

## Wandering & Wondering



**John Maybury**

### GOOD NEWS

First we got good news last week that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger came to his senses and decided to spare the state parks and beaches from any further budget cuts. Then we read in the paper about a landmark agreement between Tejon Ranch and environmental groups to protect and preserve 90 percent of the largest remaining contiguous private landholding in California. The preserved land covers 240,000 acres, an area eight times the size of San Francisco, at the confluence of four major ecological regions: the Sierra Nevada, Mojave Desert, Coastal Range, and San Joaquin Valley.

### GREEN THUMBS-UP

It's springtime and your garden is calling. Fritz Haeg ([fritzaeg.com](http://fritzaeg.com)) has a Gardenlab/Edible Estates message: Kill your thirsty front lawn and plant drought-resistant vegetables and flowers. For safe, smart control of bugs in your garden and home, consult [askthebugman.com](http://askthebugman.com) or read Richard Fagerlund's Bugman col-

umn in the San Francisco Chronicle Home & Garden section. He suggests nontoxic ways to control pests, weeds, and other problems that humans have in dealing with "nature."

### CARRIER

Vallemar resident LTJG Mike Hall (U.S. Navy) appeared in the recent PBS reality documentary "Carrier." His segment can be viewed online. Just Google "Carrier Video Clips," then click Video Clips, submenu Ship Duty, Security at Sea, and Maritime Security in the Gulf—Boarding the Silvia. Mike is a graduate of Annapolis, a Surface Warfare Officer, Navy Diver, and a Search/Rescue Swimmer. He was deployed in the Arabian Sea aboard the destroyer USS Gonzalez at the time of filming

### WORDS & PICTURES

Join leading authors, journalists, photographers, and art editors for "Words and Pictures," a panel discussion of opportunities in Bay Area journalism and photography. Sponsored by Northern California chapter of American Society of Journalists and Authors (ASJA). Freelance journalist Douglas Fox moderates the panel of Mark Murmann, photo editor at Mother Jones magazine; James Merithew, photo editor at Wired.com; and Zana Woods, photo editor at Wired magazine. They discuss and take questions on selling work, setting rates, understanding and meeting photo editors' expectations, and distinctions between shooting for print versus

Web. Thursday, June 5, from 6 to 9 p.m. (6-7 dinner and networking, 7 to 9 panel discussion). Mechanics Institute, 57 Post Street (2nd floor), San Francisco, right across the street from Montgomery BART. Light dinner from Whole Foods provided. Entry fee: \$5 for ASJA members; \$10 for nonmembers. Pay at the door, but RSVP for planning purposes to Program Coordinator Nancy Faass at [sfwritersgroup@gmail.com](mailto:sfwritersgroup@gmail.com). Free admission for two volunteers to pick up and serve food. For more information, call NorCal ASJA Chairman D. Patrick Miller at 510-849-4028.

### PACIFICA PITCHING PHENOM

Young Pacifica pitching phenom Greg Reynolds has had two starts for his new team, the Colorado Rockies. "I think he just got some balls in some bad locations," said manager Clint Hurdle, after Reynolds' first appearance. "I thought it was a pretty good first effort. I thought he handled it very professional. I saw some good things."

### BLACKWATER IN HOT WATER

Check out Tim Shorrock's "Spies for Hire: The Secret World of Intelligence Outsourcing." It tells how Bush's mercenary private army, Blackwater, has mainly bungled but also handsomely profited from working the so-called security of the Iraq occupation. Shameful.

### T-SHIRTS SAVE CORAL REEF

SaveNature.org, a conservation non-

profit based in San Francisco, and TONIC, a new for-profit based in Palo Alto, have partnered to protect fragile coral reef habitat in Palau, Micronesia, designing and selling beautiful new t-shirts. Check them out online.

### WEEDHEADS!

Cal-IPC's first round of Wildland Weed Field Courses were a huge success. Space is still available for upcoming courses in South Lake Tahoe (May 28 and 29), San Diego (June 6 and 7), and Berkeley (July 23 and 24). Six upcoming field courses will train weed workers on the biology, identification, and control of invasive plants. Please note that this year Cal-IPC offers a special highly discounted rate for restoration and watershed volunteers. Registration and info: [cal-ipc.org](http://cal-ipc.org). (Jake Sigg, Nature News)

### SAFE WAYS TO BEAT PESTS

Here are AARP's safer alternatives to commercial pesticides:

- Ants: cinnamon, bay leaf, cayenne pepper, baby powder (along baseboards, windowsills)
- Cockroaches: equal parts of baking soda and confectioner's sugar (in problem areas)
- Mice: cotton dipped in peppermint oil; used kitty litter (in problem areas)
- Flies: small sachets of crushed mint; potted sweet basil plants (around the house)
- Mosquitoes: 2 tsp. apple cider vinegar in glass of water (on deck or balcony); lavender oil (wrists, elbows)

The May 2008 issue of AARP Bulletin is full of tips for detoxifying your indoor environment (e.g., opening windows, air-purifying indoor plants, electronic air purifiers) and buying guides to cleaner, greener products for the home. ([bulletin.aarp.org/](http://bulletin.aarp.org/))

### GOOD GUYS IN BLUE

Tired of those annoying telemarketing phone calls and strong-arm fundraising tactics of supposed law enforcement agencies? Did you know that many of those calls are fraudulent. The bad guys shake down unsuspecting people for money that never goes to their local police department and youth programs. But the Pacifica Police Officers' Association (PPOA) does not make these obnoxious phone calls. It just did a mailing to everyone in Pacifica and it has a Web site ([policedonation.com/pacifica](http://policedonation.com/pacifica)) for you to donate online with a credit card. Or you can send your check to PPOA. PO Box 1525, Pacifica, CA 94044. My favorite line in the PPOA fundraising letter is: "Possession of Support Decals will not reflect preferential treatment during enforcement contacts, but it will still allow the bearer to go through any green light in town!" Ya gotta love a cop with a sense of humor. Nice work, Officer Barranti!

### BAD GUYS IN BLACK

Ravens like the ones you see and hear all over Pacifica have begun flocking together and attacking livestock in Britain, eating the animals' eyes, tongues, and underbellies, leaving them for dead. British farmers say that government-

required removal of downed farm animals to licensed disposal facilities has deprived ravens of their natural food supply. The large black corvids are scavengers that normally feed on animal carcasses and small mammals. ([Earthweek.com](http://Earthweek.com))

### SITeseer

- Find the bad guys in your neighborhood: [familywatchdog.us](http://familywatchdog.us)
- Find lost or unclaimed money or goods: [unclaimed.org](http://unclaimed.org), [missingmoney.com](http://missingmoney.com)
- Viruses, spam, scams, urban legends: [scambusters.org](http://scambusters.org)
- All about cats: [purr-n-furr.org.uk](http://purr-n-furr.org.uk)
- How to make cat videos: [mr-lee-catcam.de](http://mr-lee-catcam.de)

### SWAMI SEZ

"Everything we do is important. Every little thing we do, every picket line we walk on, every letter we write...even though at the moment they seem futile...Change comes about when millions of people do little things, which at certain points in history come together, and then something good and something important happens." (Howard Zinn)

### MAYBURRITOVILLE

- Breaking news every day: [pacificatribe.com](http://pacificatribe.com)
- Email your stories & photos: [mayburrito@goofbuster.com](mailto:mayburrito@goofbuster.com)
- My columns online: [pacificatribune.com](http://pacificatribune.com), [wanderingandwondering.com](http://wanderingandwondering.com)