NEWSLETTER

u3a
Vall del Pop

October 2026

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President's Message

October´s General Assembly was another successful event, with plenty of lively chatter in the hall while members enjoyed teas, coffees, and cakes and more ahead of the formal meeting.

In the meeting itself Teresa Tilbrook, our Groups Coordinator, gave a useful reminder of all the groups we currently have on offer. Interest in one of these groups is often the main reason people join our Association, and it is important that we have as many active groups as possible. Existing groups will always try to accommodate new members and ideas for new groups are always very welcome. The new Tai Chi group has for example been an immediate success and Simona, the group leader, provided a demonstration following our speaker.

Several members indicated by a show of hands that they would be pleased to see the former creative writing group brought back to life. We just need to find a willing leader. Could that be you?





Presidents Message Cont.

I ended the meeting by announcing that this would be Roger Bentley's last year as our Treasurer. We are incredibly grateful for everything he has done for us over many years, and he received a warm and well-deserved round of applause.

Looking ahead we absolutely must find a new treasurer between now and March. Our statutes and the regulations for voluntary organisations such as ours require us always to have three different people serving as President, Secretary and Treasurer. Otherwise, we cannot continue to operate. If you think you might be interested in becoming the new treasurer, please speak to me or Roger. You don't need to be an accountant or an auditor but some prior experience of bookkeeping for another voluntary organisation or a small business would be helpful.

Following the meeting we heard an inspiring speech from Natasha, the founder of Cultura Contra Ballas, a wonderful charity based in Javea that provides respite to people living on the frontline in the war in Ukraine.



You will find a detailed write-up later in this newsletter. I am delighted that our Goodwill team has added the charity to the organisations they are supporting this year.

In the Q & A session that followed the presentation Brigid Redmond made the particularly key point that the Ukrainians are not only defending their own country but also fighting to protect European freedom more widely. This is easy to forget as we enjoy our rather protected lives here on the beautiful Costa Blanca!

Best wishes

Chris

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Cultura Contra Balas
Culture Against Bullets

At our October General Assembly we heard a very emotional and humbling talk from Natasha from Cultura Contra Balas, Culture Against Bullets, who bring groups of individuals from Ukraine to Spain for respite from the war. Natasha has lived in Spain for 16 years, but when the war started in Ukraine 4.5 years ago her family fled as Russian tanks arrived. As they fled across the Polish border they did so at the exact same town Natasha's grandfather had fought the advancing German tanks 80 years before. They asked themselves: "have we learnt nothing?".

10 million Ukrainians have been displaced through the war, many on evacuation trains.

Natasha felt compelled to help her fellow countrymen and set up the charity with her family, to bring those affected by the war and those living close to the frontline of the war to Spain for respite and a psychological recovery programme.

The charity rents a villa in Javea and every month 35 women, children, teenagers, combat medics, schoolteachers can enjoy 10 days of respite and being looked after. Many have lost fathers, sons, husbands, family members and witnessed the atrocities of war first hand. Some have lost limbs, some their homes, all have lost their sense of safety and security.

Activities are provided, all meals are cooked for them, a professional psychologist travels with them to provide support and Natasha explained that 10 days of love and care from strangers has a huge healing effect. Yes, they have to return home, but the difference between the morale on day 1 to day 10 is huge and the intention is they return home to give back and support others in their community.

Cultura Contra Balas
Culture Against Bullets cont.

The mood is generally happy with singing and dancing, lots of art and fun. So far 23 groups and almost 700 people have benefitted which is an incredible achievement. The charity relies 100% on donations, they receive no funding from either government or institutions, and is staffed totally by volunteers who cook, take them on outings, they go hiking, enjoy yoga, motorbike rides, music and cultural activities. Over 100 volunteers help, but they are always grateful for offers to help, cook, spend time with the groups. If anyone would like to help in any way I can provide contact details.

Having once thought the war would be over in a few days, Natasha explained the situation is worse now than ever. Towns are bombed daily, power stations are bombed so there is no electricity, no lighting, no heating. They are lucky to have electricity for one hour a day. Last winter people froze to death in their homes. Schools near the front line have been closed for 4.5 years and children are taught online, in bomb shelters or in a teacher's home if they are lucky.

They are an amazingly resilient nation who just want their freedom and liberty, two things we take very much for granted. They continue to work, be creative, build and rebuild and look to the future.

I think I speak for everyone when I say how humbled, how impressed and in awe we were of Natasha's incredible works which her family helps to fund and everyone works in in some practical capacity to offer this amazing opportunity to so many people.

We were honoured to make a donation of 1000e from Goodwill funds on behalf of our members in recognition.

