

Wandering & Wondering



John Maybury

THE END IS NEAR

The Wall Street Journal reports that a Russian professor predicts the end of the U.S. as we know it. He states that moral decay, economic decline, and unchecked immigration will lead to massive civil unrest. Eventually, he says, the dollar will fail and the country will break up into protectorates of various other countries. (This item was posted by Conan the Contrarian on PacificaRiptide.com. Note: If the professor's prophecy proves to be true, I want to live in the United States of France!)



CAMEL MILK

Vital Camel Milk, sub-Saharan Africa's only camel milk processor, has received Food and Drug

Administration approval to export processed camel milk to the U.S. from Kenya. A quarter of the shipments are made up of susa, the traditional fermented sour milk of the nomadic camel-keeping communities. Vital Camel Milk has been conducting aggressive marketing to sensitize consumers on the medicinal qualities of camel milk. The campaign has so far managed to place fresh camel milk, yoghurt, and organic low-fat ice cream on the shelves of major supermarkets. Earlier in the year, the company introduced a new technology that increased the milk's shelf life from 10 to 30 days without using preservatives. Camel milk is known to have components that suppress bacteria and pathogens from causing disease. It is also believed to cushion consumers against peptic ulcers as well as offer an alternative to those allergic to cow milk. Research also shows that it is three times richer than cow's milk in vitamin C and it is also rich in iron, nonsaturated fatty acids, and vitamin B. (WardheerNews.com from Business Daily Africa, August 11, 2008)

CLAM CHOWDER

A bowl of steaming hot clam chowder down at the Chit Chat Cafe on Sharp Park fishing pier is just the thing for your little East Coast winter fix. While you spoon your soup, big waves crash against the rocks along the Beach Boulevard

seawall. Seagulls whirl overhead. If you're hankering for a little feel of New England, this is the place to be right now. (The cafe also sells coffee, sandwiches, baked goods—and bait for the fisherfolks.)



INDOOR CATS LIVE LONGER

Got a cat? Keep it indoors, especially during the day. Domestic cats, whether well fed or not, kill hundreds of millions of birds, reptiles, and small mammals, according to the American Bird Conservancy. Outdoor cats have shorter lives, too.

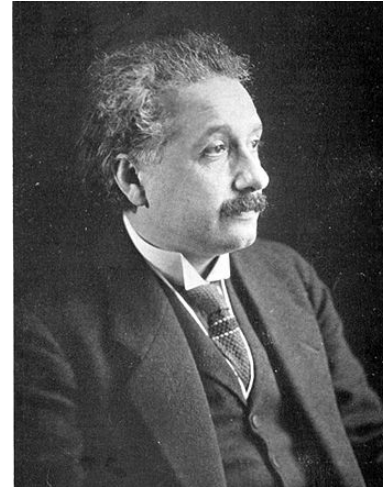
PIGGY BANKER

A Merrill Lynch banker has used his federal bailout money to buy a \$27 million Manhattan luxury apartment. This is the kind of greed and excess that makes one long for the return of the guillotine.

\$500,000 PARKING SPOT

At Founders Garage in swanky Vail, Colorado, the owner of a parking space there is selling it for \$500,000. He says he feels justified in doing so

because of great demand in the Rocky Mountain ski resort town for a guaranteed slot in a heated, indoor parking garage. (Source: Vail Daily, reported in High Country News, December 22, 2008)



YEAR OF SCIENCE

"The Year of Science 2009 is a national, yearlong celebration of science, designed to engage the public in science and improve public understanding about how science works, why it matters, and who scientists are. Science helps satisfy the natural curiosity we are all born with, and answers the questions we all ask: Why is the sky blue? How did the leopard get its spots? What is a solar eclipse? With science, we can answer such questions without resorting to magical explanations. And science can lead to technological advances, as

well as helping us learn about enormously important and useful topics, such as our health, the environment, and natural hazards. Without science, the modern world would not be modern at all, and we still have much to learn. And you can personally connect with the scientific world by enrolling in one of the many Jepson Herbarium public programs on botanical and ecological subjects. Most of the courses are taught at UC Berkeley, and many of them involve field trips and research. I have enjoyed and benefitted from a number of these courses over the years." (Jake Sigg, Nature News, free subscription from jakesigg@earthlink.net)



SITSEER

The nose knows. Perfume tester Katie Puckrik (katiepuckriksmells.com) tells all about common and unusual fragrances, including Burger King's disgusting new cologne, "Flame" (which ought to be called "Shame").

FLY ON THE WALL

President-Elect Barack H. Obama is now in Washington to talk with top Democratic and Republican leaders in advance of trying to push through an \$800 billion stimulus plan during his first weeks in office. And on Wednesday, January 7, Obama lunches with every living former American president: George W. Bush, George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter, and Bill Clinton. Wow! Wouldn't you love to be a fly on the wall at this power lunch!

SPACE WEATHER RADIO

Space Weather Radio broadcasts live "sounds from space" around the clock. In the near future, SWR will add broadcasts of solar radio bursts and VLF signals from the ionosphere. The audio streams are punctuated by scientific updates from astronomer Dr. Tony Phillips. (spaceweather.com)

SWAMI SEZ

"Truth springs from argument amongst friends." (David Hume)

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