

# The Riviera Gazette

27 March 2003 • Number 33

The Côte d'Azur's English-language newspaper

www.TheRivieraGazette.com



**Start of Summer Time**  
Remember that clocks 'spring forward' one hour at 2am on Sunday 30th



**Film Guide** Where to see About Schmidt, Cypher and a host of Oscar winners, p7

**What's On** Jazz, classics, country, blues, English theatre, a charity walk and more, p8

**My Riviera** How Margaret Gregorini stretched three months into thirty years, p6

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Expat changes name in anti-war protest, p4

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CIV pupils raise money for guide dogs, p5

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Second Monaco prison escapee caught in Italy, p5

### Film Guide

23 English-language films in eleven cinemas this week, p7

# KICKBACKS AT NICE CITY HALL



Nice Matin/François Vignola  
VIALATTE... contracts boss

By JENNY PAUL

**THE five men arrested last week in the Nice City Hall corruption scandal have been named.**

And the Director General of City Services for Nice and for the Canca regional authority, one of the city council's most senior executives, is amongst the five.

Michel Vialatte, 43, a close and trusted colleague of mayor Jacques Peyrat, has been accused of 'corruption, favouritism and peddling influence' after suspicious payments of €45,000 and €76,000 linked to the Stade du Ray construction contract sparked a swoop on the five last week.

#### Fraud

Together with businessman Pierre Besrest, 61, he is alleged to have cooked up an organised system of fraud in the public works department with kickbacks in exchange for favours dished out to bent businesses

in on the scam. The arrests specifically concern the contract for the Stade du Ray but contracts for graffiti cleaning, the tramway and the new City Hall building are all also now under investigation.

#### Embezzlement

Besrest has already served one prison sentence for embezzlement in connection with a public works contract placed by the Conseil General of Essonne. He was arrested in Paris and transferred to Nice for questioning last week, under suspicion of active corruption, peddling influence and favouritism.

Besrest is believed to have been responsible for making the introductions between Vialatte and Marseille-based construction firm A3com

whose director has also been named as one of the five arrested. Philippe Pariset, 50, is accused of corruption and peddling influence after A3com won the main Stade du Ray construction contract. It is believed the company was also preparing a bid for the €305 million Nice tramway project at the time of the arrests.

The councillor responsible for sports, former police chief Bernard Orengo, 55, is suspected of the lesser crime of passive corruption. A source close to the investigation told Nice Matin this week he believes Orengo and fellow accused René Daolio, head of the council's cleaning services, were both approached by one of the three key figures in the scandal rather than having been driving forces behind it.

The investigation that led to the arrests was started in October 2002. "Since the opening of the enquiry in

October, we've been waiting for the first fruit of this fraudulent pact to manifest itself," Eric de Montgolfier, the leading prosecutor of the Alpes-Maritimes explained.

Taped phone conversations are expected to form the cornerstone of the case against the five, along with numerous documents seized at the city hall, at the offices of Canca and at the homes of the accused. Documents seized relate to ten or so public works contracts handed out or about to be awarded out by the City of Nice.

#### Scandal

Given Jacques Peyrat's close association with Vialatte, the scandal has forced the Nice mayor to take a very defensive stance.

Nice councillors will meet on Friday for the first time since the scandal broke. The opposition is promising a heated debate.



Nice Matin  
CENTRE OF SCANDAL... an artist's impression of the new Stade du Ray, due to be completed in 2006. The award of the main building contract to A3com sparked the arrests

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UPDATE

## FRENCH INHERITANCE LAW - WHO BENEFITS?

Planning for the distribution of your estate when you die can be a daunting and emotive task, but it is a hugely important part of tax planning and should not be ignored.

This is a particularly important issue for UK residents and UK expats who own French property. Many incorrectly assume that if they have a UK will that deals with worldwide property it will adequately deal with their French property too.

In France, however, immovable property (land and buildings) is subject to French succession law. This applies regardless of the residency of the owner and regardless of any specific distribution of property they may have outlined in their UK will.

UK residents are familiar with an inheritance system that allows them to leave their estate to almost anyone but

the system in France is very different. As it suggests, succession law dictates who can benefit from a person's estate. Additionally, the amount of inheritance tax paid is determined by the relationship between the beneficiary and the deceased, and the size of each individual inheritance - not the size of the whole estate.

Assets are divided into two portions: a reserved portion (reserve légale) and a disposable portion (quotité disponible). Blood relatives called 'protected heirs' have rights to a compulsory share of the reserved portion - these are usually a person's children. Crucially, a surviving spouse or other chosen beneficiary is not a protected heir.

If there is one living child the reserved portion is half the estate; for two it is two-thirds, and for three or more living children, it is three-

quarters. All portions must be equally divided. If a son or daughter dies before the testator, their share will be distributed equally among their children.

