



by Laura Stadler

My column

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Left: Silver Medal winner Toni with fiancée Nancy. Right: Cancer support fun. PHOTO: LAURA STADLER

● I am forever humbled by the selfless hard work for charity on this island. Inspiring people who quietly make Majorca a better place.

ROTARY CALVIA

● It was a privilege to be asked to join one of the Calvia Rotary Monday lunches. Of course, I'd heard of them. The feisty former President Kate Mentink had ensured that. However, I really hadn't a clue what they actually did, short of having a lovely lunch each week at the Bendinat Hotel.

I was particularly eager to meet wheelchair-bound Toni Quinonero Martin, who had recently returned from the World Championship Wheelchair Skating (WCMX) in Los Angeles. Incredibly Toni had returned clutching the prestigious Silver Medal for Majorca! Needless to say, Toni was guest of honour at the table with his fiancée Nancy.

During the meeting I appreciated that Calvia Rotary together, with A Ma Maison and a few other charitable souls had proudly sponsored Toni in his quest. A recent highly successful Jazz Night had raised a profit of 3,000 euros towards flights and expenses to ensure his dream and success of a lifetime.

I was really impressed by the professional and to-the-point Rotary meeting that somehow felt like a family dinner party. Points were discussed between courses and everyone was included. If anyone is free to join a Monday meeting, I'm sure like myself they would be impressed. Certainly, its warm and friendly atmosphere would appeal to all ages who enjoy meeting interesting new people and would like to be part of such a world recognised charitable organisation.

TONI QUINONERO MARTIN

● Toni is a charming young man who despite his disabilities from birth has pushed

himself to achieve. I'm told the 29 year-old is a brilliant IT technician, and wiz at repairing computers. (Indeed, it was helping Saloua of A Ma Maison to repair her computer that led to the Rotary involvement.) Furthermore, undoubtedly wheelchair skating at the World Championships requires nerves of steel. Toni spoke perfect English, determined to express to the meeting how deeply he appreciated the Rotary support.

"Thank you to everyone. You gave me the major boost that I needed in my career. It could not have happened without you. Now I want to help other disabled sports people to achieve their goals." He has already been in contact with disabled in Calvia and Mali, Africa where they are in desperate need of any disabled equipment. Toni told me that he met his fiancée through facebook 3 years ago. "I am not a party person, so when my friends were out I would message Nancy. Finally, we met and the rest is history." Nancy is obviously devoted and very proud of his achievements.

How was his trip to LA? "Pushed into one week it was very intense. I am still trying to process it. The first two days after my arrival I was very ill with tonsillitis and a high fever. The doctor gave me medication and after two days I decided I couldn't waste an opportunity of a lifetime. I pushed myself to the limit to get out of bed and practice as hard as possible. I was happy to qualify and very happy to win a silver medal in Division One."

DEEP BRAIN STIMULATION

● Following lunch Ralf Jansen gave a powerful talk on an impressive new weapon against the neurological degenerative Parkinson's Disease. His wife Ursula had been diagnosed with the cruel debilitating disease in 2009. "She couldn't even hold a cup of tea." The medication to con-

trol her shaking gave her terrible side effects. Therefore, when their Majorcan doctor told them about the new deep brain simulation operation they went to Germany to try it. It took enormous courage. Ralf spoke emotionally, often breaking down as he detailed the revolutionary complex 11-hour operation Ursula underwent in 2015 (requiring 14 medical staff) and the incredible new lease of life it has given her. The form of pacemaker inserted into her has virtually stopped her shaking. "It is unbelievable how it has changed our lives. She can now move and function normally."

During the recent filming of a German documentary about her operation, her "pacemaker" was turned off under medical supervision. "Without the electrical pulses to my brain, within minutes I was shaking

and unable to use my right hand," she told me. Ursula is a striking, elegant lady who showed no signs of illness. "It's not gone, but I now have new horizons. Life is wonderful!"

THE GR21 WALK FOR CANCER

● The gruelling walk to raise funds for Cancer Support, saw 7 women trudging 7 days through the scenic Tramuntana mountains, traversing Majorca's famous GR 221 Dry Stone Way.