CULTURA
CONTRA BALAS

+34.633.584.738
culturacontrabalas@gmail.com

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WARNING! ‼️

Cristina Research Information

🚨 WARNING — BEWARE OF THIS NEW NAME FOR NOLOTIL / METAMIZOLE: TURBET 1,000 mg
This is metamizole, the same active ingredient found in Nolotil.
⚠️ A man is currently fighting for his life in an ICU in a Spanish hospital after being prescribed metamizole under this brand name at a hospital in Málaga.
He was prescribed the medication for knee pain.
This is extremely concerning because many people know the name Nolotil, but may not recognise other brands containing the same active ingredient.
Nolotil is not the only name under which metamizole is sold in Spain.
TURBET 1,000 mg = NOLOTIL / METAMIZOLE
Please SHARE this post. Someone you know may be prescribed this medication without knowing what it contains.
#Metamizole #Nolotil #Turbet #Agranulocytosis #DrugSafety #PatientSafety #MedicationSafety #Pharmacovigilance #Spain #ADAF

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WWF Project - Plant a Tree

Why plant a tree?

I read about and was moved by the WWF idea of planting a MEMORIAL TREE in the name of a deceased loved one. This could be done by a donation in your Will or, as I was able to do after that, through a donation.

Well, in my case I had two planted, the publicity from the WWF some 3 years ago had offered the chance to plant a tree in memory of a loved one. Like many of us I'd lost one, my husband Alan, now some 5 years ago and as we both were long time admirers of the WWF and their sterling work to protect animals and the planet in general, their project to reforest an area to protect and nurture griffin vultures in Andalusia appealed to me, as a way of leaving a mark in Spain for both of us.

Alan had chosen, as have I, to have a minimum fuss, no attendance cremation, with no family that seemed the sensible option, but left us after over three decades living happily in Spain, with nothing to mark our presence here.

Two trees, a holm oak and an almond, marked with our names, in an area dedicated to wildlife, appealed to me and I knew it would have to Alan too. So that is what I arranged through WWF offices in Madrid. A charming, helpful lady accepted my request, although not directly a bequest in a will they were happy to accommodate my wishes.

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WWF Project - Plant a Tree cont.

All these projects take time and money and the Refugio de Rapaces de Montejo de la Vega, in the high area between Segovia and Madrid, is no different. It is an ongoing project that you can choose to support in a different, worthwhile way.

After three years, and on Alan's 5th anniversary on 23rd September, I had travelled to Segovia and had arranged to visit the sanctuary, accompanied by WWF volunteers. Although all the area was suffering from drought conditions, it was very pleasing and comforting to me to see them, with our names on, and the wild natural area in which they are growing.





The griffin vultures obliged with a magnificent overhead display of effortless gliding. The nearby high cliffs where they nest provide the thermals that they use to spend hours on the wing, with the minimum of effort, covering kilometres in their search for the carrion that sustains them and help clean up the land, all part of the natural cycle that keeps the balance in these faraway places.

The visit was a special event for me, recovering from broken hip surgery it was more of a challenge than I had reckoned on, when I booked it months ago. But the date was important to me and with kind help from WWF was able to visit the sight and spend a few quiet moments with the trees and my memories.

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WWF Project - Plant a Tree cont.

I've long thought, and WWF agree, that a tree planted can be for any occasion or celebration, a wedding, christening, grandkids exam success, a special birthday. What a lovely unusual and worthwhile way to mark any special day.

A lasting memory in a beautiful area of Spain, amongst nature and helping nature.

Surely, you have someone who would appreciate this gesture.
I know it has meant a lot to me that I chose to do it for Alan and myself, we are growing next to each other, and we have left a small token of our lives in Spain.



You can contact Bárbara Crespi at the Madrid WWF offices.
BarbaraWWFbcrespi@WWF.es you'll find her happy to help, a dedicated hardworking WWF team leader she will appreciate any support you can offer to this WWF project or any other of their worthwhile efforts.

They are making a better world for all of us.
Sheila Skinner

WWF España
Follow on Facebook

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Dining Experience Group

Do you enjoy dining out, trying new restaurants, meeting new people, sharing good conversation and having fun? If so then our Dining Experience Group is for you.
It is open to all members, couples and singles, everyone is welcome, and we meet once a month at different restaurants in the surrounding area.

So far this year we have had some excellent meals at the following venues:
Attico, Javea – which was a great success and one of our most popular numbers wise. Good value, plenty of excellent food, great choice, super location. One I am sure we will go back to.

Vall de Pop, Lliber – stunning venue and location, excellent food, the venue we use for our Christmas dinner dance.

