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Wandering & Wondering



John Maybury

WE DESERVE BETTER

“On 9/11/01, Osama bin Laden’s thugs used hijacked airliners to create the most deadly attack on America. Now, 6 years later, President Bush has still failed to apprehend this international criminal. After doing nothing for months after 9/11, he finally responded by invading 2 countries, killing thousands of servicemen and civilians in a war without goals. He insists on staying the course regardless of costs in lives and dollars. More US troops died every month of 2007 than in the same months last year. The escalating costs are now responsible for our current economic slide. Incredibly, Bush now says he doesn’t even think about Osama bin Laden anymore. America, and the world, deserve better.” (Jim Heldberg, Pacifica Democrats, September 2007)

BUTTS ON THE BEACH

Coastal Cleanup Day last week included free entertainment by whales and dolphins. Pacifica col-

lected: 19,803 cigarette butts; 3,119 plastic bags; 2,747 food wrappers; 1,419 caps/lids; 1,009 plastic bottles; 735 glass bottles; 550 straws/stirrers; 547 beverage cans; 540 cigar tips; 516 cups/plates/utensils; 3 dead birds; 1 dead seal. Most unusual finds: very old bootlegging looking-glass jug, Judy Garland record album, safe, surgical scalpel, half an office chair, old carpet. Support environmental education and clean-ups: mail tax-deductible contributions to Environmental Family/Beach Coalition, 334 Reichling Avenue, Pacifica, CA 94044.

BIG DIG

September 17 was the first day of the Big Dig. The People’s Tunnels are now officially under construction, as Caltrans begins scooping out twin bores from the south side of San Pedro Mountain to the north. On the Pacifica side of the three-year, \$330 million project, the giant bridge rising above Shamrock Ranch will bring Highway 1 traffic up to the tunnel level. At the groundbreaking ceremony, Congressman Tom Lantos honored tunnel visionary Lennie Roberts and called the Devil’s Slide solution “the people’s tunnels.” This is exactly the moniker suggested by Pacifican Mitch Reid, who also helped lead the fight against the proposed freeway bypass and for the tunnels alternative. Photos: tunnel.org, greenfoothills.org, caltrans.ca.gov

FREE COMPOST/MULCH/CHIPS

We offer our materials free to help individuals with their landscaping needs. Our products are used by several landscapers, gardeners, and landscaping supply companies. We are an established greenwaste (wood and brush) recycling company. The chips and mulch are ideal to control weeds and beautify landscaped areas, and the compost is great for healthier soil. Many tree companies give away rough wood chips straight from a tree-cutting job and the quality of their chips is not very desirable. We inspect our material, grind it, and screen it into proper sizes for a uniform end product. Bring your car and load up or bring a truck and we will load it for you. If you don’t have transportation, we have many affordable haulers that we can direct you to (trucks from 5 to 100 cubic yards). Bay View Greenwaste Management Company, 1300 Carroll Avenue, San Francisco (right behind Monster/Candlestick Park). Near 3rd Street. Open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. to noon. Office: 415-822-7686. Cell: 650-222-0174. Ask for Sanjay.

PORTOFINO WILDLIFE SHOW

“We had breakfast at Portofino this morning, and the wildlife viewing was spectacular! We arrived around 9 a.m. and the ocean was unusually calm. Within a few minutes of our

arrival, we saw a harbor seal in the surf and at least 5 dolphins working the water about 50 yards offshore. We continued watching them—along with nearby scoters, grebes, and shorebirds—throughout our breakfast of tasty omelettes. Then, around 10:30, the show’s finale arrived when a whale—probably a humpback—breached a half-mile offshore. We saw another breach or two and a few spouts before it disappeared from view. All of this entertainment, and no cover charge! Kishore, our host at the restaurant, told us that he often sees dolphins and harbor seals, but that the current calm conditions make for exceptional viewing.” (Larry Arndt)

CONDOMS OFF THE BEACH

Throw used condoms in the trash, not in the toilet. Flushed condoms can get by water treatment and end up on the beach. In 2006, Ocean Conservancy beach cleaner-uppers picked up 30,252 condoms. Animals can mistake condoms for food. Condoms can get stuck and hang out in your pipes for years, and even if they don’t, water treatment workers have to fish them out of the water and send them to landfills anyway. (idealbite.com)

DOGS SCARE OFF BIRDS

Taking your dog for a walk could impact birdlife, a study suggests. An Australian team found dog-walking prompts birds to take flight, caus-

ing their numbers to plummet by 41%. The researchers, writing in the Royal Society journal *Biology Letters*, said birds fled because they viewed dogs as potential predators. (BBC News)

TOP TIER GAS

Toyota, Honda, BMW, Audi, Volkswagen, and General Motors have created strict detergent fuel standards called Top Tier Gasoline (toptiergas.com), designed to preserve the life of your car’s engine and extend your gas mileage. Oil companies meeting the standards include Chevron, Shell, and Unocal 76.

PET POISON

Recent suspected dog poisonings in southern Marin are a tragic reminder of the need to keep a close eye on your pets and to contact your veterinarian immediately if you witness ingestion of or exposure to a potentially harmful agent. Early decontamination and treatment can make the difference between simple exposure, and serious or prolonged illness. If you can, always bring the product in question with you when seeking veterinary assistance. A few of the more common and lesser-known ingested poisonings that we often see and treat: mushrooms, rat poison, grapes, raisins, marijuana, macadamia nuts, chocolate, flea powder, mold and fungi. Note that accidental ingestion of human pre-

scription drugs or excessive ingestion of veterinary medications can also be toxic. (Dr. Steve Dana is medical director at Pet Emergency & Specialty Center of Marin. His column *Tails of Marin* appears every Saturday in the Home & Garden section of the Marin Independent Journal, marinij.com.)

SITSEER

- Live radar tracks flights in and out of SFO: flyquietsfo.com
- Hard-to-find food labels: mybrandsinc.com
- Beat breast cancer: lifetimetv.com/breastcancer/petition/signpetition.php
- Art cars on display in Berkeley, September 27-30: artcarfest.com

SWAMI SEZ

“No pirate shall ever wear a fanny pack.” (Ancient Pirate Law)

MAYBURRITOVILLE

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