If there are surviving parents or grandparents in both the maternal and paternal lines but no children, the reserved portion is half the estate; with surviving parents or grandparents in one line only, the reserved portion is a quarter of the estate. Both must be divided equally.

The disposable portion is the share that remains. This can be distributed as the testator wishes but the more distant the relationship between the testator and the beneficiary the higher the inheritance tax liability.

Let's look at an example. Mr X is a UK resident with a child, Ms Y, from his first marriage. He marries again and buys a €400,000 villa in France as a

holiday home. He makes a will in the UK and leaves the French property to his new wife Mrs X.

When Mr X dies, his will is administered in the UK. He has not planned for the effects of French succession law and his new wife Mrs X now finds that half of the villa passes to Ms Y.

Ms Y could, by law, renounce her rights to her reserved portion of Mr X's French property, but she would lose her personal allowance and so the French inheritance tax liability could rise. In any case Ms Y does not like Mrs X and has no intention of surrendering her half of the villa.

Without proper planning French succession laws can easily lead to family arguments and difficulties such as these. Mr X, like many UK residents, assumed that his UK will would be sufficient but has now left a messy situation for his family to sort out at a time when they are already emotionally vulnerable.

Mr X could have avoided the effects of French succession law by purchasing his high-value property through a

société civile immobilière (SCI) - a French property holding company. He would then have owned the shares in the SCI, which are classified as personal property and therefore not bound by succession laws.

Owning property through an SCI means that you can dispose of the property as you wish but it will not mean the beneficiaries are able to avoid inheritance tax. In next week's **Sovereign Update** we look at structures that can be used to mitigate tax in addition to avoiding French succession laws.

**Plan ahead, get advice and make sure your assets are distributed to the people you choose. If you would like further information regarding tax planning or corporate ownership, please contact us.**

The information provided in this article does not constitute advice and no responsibility will be accepted for any loss occasioned directly or indirectly as a result of persons acting, or refraining from acting, wholly or partially in reliance upon it.

## Taxing issues?

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**TGV stop, go**

THE Ministry of Transport has given the go-ahead for a public debate and consultation process on a new super-fast TGV train line to link Paris and the Côte d'Azur, just ten days after locals were told government cutbacks meant there was no chance of the project being considered before 2020.

**Resorts share workers**

COASTAL town Ste Maxime has twinned with ski resort Courchevel to share seasonal workers, since the employment needs of the two towns are complementary. Both resorts are now considering how to accommodate the workers.

**Hallyday in trouble again**

AGING rocker Johnny Hallyday was in trouble again this week after altering his home in Marnes-la-Coquette without planning permission.

The Belgian crooner has until September 29 to change it back or he faces trouble with the authorities.

**Snorty boy**

TWENTY SIX kilos of cocaine were seized on the A8 at La Turbie last week. The €1.3M haul was found in the bumper of a Spanish-registered car which was headed for Italy.

The Spanish driver has been arrested and is now awaiting trial in Nice.

**E-as-y way to jail**

THREE youths were each sentenced to three years in prison this week after sniffer dogs caught them with over 2,300 ecstasy pills on the A8 at Frejus.

They were on their way home from a rave party in l'Herault in May last year when the haul was discovered.



24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE... Juan les Pins' bars and restaurants want to stay open for as long as customers want to party

# JUAN LES PINS PLANS LATE NIGHT OPENING

AS THE summer season begins to kick off along the Coast, bar and restaurant owners in Juan-les-Pins are calling for later opening hours.

Currently they are licensed to open until 2:30am in July and August, but are supposed to close at 12:30 the rest of the year.

"In both cases, it's too early," local bar owner Rudy Mamam told Nice

open later at night, but since 1997 we haven't been able to get them.

"The police used to turn a blind eye, allowing everyone to stay open until 4am or 5am. But last summer, the police kept coming by and telling us to close up."

"We want to open until 2:30 at the weekends throughout the season," Martine Parent of the Union of Restaurateurs and Hoteliers told *The*

*Riviera Gazette*.

"English-speakers who work on the yachts actually came and asked us directly if we could extend our opening hours, so it is at the request of our clientele that we have made the demand for an extension," she continued.

The union has applied to the council for a 2:30am closing time all year round, and hopes for a verdict soon.

**Black bags, black flags**

THIRTY volunteers marshalled by the Surfrider Foundation picked up nearly 3,000 litres of litter from La Bergerie beach at Hyeres this week.

Rubbish collected included a television aerial and a beach table.

Beach cleans took place in many other Var resorts including Frejus and Saint-Mandrier. The Surfrider foundation will use the volunteers' feedback to award black flags to the dirtiest beaches.

**Three years for drink drive death**

A MARRIED father was sentenced to three years in prison this week for killing a 19-year-old and seriously injuring five others on Nice's Voie rapide last October.

