

Wandering & Wondering



John Maybury

RIVER RUN

Tuolumne River Public Information Meeting, Tuesday, April 15, 7 to 9 p.m. Pacifica City Council Chambers, 2212 Beach Boulevard across from the pier. Pacifica residents are invited to come learn about regional water use issues and conservation programs. We all need to be aware of where our drinking water comes from, how it gets to us, and the sustainability of that resource—the Tuolumne River. With 59 percent of this wild, scenic river already diverted, we need to conserve, recycle, and use this important water resource more efficiently. So come learn how Pacifica can be part of that solution.

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Beatle band (not look-alikes!) called Across the Universe playing next Saturday, April 12, at The Seahorse Saloon in Pacifica, from 8-10:30 p.m. Showing film footage of the Fab Four. [seahorsesaloon.com]

CPO SHARK?

The U.S. Navy is thinking about using trained dolphins and sea lions to patrol Kitsap-Bangor military base off the coast of Washington state near Seattle to detect underwater enemy intruders.

NO SCAM/SPAM

My personal circle of cynical journalists (is there any other kind?) wants to create an Internet filter and burial ground for really dumb, overused e-jokes, conspiracy theories and bogus alerts that we are all sick of seeing go around and around by email. So if you know any software genius with enough venture capital to “remove this stone from our shoe,” we will make you an honorary member of our spam-hating, scam-busting society.

LOCAVORE

Have you heard the nutrition theory that we should eat seasonally and geographically only what can be grown within, say, 100 miles (or even less) from home? This is based on the idea that early man ate only what could be hunted or harvested within walking distance of the cave mouth. And in those days, I bet their eyes were a lot bigger than their stomachs. Just a little food for thought!

DITCH YOUR CAR

The average two-person household can save more than \$6,200 a year by

getting rid of just one of the cars and using public transportation instead. The savings come from not paying for maintenance, insurance, loan payments, and gas. (American Public Transit Association)

FREE AD SPACE

Leal Charonnat wonders why the Feds don't wise up and sell advertising on our currency. He says the Federal Reserve estimates dollar bills and \$20 bills last a couple of years in circulation, fives and tens about a year and a half, whereas a \$50 bill lasts almost 12 years, and a \$100 bill more than eight years.

THE NAYS HAVE IT

A former client of mine once performed several scientific surveys and field studies clearly showing that all-mail ballots sent a month before the election improved voter turnout and comprehension of the issues. But when my pollster friend reported these results to the state Legislature, the two parties so distrusted each other, fearing that voting by mail would favor one party over the other, that the official changeover to the clearly more “democratic” voting method never made it into law. And more's the pity.

HOMELESS VETS

One in three homeless Americans are military veterans, and that number is rising as the wars in Iraq

and Afghanistan drag on into the McCain dimension. One in four returning vets with posttraumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) seeking medical care from the Veterans Administration (VA) had to wait up to three months to see a doctor. More than 53,000 of these returnees are wounded physically and/or psychologically by the wars. The ratio of VA patients to doctors is 500 to 1. Unemployment rates are up to double those of the civilian population. Almost all vets have trouble getting their pay. Many are returning to the real world pumped full of antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs but little or no medical supervision or follow-up counseling for those medications. More than 200 have committed suicide. And the Republicans want to cut more money from military benefits budgets. (Democracy Now)

200-YEAR ITCH

“The average age of the world's greatest civilizations has been 200 years. These nations have progressed through this sequence: from bondage to spiritual faith, from spiritual faith to great courage, from courage to liberty, from liberty to abundance, from abundance to selfishness, from selfishness to complacency, from complacency to apathy, from apathy to dependency, from dependency back again into bondage.” (Sir Alex Fraser Tyler, 1742-1813, Scottish jurist and historian)

ALL OUT

Partial withdrawal of troops in Iraq isn't enough. You can show your support for a total end to the war by downloading and displaying, in your home, your car or your office, a sign calling for ALL our troops to come home. Get downloadable window signs from peaceactionwest.org.

CHUBBY BUNNY

Beware of a dangerous carnival game called Chubby Bunny, wherein participants cram their mouths full of marshmallows until they are unable to say the words “chubby bunny.” In 2006, a 32-year-old Canadian woman died playing the game at a fair in London, Ontario. (Globe and Mail)

SCRATCHED CD?

Spray a little Pledge furniture polish on it, then gently wipe it all off with a soft micropore cloth (the kind used for eyeglasses). Or Buff the scratch with a buffer pad on a bench grinder or electric drill. Or Apply Brasso or Rain-X windshield cleaner and wipe off with cloth, as above. Also, some video stores have CD buffing machines.

CFL PROBLEM

Compact fluorescent light bulbs pose a bigger threat to health and the environment than previously

thought, say officials and activists, who warn that the bulbs' mercury-laced contents can be hard to dispose of. (MSNBC, March 20)

SWAMI SEZ 1

“We have reached a point where the value we do add to our economy is now being outweighed by the value we are removing, not only from future generations in terms of diminished resources, but from ourselves in terms of unlivable cities, deadening jobs, deteriorating health, and rising crime. In biological terms, we have become a parasite and are devouring our host.” (Paul Hawken)

SWAMI SEZ 2

“A river is water in its loveliest form; rivers have life and sound and movement and infinity of variation, rivers are veins of the earth through which the life-blood flows to the heart.” (Roderick Haig-Brown)

MAYBURRITOVILLE

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