between each taste of wine we were encouraged to have a small plain biscuit and rinse our glasses with water so as not to confuse the tastes. Gradually the conversation increased in volume as the wine took effect! Lorraine soon joined us providing a lovely selection of savoury nibbles while we continued working our way through the various wines. We were all really impressed by the variety and how the flavours improved as the wine aged, ending with the 2009 reserva which was lovely.

Our thanks to Les and Lorraine for their hospitality and a very enjoyable afternoon. We wish them continued success with their bodega and a Very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2012.

Carol Lockhart

WHAT'S ON

Thursday 9th February – The tea dance at El Cid's. This starts at 3 o'clock. Tickets are €6 and this includes Victoria sponge and tea and biscuits. How English is that?

Friday 10th February – Quiz night at the Bar Nou. €10 per person. This includes fish and chips and wine and dessert. Ring Anne or Derek on 966481069 to book a table.

Friday 24th February – A day trip to Xativa. €9 per person for a coach trip from Jalon to take in this lovely town, to include a tour of the glass factory.

Thursday 8th March – AGM at Jalon Town Hall. This is the opportunity to elect new members to the committee.

Friday 12th April – Another quiz night at the Bar Nou. €10 per person. This includes fish and chips and wine and dessert. Ring Anne or Derek on 966481069 to book a table.

Wednesday 16th May - 6 day, 5 night trip to Mallorca. Coach direct from Jalon, flight from Valencia. Half board at the bargain price of €314.50. Sightseeing trips available at extra cost. Phone Derek and Anne on 96 648 1069 to reserve your place.

Friday 18th May – Yet another quiz night at the Bar Nou. €10 per person. This includes fish and chips and wine and dessert. Ring Anne or Derek on 966481069 to book a table.

Saturday 1st September – The Big One!! Following Dennis's talk on the sailaway success of last year's cruise, Anne and Derek have arranged a cracker. This will go from Barcelona and take in France, Italy, Greece and Turkey