The driver already had a one month suspended sentence for a previous drink drive offence, and was speeding and weaving across the road before he was in a collision with two other cars.

**French CNN**

A FRENCH-LANGUAGE equivalent of CNN is to launch in 2004.

The government-funded news channel will offer viewers "the choice of a different take on the news, marked with the unique point of view of our country on world affairs," a government spokesman explained.

**St Tropez season looking good**

HOPES are high for the 2003 tourist season in the Var, with reservations in StTropez for the months of July and August at a 'normal' level, despite international tension.

The Var's major tourist asset is that 80% of its clientele is French.

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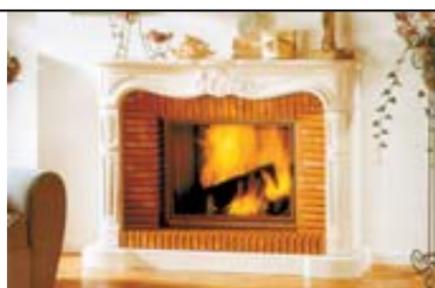
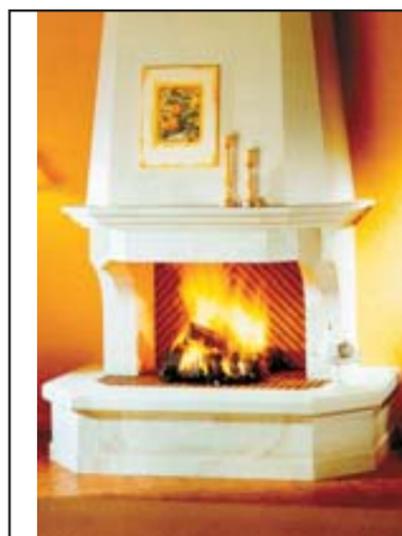
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# Mougins tackles crime

By Sarah Clark

**MOUGINS town council moved a step closer to introducing a tough anti-crime scheme this week.**

The town, a popular choice for expats, is suffering from a growing reputation as a magnet for burglars. So the town council now plans to bring in a 'Contrat Local de Sécurité'.

This will enable it "to organise everyone involved in tackling crime to be as effective as possible," Mme Bloch, Mougins' assistant director general told *The Riviera Gazette*.

"It is a contract with the state, with the prefect and the procureur, which gives us extra instruments to fight crime," she explained.

"Mougins' crime level is average for towns of this population in the Alpes-Maritimes. But the commune of Mougins is very large, the same size as Antibes, and only 50% of it is built on. This makes it difficult to police. And most of our

crime comes from outside the commune, from the neighbouring towns of Vallauris, Cannes and Le Cannet."

The results of a study designed to identify where problems lie and how they could be fixed were presented at a special meeting in Mougins on Monday.

The research identified three areas for Mougins' crime fighters to focus on. The first covers burglaries, car thefts and petty theft, the second covers graffiti, fly tipping and other antisocial behaviour whilst the third tackles ways in which Mougins' population could be made to feel safe.

"A survey is being sent out to all Mougins residents and we really want to hear people's suggestions and points of view," Mme Bloch concluded.

"Mougins is by no means

worse than anywhere else," long-term resident Keith Meredith of estate agents Coast & Country told *The Gazette*. "I remember an old story about a paranoid Canadian family who sold up everything in the 1970s and moved to a desert island to get away from it all - but chose the Falkland Islands."

"Wherever there's money there's crime, and Mougins is a pretty rich area. But I've lived here for thirty years and I've never been burgled. So long as you take precautions and don't flaunt your wealth, you're fine."

But not everyone's experiences are the same. One Mougins family decided to sell up and move back to the UK after their third break-in in just a few months. "We went to the UK last month to get organised for the move back - and when we got back to Mougins, the house had been broken into yet again," the anonymous expat told *The Gazette*.

## Lolo hubby set free

**THE husband of busty porn star Lolo Ferrari was released from prison in Grasse last week after spending more than a year on remand under suspicion of murdering his former wife.**

Lolo, whose enormous 54G (137cm) chest was recognised by the *Guinness Book of Records* as the biggest in the world, was found dead at the couple's home in Peymeinade in March 2000, aged 37.

A post-mortem found the cause of death to be an overdose of prescribed medication.

But then her husband and manager Eric Vigne was arrested in February 2001 and charged with failing to help a person in danger. And when a new autopsy last November revealed she may have been suffocated in her sleep, the court in Grasse decided there was enough evidence to try Vigne, 53, for her murder.

Vigne has always protested his innocence, but prosecutors said he had two possible



FREE... Eric Vigne with Lolo in 1998

motives: they claimed he was grooming two young women, 'The Silicone Girls', to replace his alcoholic wife on the cabaret circuit, and that Lolo had taken a lover.