Kathmandu Indian restaurant, Moraira – fabulous Indian food, our personal favourite Indian restaurant and our regular go to. Great value and excellent dishes.

Mirabelle's, Jalon – a local venue. Very good food

A Lot, Moraira – was a new restaurant to us and not long opened when we went. They certainly spoilt us with plenty of food! Lovely location opposite the sea.

Maxim's, Moraira – super restaurant, lovely eating inside and out. Excellent food. One to return to.

Stelis Greek restaurant, Moraira – fabulous Greek food and so much of it! I think many of us took out take aways! Very warm welcome and our most popular numbers wise. Definitely one to return to.

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Dining Experience Group cont.





Baladrar, Moraira – superb restaurant and possibly the best value for money for the quality and quantity of food. We were very spoilt! Beautiful venue and location overlooking the Ifach. Can't wait to return!



This month, October, we are off to **Verdi Vent, Bernia**, somewhere very different but always good food and lots of it! I am thinking we might visit **Casa Lili for some Chinese** dining in November.

We do try and find somewhere different to try each month that will suit most people, that fits the budget, has parking close by and is easily accessible. It's not always easy! The bad news is Chris and I like to recce first to make sure it is suitable so it means lots of eating out! (I'm not really complaining!)

We like Moraira for it's excellent choice of good restaurants and it's a lovely place to visit without being too far for members to drive. But we are very happy to try other venues if anyone can recommend somewhere they think fits the criteria. We try to keep to a maximum of 30 euros a head (or under) to include 3 courses, water, a drink and bread. We are happy to try and arrange car share/lift if necessary.

We send out details every month by e mail to all members so please look out and reply if you like the sound of it. We look forward to you joining us.

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Dining Experience



Friday 23rd October
1pm

Verdi Vent, Bernia

Plenty of parking on site.

The menu includes:

Tapas | Soup | Starter | Main course (to choose) | Dessert | Water and wine | Tip included

All other drinks must be paid for.



Main course options:

Duck
Beef Fillet
Chicken Breast
Lamb



Please advise your main course choice when booking.

You won't come away hungry from here!

Need a lift?

If anyone needs a lift please say and we will try to arrange.

Suggestions welcome

We are always open to suggestions bearing in mind price, location, parking etc.

Please email to book:
secretary@u3avalldelpop.com

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u3a Vall Del Pop coffee mornings

We look forward to seeing you at the following events.
No need to book, just turn up.
Please note, occasionally dates and venues may have to be amended so please keep an eye on the new website or Facebook for updates.





Members General Coffee Mornings 11.00am

Resto Bar Quijote Orba
14th October

Blanca Bikes
19th November

Resto Bar Quijote Orba
16th December

Friendship & Support Coffee Mornings Weds 10.30am

Casa Aleluya Jalon (Xalo)

21st October

4th & 18th November

9th & 23rd December







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Join in and meet new friends!

Activity groups meet regularly to pursue common interests. You can learn new skills or brush up on old ones, and it's a great way of making new friends!

The Group Co-ordinator is available to assist and advise in starting new groups or to help existing groups to recruit members etc Teresa - Group Co-ordinator - activitygroups@u3avalldelpop.com

	ACTIVITY	CONTACT
	***Allotment*** - We have a large 6m x18m allotment in Jalon. There is a shed and water on site.	SUE HARVEY & BRIGID REDMOND brigred4119@gmail.com
	***Ballroom, Latin & Sequence Dancing*** - Whatever your level of fitness, ballroom dancing is a great way to exercise and meet new friends.	DUNCAN THOMPSON dtheys14d18m@gmail.com Telephone: 634 33 46 89
	***Bridge*** - The aim of this group is to provide an opportunity for people to play bridge in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Cooperativa in Parcent.	WENDY SIM wendy.sim1@hotmail.com Telephone: 711090516
	**Canasta** - We meet every Tuesday afternoon at Casa Claudia in Jalon. New members would be very welcome to join us.	MARY WOOD marywoodspain@gmail.com Telephone: 675 674 301

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	ACTIVITY	CONTACT
	**Tai Chi and Qijong** - Gentle and accessible sessions from a qualified, experienced instructor.	SIMONE VAN DER HEIDE info@simonevanderheide.nl Telephone 666611029
	***Cinema*** - We aim to show a wide range of films in English. If you want to be included in the Cinema Group mailing list please contact Group Leader.	CHRISTINE BRAZIER justnanny@live.co.uk
	***Digital Photography*** - Our aims are to develop our digital photography skills in a social and safe group setting; and importantly, have fun doing so.	DAVID BROCK Davidandeileen50@yahoo.co.uk Telephone: 606 995 919
	***Dining Experience*** - Is now venturing outside the valley. Members can recommend an old favourite that they enjoy or a new venue to try.	Paula Barrett secretary@u3avalldelpop.com
	***Game Addicts*** - We are a group that likes to keep those grey cells active, and pride ourselves on being a friendly, light hearted crowd.	GORDON RODMAN boneinjalon@gmail.com Telephone: 693 725 199
	***Ladies At Lunch*** - We want to 'spread the wealth' so we plan these lunches at a variety of restaurants across our region.	SALLY ELLIS U3aladieslunch@gmail.com

