

Burgos Today

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Reconocimiento - No Comercial - Sin obras derivadas - Genérica



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NEWS BULLETIN

Thanks Pria and welcome to our programme. In this new edition of BurgosToday we'll look at how Mirandeses responded to their town council's call for a direct vote on the controversial thermal plant.

We can count on a new much-needed much-polished version of a strategic plan on snowfall crisis management.

Up to 42 companies based in Burgos are doing fairly well in a very competitive environment.

Now the news in full:

- **Snow Disruption**
Snowfall Early Intervention Scheme ready for action

This time around the city council has put together a purposefully ambitious fail-safe Snowfall Early Intervention Scheme which provides for readily available trucks and SMS-linked units. With it they want to put behind them that shame and embarrassment which the fledgling local government was put to over Christmas, 2004. Not without having engaged in tireless negotiations with those council employees who might see their work schedules extended, Councillor for Public Safety, Gema Conde, has managed to hammer out a deal which includes some new measures.

Some areas inside the city (Milanera, Aduana, ...) have been designated and set aside so that trucks trapped by treacherous weather conditions can be safely taken to them. This will minimize traffic congestion as well as facilitating the snow removal. Mercadona stores have pledged assistance as they will provide basic food products to motorists and truck drivers accommodated in community centres and sport facilities.

Some agreement has been reached also between Burgos City Council and the central government office in Burgos by which machinery and snow-removing vehicles will be on stand-by along Cantabria Avenue for the duration of the snow alert. This road has been rated as a hot spot as well as the Islas Baleares underpass. More vehicles for the clean-up operation will be on lease from private contractors.

- **Best-performing companies**

Burgos City owes much of its easy times in terms of population, prosperity, employment levels, ... to its crossroads status, a landmark monument, its gothic Cathedral and to the fact that back in the sixties it was designated as a centre for preferential industrial development, which acted, by way of cash and tax incentives, as a pull factor for a good number of large companies, some of them multinational, within a wide range of sectors. Over the years, many of them have been based in either Villalonquéjar or Gamonal industrial estate for almost four decades, they may have changed trade names or switched to different products.

At present, quite a few of those Burgos-based companies, according to a report made by *Iberinform*, rank alongside other 5,000 top firms in Spain, that is, a 0.8%, a record high for Castilla y León. In the turnover ranking, Burgos, 0.5%, is outperformed by Valladolid, 1.1%, as Renault vehicle assembly plant tips the scales.

Among those firms with headquarters in Burgos topping the list of best-performing companies are newcomers such as some *Pascual* and *Antolín* new divisions, representing the thriving food industry and building contractors, both housing and civil engineering.

- **The outcome of the vote on the plant binding on the town council**

Judging by the turnout for the locally-held referendum on the combined-cycle thermal plant which *Montefibre* and *Iberdrola* are planning to build jointly, 12,291, 36,6% of the voters on the register, Mirandeses do have an issue with this facility. The referendum, which was held over two days, had an overwhelmingly conclusive result: 96,54% of the ballot papers cast said an unambiguous no the thermal station.

The turnout, although relatively low, has been high enough from a political and administrative perspective as all parties, Socialists, PP and United Left represented in the town council agreed unanimously to initiate the vote and to set the 20% mark for the referendum to be valid. A simple majority of voters would have been sufficient for the decision to be taken.

ODDS AND ENDS TRACKING DEAD PEOPLE'S PROPERTY

That some business activities are subjected to vicious, sometimes almost unbearable, competition is no news for many of us. After all sectors within an economy are said to be prompted by and somehow benefiting from competition. It's its driving force, its second nature.

However, from time to time we hear some stories that shake that complacency off its foundations. One of those business activities that are the victims and the beneficiaries of fierce competition is estate agency, a service provider which has been boosted by the property boom in recent years.

Estate agencies, needless to say, buy and mostly sell on behalf of property owners, charging them for such services. They also do lettings. Estate agents gather endless lists of properties whose owners want to sell without going through the ordeal of taking lots of calls, showing prospective buyers around the flat or house and bargaining for a high enough price. Then they set about recruiting their sales horde: a number of sometimes over-qualified, fresh from college graduates who end up selling property as a last resort, as a job between jobs or as a starter job.

These recruits are intent on succeeding but, above all, they want to earn and save some money, they want to reassure themselves that unemployment was a passing nightmare. They need to be high-powered and ambitious, wanting to impress their bosses and themselves. So far so good. However, more often than not, some of these sales people lack some principles and quickly slip into unethical practices, probably because they replicate their bosses'.

I once bumped into one of them, decent and honest, who resented exploitation as much as unfair dealings.

She was having a rough time working for this estate agent who advocated all kinds of tricks and fraudulent practices when it came to securing a purchase. She had already made up her mind to leave the business but something occurred that made her tell her boss the truth she had not dared to tell until then. What triggered her departure from the firm?

It was something that reminded her immediately of the film "Two much", starring as you probably know Antonio Banderas and the woman who would become his wife, Melanie Griffith.

She was told to check the papers, but this time she was not to search the classifieds for advertisements of property for sale which were not yet in her boss's lists. She would have to check the death notices page, find out the address of the deceased and pay a visit.

She would have to convince whoever was there in charge that it was the right time for them to sell the flat and make easy money on it. That's disgusting, she retorted after having been instructed in small detail. That's it, I'm leaving. And she left, fully aware that she could not hope to get together with her boss and reach a settlement as to how much of her monthly pay remained unpaid.

How brave of her, how honest and brave. She taught him a lesson undeterred by the consequences. She put honesty before security. A big round of applause for you.

EL CID EXHIBIT

That's a clip from an internationally-acclaimed Spanish animation movie: *El Cid, the legend*, which I recommend watching several times, and the metallic sound was Rodrigo's Dad drawing a sword that had helped him build a reputation as a warrior no one had ever questioned and now he's about to hand it over to his son, his alter ego, his trusted heir, the person who has the legal right to receive such a priceless gift, a sword that will make him world-famous, ranking in fame and glory with legendary knights such as Lancelot or King Arthur himself.

This sword, by the name of Tizona, is the keynote of an exhibit consisting of 280 items dating from the XI century to present day that are currently on display at the cloister adjacent to Burgos Cathedral. The exhibit will mark the VIII hundredth anniversary of the manuscript of *El Cantar del Mio Cid* by rekindling an interest in *El Cid* folklore, bringing back the splendour of *El Cid* and his time.

The president of Castilla y León, Juan Vicente Herrera, was present at the opening and pointed out the significant role that *El Cantar del Mio Cid* had played in the formation of Spanish as a language spoken by a whole people.

The exhibit has brought together 280 items contributed by up to 80 public and private agencies and organizations, as well as individuals, and it showcases the life and time of *El Cid*, together with his legacy.

And probably, most certainly, his legacy started to consolidate right after a true moment of truth ...

The new king, humiliated and mortified, after dispelling the doubt raised by Rodrigo, sends him away, banishes the great warrior and strips him of possessions, titles and honour. Well, no. He retained that honour deep within himself. And it was that honour and that courage that propelled him to drive back all enemies along a route that has been recently given a tourist-appealing name *The Trail of El Cid, La Ruta del Cid*. Many local authorities and three regional governments are expecting to turn *El Cid* folklore into big revenue. Not bad for a region like Castilla y León which has long neglected its rich cultural heritage.

We promise to devote more time to this tourist gold mine in coming programs. For the time being, find some time and the right company for a leisurely visit to the *El Cid* exhibit. Remember the entrance into the Cloister is at Paloma Street. Admission is free.