Now, however, a request to extend Vigne's detention by a further six months has been turned down. "They have not yet dropped the charges, but we successfully argued that they could not justify holding him in prison any longer," Vigne's lawyer Eliane Kamara told *The Riviera Gazette*. "We are very pleased with this result."

## Brits warned to 'be vigilant'

**SECURITY has been stepped up in the Alpes-Maritimes following the outbreak of war in Iraq.**

At Nice airport, security checks on luggage have been increased and customs officers are using sniffer dogs extensively.

Security checks have also been reinforced at the region's ports, train and bus stations and, whilst police are still continuing with 'normal' duties, they have been offered overtime to ensure full manpower is in place at all times.

The British foreign office says "although we are not aware of any specific threat to western or to British interests from terrorism in France, we believe there is an increased general threat to visibly British institutions and organisations from global terrorism in France, as there is in all other countries in Europe. Against this background, UK nationals should be vigilant in public places and areas frequented by tourists."

## Bye bye Bush

**A BRITISH pensioner living in the Hérault has changed his name from Bush to Buisson - French for bush - in protest at the US President's decision to go to war with Iraq.**

"I'm proud of my name, but I now live in France and have decided to become French. I do not want my name to be associated with that horrible man in America," Eric Bush told *The Riviera Gazette*.

"I have changed my name in protest at the war. I am completely in agreement with Chirac and think this is an illegal war. I'm not pro Saddam Hussein, but I cannot accept that innocent people have to die," the septuagenarian explained.

"I changed my name over the internet on [www.deed-pollsonline.co.uk](http://www.deed-pollsonline.co.uk) and it cost £38. The certificate will be here this week."

## Flan flingers strike again

**THE President of the UMP political party has become the latest in a long line of high profile victims of France's phantom flan flingers.**

Former prime minister Alain Juppé was leaving the Institut d'études politiques in Aix-en-Provence last week when a custard pie hit him in the face. The culprit got away, despite bodyguards' efforts to catch him.

An organisation called AARRG, which describes itself as a 'resource for global resistance', has claimed responsibility. It says its aim was to denounce "the activities of this individual and the party he belongs to."

Authorities say the flan flinger is guilty of premeditated violence and are actively



TART TARGET... Custard casualty Alain Juppé last Wednesday night

searching for the culprit.

Last October, Noël Godin, 57, was ordered to pay €1 in damages to Jean-Pierre Chevènement for assaulting him with a custard pie during last year's election campaign.

## Second Monaco escapee caught

AN ITALIAN man who escaped from Monaco prison with former nurse Ted Maher in January has been recaptured in Pisa.

Luigi Ciardelli, 46, dubbed 'Cyrano' because of his distinctive nose and eloquent speech, was serving seven years for robbery and drug trafficking when he and Maher escaped from the Principality's tiny prison on the night of 21 January.

The pair sawed through bars on their cell window and made off down a rope made from plastic bags.

Despite his recapture, Ciardelli's escape looks as though it will have succeeded in its aims. In a phone call to *Nice Matin* in early February the fugitive said he would give himself up if he got a guarantee that he would not be returned to Monaco.

Now, as an Italian citizen detained in Italy, any bid to extradite him to Monaco would be unlikely to succeed. The Monegasque authorities have already indicated they will not seek to do so.

Ted Maher, 43, was serving a ten year sentence for starting the penthouse fire in which billionaire banker Edmond Safra died in 1999. The former commando was recaptured at a hotel in Nice the day after his escape.

Maher is currently being held in Aix-en-Provence prison. He is due in court on April 3 to hear Monaco's bid to have him returned to the Principality.

Since Maher is an American serving a sentence for a crime committed in Monaco, the Principality's case is expected, this time, to be rather stronger.

# CIV PUPILS GO WALKIES FOR BIOT'S GUIDE DOGS



BLIND DATE... CIV students get the chance to see life through another pair of eyes



BAND AID... Student group Savage Reservation played at the school's International Day

THE CIV International School in Sophia Antipolis was visited by two guide dogs last Friday, as students learned how the specially trained animals work with humans.

"It's something we do every year," Vicki Cozens Walker, a teacher at the school, told *The Riviera Gazette*. "It's because on Saturday we're holding our annual charity 'walkathon' to raise money for the guide dog training school in Biot.

"This will be our thirteenth year and we've so far 'bought' sixteen dogs. It's fun too - last year one pupil actually ran all the way around the 15km course and now there's a bit of a competition to beat that record."

The event starts at 8am on Saturday at the school - anybody wanting to take part should go to the 'Agora' and have pre-arranged sponsorship.

● It's been a busy week at the CIV - pupils also held a fundraising 'International Day' last Saturday. "The number of people that turned out was amazing," organiser Lori Mazzioti-Gardet told *The Gazette*.