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	ACTIVITY	CONTACT
	***Let's Sing Together...For Fun*** - Love to sing anywhere, any place, when a tune pops into your head. We sing songs that we enjoy, are fun and lifts our spirits.	Group Co-ordinator activitygroups@u3avalldelpop.com For more information
	**Mahjong** - Vinyaters Xalo Friday from 2.00pm A game rumoured to be around 2,500 years old, that is similar to Rummy, played with tiles.	BERYL COMAR berylcomar@gmail.com
	**Romeo Lunch** - A relaxed and informal men-only lunch group which meets monthly at various local bars and restaurants. What happens at lunch stays at lunch!	Chris Barrett president@u3avalldelpop.com Whatsapp +44 7772 106472
	**Mosaic** - We create decorative mosaics using glass and ceramics. Join us to learn how to do this fascinating hobby. Contact group leader	LIZ WILLIAMS Lizwilliams2008@live.co.uk Telephone: 684116089
	**Open Forum** - We meet fortnightly to discuss a variety of different topics, both serious and light-hearted. We are all different but we are all equal here!	SUE HARVEY shirleylliber@yahoo.com Telephone: 965730605
	**Petanque** - We meet every Wednesday & Friday mornings in Lliber	GERRY BACON Gerard.bacon@yahoo.com Telephone: 600 652 821

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	ACTIVITY	CONTACT
	**Spanish Conversation** - An opportunity to practise Spanish you have learnt in a casual conversation. Beginner, expert, or somewhere in between?	HEIDI MORGAN mike_heidi@hotmail.com
	Walking Groups - Make friends with others who enjoy exploring the excellent hill, valley and coastal walks. When possible we visit a local bar for refreshments.	JAN AND PAUL LENISTON paulleniston@hotmail.com Telephone: 651 633 198
	Yarn & Thread - Anything to do with yarn and thread is welcome. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Monday morning of the month at varied locations in Orba.	LORNA BOTTEN lornabotten@gmail.com Telephone: 96 558 3484

If you would like to promote your group in a future Newsletter
Please contact

Linda - news@u3avalldelpop.com

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Your u3a invite you to a spooky Halloween evening of music and dancing with the fabulous Paul and Judy: Saturday 31st October 7pm-11pm at Pepe's, Alcalali.

Dress to scare if you dare!!! for a prize. Only 17e, monies raised by Goodwill for local charities.

Meal choices on booking please:
Chicken pie, hake florentine, roast pork, veg lasagne,

Bread and alioli and ice creams included.

Please note this year we will be seated inside the venue (not in the conservatory) to keep warm!

To book e mail Goodwill@u3avalldelpop.com with menu choice. Pay at GAs or monthly coffee mornings

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Come and join us for a day Christmas Shopping at La Zenia Boulevard

Thursday 19th November - €15.00 euros



Coach departs Rastro car park Jalon at 08.30

Book & pay at GA or general coffee mornings.

Email: angela.lish55@gmail .com

WhatsApp: 685738851

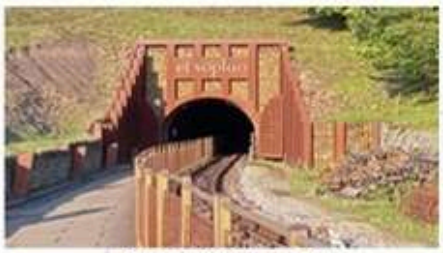
To reserve your place.

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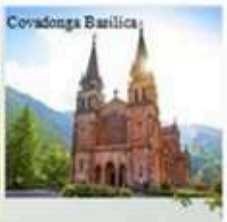
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Trip to Asturias & Cantarbria - 2027









CANTABRIA

Gaudi's Capricho



Your U3A Vall del Pop
is planning an 8 day trip (7 nights)
To Asturias and Cantabria
in September 2027

We will be staying in Cangas de Onis on the Cantabria/Asturias border. Bed and breakfast. Hotel Casa de Campo. It has a restaurant but if you want an evening meal out in Cangas, the coach will transport you. We are going to break the long journey by stopping for one night on the way there in Tudela at the Hotel Sercotel, then one night on the return journey at the Hotel Tibur in Zaragoza. There will be plenty of comfort breaks when travelling.

