

JIMENA OJEDA

Parents donate to NGO

The parents of a two-month baby who lost her fight for survival after being born with a congenital heart problem have donated the money well-wishers would have spent on wreaths to a local charity to help it fight such conditions.

Tiny Jimena Ojeda died despite doc-

tors' efforts in the Las Palmas Maternity Hospital to keep her heart working. The last-ditch attempts to keep her alive included a paediatric heart surgeon who was flown in from Italy to perform a late operation which failed to resolve Jimena's condition. Parents Gustavo and Rita publicly praised the efforts of the hospital and asked for friends and

family not to spend money on flowers but to give it to them to help a medical charity, which sponsors research into congenital heart disease. "We know our daughter will help bring life to children like her if the money is spent on the charity" said the grieving parents in an interview with the La Provincia newspaper in Gran Canaria.

MURGAS MAYHEM

Carnaval pitch battle

The reputation of the Las Palmas Carnaval took a nosedive with revelations that the Grand Final of the Murgas (satirical singing groups) competition was followed by an off-stage battle between two rival groups.

According to media reports, the trouble started when one of the groups began to heckle the winners (Los Serenquenzenes) and matters got out of hand quickly. Chairs were thrown and punches exchanged between the rivals, forcing police to intervene to escort the

winners away from the scene to avoid further trouble. News of the incident, which witnesses say lasted around half an hour, has fuelled complaints that the Carnaval is attracting the wrong sort of competitor and the organisers have been urged to ban the culprits for life.

PLUG PULLED

Bogus electricity man

A man who conned his way into the homes of elderly people posing as an electricity worker has been arrested in Las Palmas.

The conman offered to assist his victims with advice on energy saving and check their mains boxes in return for a small sum. However, he took advantage of the visits to help himself

to jewels and other valuables in rooms while pretending to check power sockets. In order to obtain time alone, he would ask the occupants to stay beside appliances and switch them on and off when required. He was caught after one 77-year-old woman reported to police that gold rings and chains had disappeared from her home during one of the visits. The same woman

had been conned into paying €235 for a non-existent electrical repair.

The arrested man, a 27-year-old local, has almost twenty previous offences to his credit in Gran Canaria. The electricity company in question has reiterated advice to people to check the credentials of anyone calling to carry out unsolicited checks or repairs and to contact them in case of suspicions.

News in Brief

Gun incident

Off-duty policeman charged

• An off-duty Gran Canaria policeman who pulled his gun in an argument in a bar in Arucas faces prosecution and possible suspension for his behaviour.

Witnesses say the officer, who had been apparently been drinking, was abusive to a female member of staff in the bar next to the town's sports fields, where his young son was playing football. Another customer intervened to calm the situation only to find himself embroiled in an argument and a gun pointed to his head. He managed to escape in the direction of the football field but was followed by the gun-wielding policeman, who triggered panic among the parents of the young players as he scoured the area for his rival. Several parents restrained him until other officers arrived to take charge of the situation. He spent the week-end in cells before appearing in court 48 hours later.

Gran Canaria

Old film found

• A film believed to be the oldest ever shot in Gran Canaria has been sent to Madrid for restoration by experts after it was donated to the Canarian Film Library.

Shot by a local film-maker in 1915 on the Las Canteras beach, on the spot now occupied by the Reina Isabel hotel, the 28-mm reel was located thanks to information supplied by a Basque director who contacted the Library with details. According to the El Día newspaper, it has been donated by the Navarro family, one of whose members appears in the film as a young boy on the beach. A digitalised version of the film is to be commissioned also with a view to public screenings.



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