"We normally have this event on a Wednesday, but wanted to make it more accessible this time. Over 2,000 people turned up and we made over €3,000 by selling food from thirteen countries, including Scandinavia and Japan, and laying on entertainment as diverse as bag-pipes, French choirs and a student rock band. The proceeds will go to Greenpeace, SCAMP, Amnesty International and Nomads."

## No butts

PRESIDENT Jacques Chirac has launched a nationwide anti-smoking initiative, expected to cost half a billion euros over the next five years. One person dies from smoking related illness every three minutes in France.

## Directors flock to Var

LAST year 88 films, ranging from music videos to television movies, were shot in the Var. 73% of the productions were in French.

The gulf of St Tropez was the most popular location, but film-makers also took their cameras to the Maures, the Gorges du Verdon and the Esterel.

## Ginola's wine

FORMER footballer and shampoo model David Ginola, presenting 'Soleil' awards for wines produced in the Var last week, announced his intention to buy a local vineyard with the aim of introducing the wines of the area to his "English friends."

Heartthrob Ginola was born in the area and now lives in Ste Maxime.

## Heavyweight crime

THIEVES managed to steal a safe weighing 500kg from a petrol station in Nice last Sunday. After forcing the rear door of the building, the men loaded the safe, containing €7,000, onto a lorry and escaped.

## Good news, bad news

A MAN admitted to Nice's St Roch hospital after a serious accident turned out to be a wanted criminal, and was arrested as he came out of a coma.

The man was part of a three-man gang that held up drivers and stole their cars around Antibes and Grasse.

All three have now been caught.

## OPEN FORUM EU ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT TO END TAX EVASION

After several years of negotiation the EU has finally announced new laws to counter tax evasion and bring banking secrecy to an end.

**FACT** EU Member States will now automatically exchange information to prevent, and enable investigation into tax evasion.

Banking Secrecy, as we have known it, is finished. **FACT**

**FACT** Other EU Members and Switzerland will impose a withholding tax of up to 35% on all non-resident accounts.

If you are not disclosing your full income and wealth to the tax authorities you are now at significant risk of discovery. **FACT**

The difficulties and dangers of these new laws will not be avoided by closing your eyes to them. Nor will they be avoided by merely waiting to see what happens. At the second in our Open Forum series we will discuss the implications of these new EU laws and explain how you can legitimately avoid tax on your savings and investments.

Time will be allocated for you to put questions to our guest speaker. We have studied and understand the new laws. Your attendance will ensure that you do too! To ensure your place please book early. The Open Forum held last Autumn was fully subscribed.

OPEN FORUM  
OPEN FORUM

If you have not booked your place for the event yet, contact your local partner now.

Tuesday, 8th April 2003

Hotel de Vigniamont  
5 Rue Massillon, 34120 Pezenas  
at 10.30 for 11.00am, until 1.00pm

Wednesday, 9th April 2003

Hotel Les Bories  
Route de L'Abbaye de Senanque  
84220 Gordes en Provence  
at 10.30 for 11.00am, until 1.00pm

Thursday, 10th April 2003

InterContinental Carlton  
06414 Cannes  
at 3.30 for 4.00pm, until 5.30pm

Friday, 11th April 2003

Columbus Monaco  
98000 Fontvieille Monaco  
at 10.00 for 10.30am, until 12.00 noon

For Pezenas and Gordes en Provence contact Stephen Langton, Partner on 04 67 09 93 92 or [stephen.langton@blevinsfranks.com](mailto:stephen.langton@blevinsfranks.com)

For Cannes and Monaco contact Rob Kay, Senior Partner on 04 93 00 17 80 or [rob.kay@blevinsfranks.com](mailto:rob.kay@blevinsfranks.com)



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## My Riviera

## Children's author Margaret Gregorini tells Sarah Clark how a three month break turned into a thirty year adventure...

"I CAME here in July 1974, for three months. I'd been working as a hotel receptionist in Aviemore, Scotland and I'd asked for leave to go travelling.

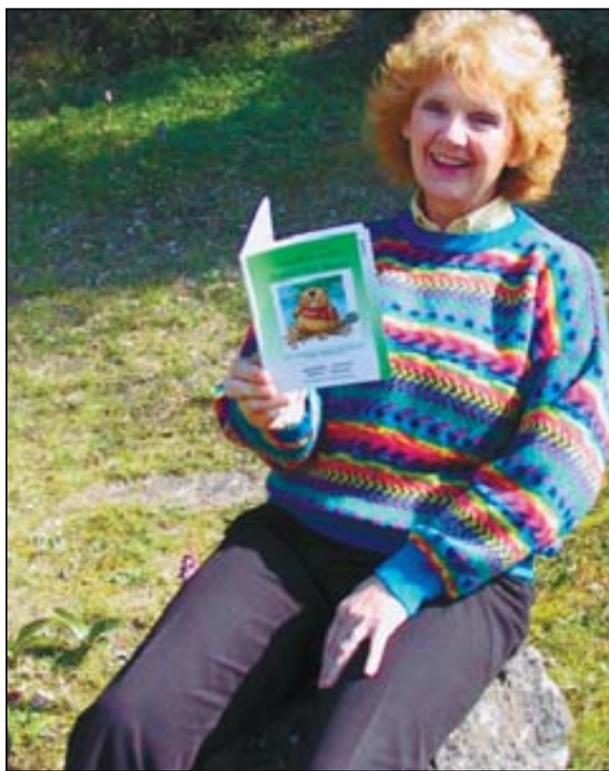
I had a train ticket to Barcelona but, when I got to London, I changed my ticket to Nice. I already knew someone in Nice, a ski instructor I'd worked with in Scotland, so I sent him a telegram from London asking him to meet me at Nice station.