PRICE: €860 pp for a couple (320 single supplement)

Price set for 40 persons to go.

A €200 euro deposit per person will be required when putting your name down. If you pay by bank transfer your **surname** and the letters "**Ast/Cant**" must be used as a reference so we know who sent it and which trip it refers to.

To Book contact:-
Sonia Higginson at
ladyrocker2@googlemail.com or at **GA's** or **coffee mornings**

ITINERARY:- Depart Xalo on 12th September 2027 to Tudela for 1 night Hotel Sercotel (comfort breaks on the way).

The coach will leave Xalo rastro car park, time to be arranged.

Day 2—13/09—Breakfast, then drive to destination Cangas de Onis, Hotel Casa de Campo, time to unpack and stroll around and find somewhere to have your evening meal. As stated if you don't want to use the hotel restaurant, the coach will take us into Cangas. We are approximately 3 kilometres from the centre of the town.

Day 3—14/09—Breakfast and depart to visit with a local guide:- Santander (capital of Cantabria). Pereda Gardens, Santander Cathedral. Lighthouse to view entire city and Magdalena peninsula. Lunchtime. Afternoon Santillana del Mar and a walking tour of its historic centre. Onwards then to Comillas, passing the Sobrellano Palace to visit Gaudi's Capricho (one of his first houses he designed, entrance inc). Return to Cangas de Onis and hotel.

Day 4—15/09—Breakfast then visit Oviedo (capital of Asturias) with a local guide. Coach will take us on a panoramic tour of the city, passing the Palacio de Congresos, Campo de San Francisco and Campoamor theatre where the Princess of Asturias awards ceremony takes place, making our way to the Market. Lunchtime. Afternoon visit Gijon with a local guide. Return to our hotel.

Day 5—16/09—Visit the famous Basilica of Covadonga along with the holy cave. Lunchtime. Afternoon visit Ribadesella and take a tour of the Lonja, Old Town, Fishing Port and Paseo Indiano. Return to our hotel.

Day 6—17/09—Breakfast and depart to the Picos de Europa. Going through the Hermida gorge to Fuente Dé, where we can go up by cable car to admire the views of the Mirador del Cable. Continue onto the Monastry of Santo Toribio de Liébana, where the largest piece of the cross of Christ is preserved. We then visit Potes (capital of Picos de Europa) touring its historic centre. Lunchtime. Afternoon we visit San Vicente de la Barquera, a very popular fishing village on the Cantabrian coast. There is a castle here as well as a rich heritage. Return to hotel.

Day 7—18/09—Breakfast and depart Cangas de Onis for El Soplao caves (entrance inc). Onward to Zaragoza, Hotel Tibur, (1 night) free time in the city.
Day 8—19/09—Breakfast, depart Zaragoza to Xalo. Comfort breaks en route.
Included in the price is all the coach travel, breakfasts, accommodation, an English speaking guide to accompany us and basic travel insurance. Lunches and evening meals are NOT included. Also 2 entrance fees included.
Please be aware:- whilst every effort is made to accommodate all dietary requirements, it may be beneficial to carry your own snacks. Also regarding mobility—there is walking and climbing steps/ stairs on some of the excursions and not sure if all hotels have a lift.

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Collaborating with other organisations

THE ARTS SOCIETY MARINA ALTA PRESENTS

130 YEARS OF SOROLLA: MASTER OF LIGHT

By Arantxa Sardina

WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2026



In 1896, Joaquín Sorolla visited Jávea for the first time looking for inspiration for his paintings. Sorolla was a renowned Spanish painter, celebrated for his vibrant and luminous depictions of Spanish life - particularly beach scenes, fishermen, sunlit landscapes and paintings of everyday life. Known for his remarkable skill in capturing the effects of sunlight, Sorolla's work celebrates the artistic identity of the Marina Alta.

Morning lecture: Espai La Senieta, Avda. de Madrid 15, 03724 Moraira

Doors open at 10.15 for 11.00 h lecture.

Evening lecture: Casa de la Cultura, Plaça de Baix 6, 03730 Jávea

Doors open at 18.45 for 19.30 h lecture.

FREE ADMISSION FOR TASMA MEMBERS.

GUESTS WELCOME BY PREPAID €15 DONATION VIA WWW.ARTSOCMA.ORG

Join us from as little as €7.50 per lecture - see membership benefits at www.artsocma.org

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via email: info@artsocma.org

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THE ARTS SOCIETY MARINA ALTA

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