Anita Vince (who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2015) walked with her sister Nicole Higginson and old friends Suzi Davies and Helen Winton and Holly Pater-son who both flew all the way from Newport, Rhode Island to join the walk. New friends were made with Violeta Painter from Nourish the Guide and Melanie Bowen Jones. Jan Wells walked three days and occupied herself by baking them cakes while not walking.

Anita's daughters Brooke and Nieve Judkins strode a full day with the intrepid hikers, with no complaint! As did others of Anita's supportive family, including her parents. Sarah Feltham-Hunt valiantly provided logistics and support, such as the all-important refreshments and clean clothes! "Since being diagnosed with breast cancer, my family and myself have been undertaking a different journey.

"Now I feel I am on the right road to recovery," said Anita.

To celebrate the successful conclusion of the walk, Charles Nutter organised a delightful 1970s themed party for the Cancer Support Group at the Liberty Kitchen in Pollensa, which proved a huge success.

The raffle raised 632 euros with prizes ranging from a wide variety of beauty treatments and well-being classes to a magnum of champagne, while Ian David Jones of Liberty kitchen donated 2 euros a head.

Krista Hyer and Barbara Marshall of the CSG were thrilled to see funds in excess of 4,000 euros raised to continue their sup-



The inspiring Ursula and Ralf Jansen living life to the full. PHOTO: LAURA STADLER



port of Majorca's cancer patients

Checkout www.cancersupportmajorca.com to help or support their essential work

CHARITY KING

● It was wonderful to catch up with Golf Charity King Robert Winsor MBE. He was so upset at missing dad's 98th birthday celebrations this year that he insisted on taking us out for a special lunch. "Have whatever you want on the menu," he told dad. "Today I'm going to spoil you." Dad hasn't heard that in decades. As ever the conversation was lively and full of reminiscence. Dad remembered when Robert lived nearby in Totteridge where he remarkably bred a penguin in captivity. Hence the reason he's nicknamed The Penguin. His charity work both in London and Majorca in which he raised 2 million euros for disadvantaged children earned him much acclaim. In 2007 Calvia Council crowned him European Citizen of the Year and in 2013 the Queen awarded him a prestigious MBE.

I remember Robert on his wedding day to the lovely Maria. Her wedding dress and stunning satin boots will never be forgotten. The lady has unique style, and I wasn't surprised to learn she was busy out working on yet another interior design project.

I couldn't help linger in Robert's office, lined with photos of him with every eminent person I could think of including: Her Majesty The Queen and The Spanish King to celebrities such as Peter Sellers, Oliver Reed and Sammy Davis Junior. He was even sharing fun times with Dodi Fayed! Robert certainly moved with the jet set in



Above: Cancer Support event. To the right: Robert Winsor MBE with his much loved rescue dog. PHOTO: LAURA STADLER

his youth. Yet now admits to being perfectly content to relax on his terrace with his lovely wife and rescue dogs, soaking in his spectacular panoramic vista of rural Majorca.

AND FINALLY

● I stand in awe of the Duchess of Cambridge who within hours of giving birth to her third child was in front of the world's paparazzi looking as fresh and radiant as if she'd just enjoyed a relaxing holiday! Any-

one who has given birth, I'm sure will join me in thinking that the last thing they had strength to consider was a hairdresser and make up artist!

Personally, I couldn't move and slept for hours. In fact I so loved being in the Lindo Wing where royal babies abound (indeed my son was in the nursery between a Prince and a Princess) I didn't want to leave the lovely cosseted surroundings. I managed to wing ten days after my son, enjoying a blissful time with girlfriends in

nearby rooms, who coincidentally gave birth the same week. After my daughter, complications after her birth enabled me to stay a week.

Notably Constantine, the former King of Greece was pacing the corridor while his wife was in the next room, coming to my rescue when my buzzer was out of reach. Noting I was in distress, he summoned help. I never got to thank him but have been forever grateful.

Certainly with all the will in the world, and I was well over a decade younger than the Duchess, I could never have got out of bed, yet alone left the Lindo Wing looking so stunning the same day as I'd given birth. Respect!



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