I got a job as an au pair but it was like slave labour so I left after a month and got a summer job selling milkshakes.

I met a chap and, when the summer season ended, we both went up to Isola 2000. The resort was very new then, and it was an English chap who'd built it. He used to go to Auron but there wasn't always enough snow so he scouted around for somewhere with plenty, picked Isola 2000 as a good site and built the resort.

It was smaller then, of course, just that main complex. Celebrities came because they knew the owner. It was great fun, Wilfrid Brambell, the old man in Steptoe & Son, used to buy a bottle of gin every day.

Then I worked with a commodities brokerage in Nice, moved to IBM in La Gaude and, when my son was two, I was offered a job as an English teacher at a pre-school in



ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?... A seventeen year stint as a pre-school teacher has taught Margaret a thing or two about children's stories

Cagnes-sur-Mer. I stayed there seventeen years!

The school changed hands in 2001 and I left. I've always fancied writing children's books and now I had the time to do it.

I translate French stories into English for 'Bi-books', a new range of books with text in two languages, and my own first story will be published in the next couple of months. I've

written three so far.

Bi-books are a wonderful new concept in bilingual books for young children, launched by a local publisher, Editions Catherine Cousin in Villeneuve-Loubet.

The idea is that each book is in two languages, French and one other, with the French and second language on facing pages so children who know or

who are learning a second language can read and understand the story in both.

They're already available in fifteen different languages and there'll be Bi-books in Niçois, Provençal and Corsican soon.

So far there are two French-English books, Blue and Poutchi the Beaver, and my three stories will be joining the range over the next few months.

My husband was French and my children Paul, 19, and Victoria, 10, have grown up in a French atmosphere. We go back to the UK for two weeks every Christmas and six weeks in the summer, but I think I'm probably very integrated with French society. I live in Fabron, Nice which has a mostly French population, and I don't know many Brits.

My nephew, Damien Gregorini, is the goalkeeper for Nice football club. We go to all the matches, the atmosphere there is incredible. There are so many people at the matches now they're in Division 1. It feels like everyone's behind Nice FC.

I'm really excited about things now. With the Bi-books, it's a whole new part of my life starting at 5!

Thirty years after I arrived for three months, I'm still here. I do wonder, though, what would have happened if I'd gone to Barcelona...

## Classifieds

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

● WORKSHOP: Spiritual Drawing, 25-27 April. 04 92 10 89 35

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● VOLVO 340 DL auto, 1987, 82 000kms, 06 reg, LHD. €750. Simon, 06 22 82 16 18. (Mougins)

● MERCEDES 560 SEC 1989 coupe, excellent cond, US spec, French plates. 190,000km, met grey, blue int €11,000. Tel: 04 93 78 01 67/06 84 07 15 57

● VOLVO V70 Summum, 7 seats, ex cond, 95,000km, a/c, CD/cass, sunroof. €14,000. 06 64 75 11 30

● 1997 Renault Twingo 60000km, royal blue, sun roof + bike racks. €4,300 ono. 06 12 77 13 14

● VW Golf IV 1.6 Confort, 2000, LHD, French registration, 52,000kms. €11,600. 06 17 64 56 16

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## COMPUTERS &amp; IT

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● IT professional available for database, website and software development. 04 93 80 04 56

