

# Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury



## NEVER NEVER LAND

Like the Energizer bunny, Connemara's advertorial in the Chronicle real estate section keeps on going and going and going. The most recent one was headlined "Final homes now selling at Connemara in Pacifica." I have lost count of how many times O'Brien Homes has run some variation of this "story," but the essential fact remains: The houses aren't selling. Besides, I don't think that monster homes belong on our green coast. These so-called luxury homes are an abomination: huge ugly boxes dominating lower Milagra Ridge, totally out of character with the community and the environment. They are the pampas grass of our local ecosystem: invasive nonnatives. (If only they could be as easily eradicated.) Unfortunately, we may be stuck with these empty million-dollar behemoths for some time. Maybe the Connemara Big Boxes should be subdivided into affordable housing for Pacifica's struggling middle-class and working-class families.

## DRESSING DOWN

Lehna Wells emails: "Tanaka Design Group added some smiles to my morning coffee. In [its] design for the Palmetto Avenue streetscape (Pacifica Tribune, October 21), the woman is in a dress and all the men are in dress shirts. Makes me wonder if [Tanaka] ever actually visited our relaxing and relaxed village."

## CLIMATE COMMITTEE

On the heels of a successful 350 event on Linda Mar Beach last weekend, Pacifica's environmental groups now focus on education to raise awareness of climate change and

global warming. Email info@pacificaclimate.org and visit the local green groups' Web sites at pacificaclimate.org and pacificabeachcoalition.org.

## FLOREY'S BOOK BLOG

Aaron Schlieve of Florey's Book Co. shares information about local authors featured at Florey's book-signing events. Aaron says, "Probably the easiest way to get the info is to just go to the Florey's blog (floreysbooks.blogspot.com). That has any and all digital images of the books I have, as well as the (sometimes slightly reformatted) text that is in the emails I send to announce the events. If you want to go further back than what is up now, just go to the archives (near the top on the left)." Florey's books and authors also appear in the BOOKS category on PacificaRiptide.com.

## APRIL VARGAS 2010

"We've all advocated for preserving San Mateo County's natural resources and wildlife habitat for decades. We honor the work we've done together and appreciate your commitment to the magnificent coastal lands that we all cherish. We now have the opportunity to elect a leader who shares our values and has a proven record of fighting for fair and progressive policies that protect our environment and maintain our quality of life. April Vargas is that leader. Over the past 15 years, April's leadership has been critical to the success of many San Mateo County campaigns, including passage of the Devil's Slide Tunnel Initiative, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's expansion to the Coast, and the recent

adoption of the county's Green Building Ordinance. To learn more, please visit April's Web site at aprilvargas.com. With our help, she will become the next member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors representing District 3, the seat that will be vacated by Rich Gordon. The election is on June 8, 2010 and it is important that we provide early support for her candidacy." (Tim Duff, Rob Caughlan, and Patty Mayall, supporters of April Vargas for Supervisor 2010, held a house party for April last weekend in Pacifica.)

## PACIFICA COMPUTER PROS

Ed and Stephanie Vinces, Pacifica Computer Pros and Microsoft System Builders, email: "Get hands-on experience in new Windows 7. We have several computers of various generations prepared with Windows 7 for you to test out the new features, including the new look and feel of the operating system, Jump lists, Snap, and Windows Search. The most important improvements are better performance, security options, pop-up controls, and new storage options. This version of Windows truly lets you work the way you want. For those of our customers and friends who have not been updated on our latest affiliation with TechShop, it is a 15,000-square-foot do-it-yourself workshop at 120 Independence Drive, Menlo Park. The space is designed to provide tools, equipment, training, work space, and a supportive, creative community so that we all can design and build things we want to make. We have been having a great time experimenting with the 45-watt laser, using plastic, cloth, and wood. Please call us to make an appointment for you to see the new Windows 7, not as much fun as TechShop, but still worth the effort." (compros.com, techshop.ws)

## CREEK LOVERS

Here's some great news about a grant program for volunteer groups, teachers, environmental groups, and others interested in helping protect our creeks and waterways!



PHOTO BY TED CUZZILLO

## The Case of the Guilty Graffiti Grammarian

The San Mateo County-wide Water Pollution Prevention Program (SMCWPPP) is offering \$15,000 in Community Action Grants for volunteer groups, teachers, environmental organizations and other local, not-for-profit associations interested in developing and/or implementing projects that improve the quality of local creeks, the Bay or the Pacific Ocean within San Mateo County. Up to \$3,000 will be awarded to groups proposing projects to restore, protect, enhance, or prevent pollution of local waterways or which benefit the ecology of the San Mateo County watershed. The deadline for applications for the 2009-2010 Community Action Grant Program is November 20, 2009. For all the details, go to flowstobay.org

## DOUBLE MEANING

Pierre Messerli emails: "I had to chuckle when I read your STRAIGHT FLUSH blurb last

week. We used to have ATM machines (automatic teller machine machines). Now we have HET toilets (high efficiency toilet toilets). The IRS (Internal Revenue Service service) can't be far behind!" Then there is the classic Department of Redundancy Department, or DRED. Stay tuned next week for more double entendres, mixed metaphors, and other forms of linguistic lunacy.

## SWAMI SEZ

"Your best bet is to stick to the facts of your experience without drawing conclusions about a person's character." ("Intelligence Report," Parade Magazine, September 20)

## MAYBURRITOVILLE

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