

Music around the world

Amateur musicians will come together on Saturday, June 4, for another remarkable international concert which involves none of them leaving their homes. It will once again be co-ordinated from the Granada village of Órgiva by music teacher Tracy Rose who has built her business, Music Lessons Anywhere, from a handful of students taught by herself to more than 70 students in 26 different countries, taught by seven teachers specialising in



In 2014's concert, six-year-old Luis played live in Órgiva while 11-year-old Leen from Libya was seen playing from her home in Málaga

various instruments, based in different locations around the world and connected through the internet. Each year, the students come together to perform live from wherever they live, alongside local students who play at a venue in Órgiva. This year promises to be the biggest event ever, with even the teachers joining in. In Órgiva, the incoming video is displayed on a huge screen for the audience, while the entire concert will be streamed live in HD and can be viewed from anywhere at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/concert-musiclessonsanywhere-net> from 2.30pm.

Bus fire

A local bus caused chaos in the centre of Málaga when its engine caught fire twice in 15 minutes. It stopped first in calle Compás de la Victoria when fire crews were called after it started emitting smoke. After attending to the outbreak, the fire restarted in the air filter causing the crew to return to the vehicle. No-one was injured in the incidents.

Taxi attacks

National Police have detained two people, one a minor, believed to be responsible for robberies from taxi drivers in Málaga during December and January. Their detention followed another recent incident after a driver was attacked by two individuals who refused to pay their fare before snatching his takings. The driver's statement enabled officers to trace the pair allegedly responsible.

Granada farmers fear serious drought threat

Almost 12,000 hectares of crops around Almuñécar are at serious risk from drought. Sub-tropical fruits grown in the Rio Verde valley are under threat following what is described as over-exploitation of wells by farmers.

Recent heavy rains have alleviated an extreme situation but many expect the situation to become critical over the summer months. Those affected in Almuñécar, La Herradura, Jete and Otívar are already incurring high power costs to have water pumped in.

On April 29, the town council in Almuñécar urged the regional environment department to consider activating a drought alert in the Verde and Jate valleys. The motion passed described the situation as "alarming" because the 12 monitors which check on the state of wells in the area

indicated that water levels were verging on an historic low. It added that the worst case scenario would be for sea water to enter the aquifer, an event which, it says, would be a social and economic catastrophe in the municipality.

The regional agriculture department has responded by saying it would act with "caution" and had postponed taking a decision until the end of May to see if levels have improved by then.

Meanwhile, the association of municipalities in the area has commissioned a study from Granada University to examine whether it would be viable to divert water from Almuñécar's water treatment plant into the Rio Verde, instead of it being poured into the sea as happens at present.

Voting decision awaited

As we went to press, a ruling from the UK's Supreme Court was awaited on a challenge to the present legislation which prevents British nationals from voting in the forthcoming referendum on EU membership. On May 27, the court of appeal upheld an earlier High Court judgement on a case brought by two emigrants who have lived outside the UK for more than 15 years and are therefore ineligible to vote.

Their solicitors argued that this is an unjustified restriction on their EU right to freedom of movement and infringed their common law right to vote. However, in the latest judgement, the Master of the Rolls, Lord Dyson, said that there is no common law power,

such as the right to vote, which could declare the present legislation unconstitutional. He added that EU law could not override British legislation which disenfranchises those who have been absent from the electoral roll for more than 15 years. The Supreme Court was expected to hear an emergency appeal against the ruling within days of the court of appeal decision. Cases usually take several years to reach the UK's highest court.

The present government in London has promised to scrap the 15 year rule, but has not yet done so. The final date for new voters to be registered for the June 23 referendum is June 7.

"Natural" death after eviction

A man has died in Oviedo after being arrested for resisting eviction from his home. The 28-year-old Cuban national was detained after he bit the leg of one of the police officers supervising the operation.

As he was being taken to the police headquarters, an officer noticed that the suspect was distressed and having difficulty breathing, so ordered the driver to go straight to a hospital. A police statement said the man died in the Hospital Universitario Central de Asturias a short time later.

An upper court in Asturias was told last

month that a post-mortem examination indicated that the man had died from cardiac-respiratory failure, and that his body showed no signs of violence such as trauma, bone fracture or internal bleeding.

It concluded he died from natural causes. The court also heard that the dead man's brother had filed an official complaint about the incident. The victim had lived legally in Spain since 2010 and worked at a dance academy run by his sister in Oviedo. He is reported to have appeared as a singer and dancer on a number of Spanish TV talent shows in recent years.