## HOUSEHOLD

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## JOBS

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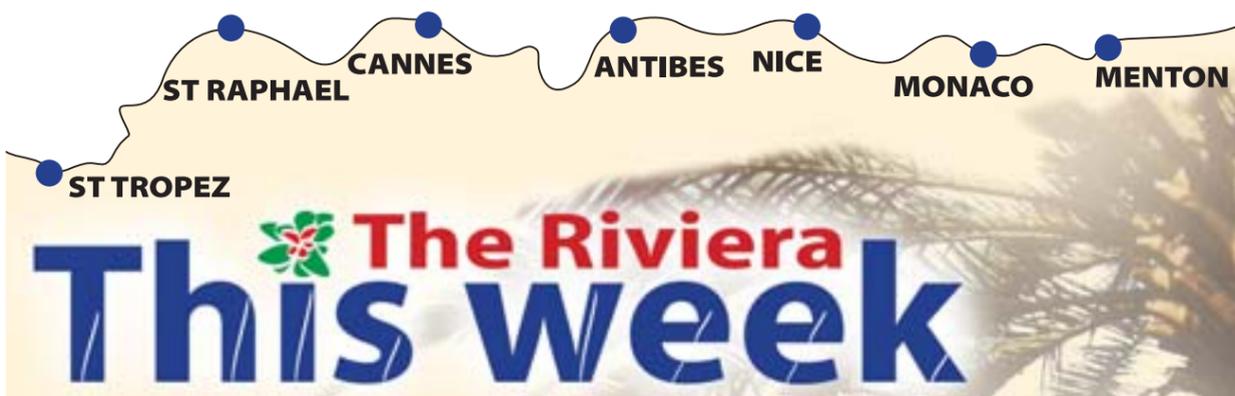
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What's On and Where To Go...



Thursday 27

- The International School of Nice presents **The Return to the Forbidden Planet**, a musical comedy loosely based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, tonight, Friday and Saturday at 19:30. Tickets are €13 for adults and €8 for students. Call 04 93 21 04 00 for reservations.
- The British Association of Monaco is holding a **happy hour** at 18:30 at Le Bistrotet, Galerie Charles III (near the Metropole Hotel) in Monaco – a great chance to meet new people over drinks. Tel: +377 93 50 19 52.
- Milia and MIP TV, respectively international markets for **digital interactive entertainment and TV programming**, continue until tomorrow from 09:00 to 19:00 each day at the Palais des Festivals, Cannes. Tel: 04 93 39 24 53.
- The Bill Frisell Quartet performs **live jazz** tonight from 21:00 at the CEDAC in Cimiez, Nice. Tickets are €15. Tel: 04 93 53 89 66.
- The 14th Décoration & Jardin exhibition, a **homes and gardens** exhibition, starts today at 21:00 at the Espace Fontvieille, Monaco. See everything for the home and garden under one roof until Monday. Entry is €5. Tel: +377 97 98 50 00
- The **Georgian National Ballet** company performs at the Palais Nikaia in Nice, at 15:00 and 20:30. Tickets from €40. Tel: 08 92 69 70 73 to book.
- The Salon du Patrimoine Maritime Méditerranéen, an event **celebrating the Med's maritime heritage**, starts today at the Citadelle and port in Villefranche-sur-Mer and continues until Sunday, from 09:00 to 18:00 each day. See stalls, workshops and concerts from countries around the Mediterranean. Entry is free. Tel: +33 4 93 01 73 68.

Friday 28

- The Red Pear Theatre goes wacky tonight and tomorrow at 20:00 with **Shakin' Up Shakespeare** at the Theatre Antibea in Old Antibes. David Bateson, Barry McKenna and Vivienne McKee - as well as a few unsuspecting members of the audience - star in this crazy cocktail of a show, in which Shakespeare is thoroughly 'shaken up!' Tickets are €23 from 04 93 61 01 71.
- The Chris Davis Quartet is performing **swing and blues**, from Cab Calloway to Louis Armstrong, at the Bar-en-Biais jazz club in Antibes from 21:00. Tel: 04 93 74 10 98.
- A **garden show**, the 14th Fête des Jardins de Sophia, starts today Place Sophie Laffitte, Sophia Antipolis at 12:00, until 19:00. It continues tomorrow and Sunday from 10:00 to 19:00. Entry is free. Tel: 04 93 65 84 47.

- The 12th Festival Musical du Grand Hotel du Cap-Ferrat continues tonight with **Hey! Crooner**, a concert by Guy Marchand and the Frederic Manoukian orchestra at 20:00. Tickets are €30 – email banquet@grand-hotel-cap-ferrat.com for information.
- Continuing today are Milia/MIPTV, the Monaco homes and gardens show, the Salon du Patrimoine Maritime Méditerranéen and the ISN's school production.

Saturday 29

- The CIV School's 13th annual charity **Walkathon** starts at 08:00 this morning at the CIV in Haut Sartoux, Sophia Antipolis, until 13:30. All proceeds go to Biot's guide dog school, and the walkers this year aim to raise enough to train a new guide dog. Tel: 04 92 96 52 24.
- The Ensemble Resonnance de Nice is performing the music of **Mozart and Bach** at the Centre Culturel la Providence, Nice, from 20:00. Entry is €12. Tel: 04 93 80 34 12.
- The local branch of the **International Vegetarian Union** will hold its monthly get-together at 19:00 at The Speakeasy, 7 rue Lamartine in Nice. The meal afterwards is €12, non-vegans are welcome. Tel: 04 93 85 59 50.
- The Bar-en-Biais jazz club in Antibes is hosting a **Country Rock'n Roll** evening with Eddy Ray Cooper at 21:00 tonight. Tel: 04 93 74 10 98.
- The 6th Salon de la femme – an **exhibition for women** – is today and tomorrow at the Palais de l'Europe, Menton. From 10:00 to 18:00 each day there will be wine and bread tasting, forums, fashion parades and a 'Great Britain' show at 15:45. Entry to events ranges from being free to €12. Tel: 04 92 41 76 76.
- A model exhibition runs from 09:00 to 18:00 in the Place de Gaulle, Cagnes-sur-Mer – entry is free. Expect hobbyists showing **model trains, boats and more**. Tel: 04 93 20 61 64.
- Handel, Paganini and Ravel will be featured in a **violin and violoncello concert** at the Palais Carnolès, Menton, at 15:30. Admission is €16. Tel: 04 92 41 76 76.
- Continuing today are the Monaco homes and gardens show, the Salon du Patrimoine Maritime Méditerranéen, Red Pear's *Shakin' up Shakespeare*, the Sophia garden show and the ISN's school production.

Sunday 30

- Daylight Saving Time starts all over Europe today – remember that **clocks 'spring forward' one hour** at 02:00.
- Today is **Mother's Day in Britain**; St John's church in Menton will be holding a special family-friendly Mother's Day service at 10:30. All are welcome. Tel: 04 92 10 28 11.
- The Festin des Cougourdons is on today in

- Cimiez – at the gardens and the Place du Monastère - in Nice. Experience **traditional Niçoise atmosphere** with food, music and performances from 10:30. Tel: 04 97 13 21 21.
- Monte Carlo's Philharmonic Orchestra is giving a **classical concert** featuring the music of Rossini, Ravel, d'Indy and Respighi at 18:00 at the Auditorium Rainier III in Monaco. Tickets start at €15. Tel +377 93 10 85 17.
- The **Cannes PACA Regional Orchestra** is also performing today at the Théâtre Noga Croisette, Cannes at 16:30. Tickets are €20. Tel: 04 92 98 62 77.
- Cagnes-sur-Mer's **Festival de Musique Sacrée** continues with a concert at the Eglise de la Sainte Famille by the Nice Philharmonic Choir and the San Remo Symphony Orchestra at 20:30. Entry is €12. Tel: 04 93 22 19 25.
- Continuing today are the Monaco homes and gardens show, the Salon du Patrimoine Maritime Méditerranéen, the Sophia gardens show and the Salon de la Femme.

Monday 31

- **Roquebilliere's annual fair** starts at 09:00 at Place Corniglian Molinier. Everything from clothes to food and agricultural equipment will be on show. Tel: 04 93 03 51 60.
- Continuing today is the Monaco homes and gardens show.
- Stars 'n' Bars on Quai Albert 1er in Monaco hosts the second annual Monaco-USA **bi-lingual quiz night** tonight – the evening kicks off with drinks at 19:30, followed by dinner and the quiz at 20:30. Entry is €10, with a maximum of six per team. Book a table on +377 97 97 95 95.

Wednesday 2

- The France-Grande Bretagne Association in Nice will be hosting a **talk, in English**, this afternoon at 15:30. Sandhya Mohan, from India, will speak on 'Karma and Curry' at the Espace Associations, 45 Promenade du Paillon in Nice (just above the Gare Routiere). Tel: 04 93 81 22 88 for more information.
- **Monte Carlo Ice Stars** – From today until Friday stars from the international figure skating circuit will perform in a 'brand new, dazzling extravaganza' on a specially built ice rink at the Salle des Princes, Monaco. Shows are at 15:00 and 20:30 today, and 20:30 tomorrow and Friday. Tickets start at €30. Tel: + 377 99 99 3000
- **Peter Gabriel** is in concert at the Salle Nikaia, Nice, on May 28. Tickets are €40 and €50. A few seats are also still available for Mark Knopfler on April 28 at €38.75. Book at www.ticketnet.fr or call 08 92 69 70 73.

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Riviera Weather						
	Thursday 27	Friday 28	Saturday 29	Sunday 30	Monday 31	Tuesday 1
AM	7°C Sunny	9°C Cloudy	12°C Rain	12°C Cloudy	10°C Clearing	9°C Clearing
PM	16°C Clearing	17°C Cloudy	16°C Rain	16°C Cloudy	17°C Clearing	17°C Clearing

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**MARCH IN NICE...**  
Avg. high: 15°C Avg. sea temp: 13°C  
Avg. low: 7°C Avg. rainfall: 70mm  
Days are getting warmer, but mornings and evenings remain cool. Rainfall less than average – so far!

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next issue out **thursday april 3** see you next week!