

Wandering & Wondering



John Maybury

TRUE LIES

"The Fog Fest proved that people are eager for Democratic change. Visitors swarmed our booth. We registered 83 new voters, passed out many voter registration forms, signed up new club members, and took in over \$1,000 in donations. The Republican booth was surprisingly polite this year—they agreed not to tell lies about us, and we agreed not to tell the truth about them." (Jim Heldberg, Pacifica Democrats newsletter editor)

GOOD SAMARITAN BARACK

Norwegian newspaper VG reports a story from 1988 about a newlywed trying to get to Norway to be with her new husband, and the stranger who helped pay her luggage surcharge. Mary Andersen was at the Miami airport checking in for a flight to Norway to be with her husband. A ticket clerk told her she would have to pay a \$103 luggage surcharge. But Mary had no money. As tears streamed down her face, she heard a "gentle and friendly

voice" behind her saying, "That's okay, I'll pay for her." Mary turned around to see a tall man she had never seen before. "He had a gentle and kind voice," she says. She assured the stranger that he would get his money back. The man wrote his name and address on a piece of paper. When she finally walked off toward the security checkpoint, he waved good-bye to her. Who was the man? Barack Obama. Twenty years later, Mary is thrilled that the friendly stranger at the airport in 1988 may become the next president. She has voted for him already and donated \$100 to his campaign. "He was my knight in shining armor," says Mary, smiling. (She paid the \$103 back to Obama the day after she arrived in Norway. At that time he had just finished his job as a poorly paid community worker in Chicago, and had started his law studies at Harvard University.) Mary has even convinced her parents to vote for Obama. Mary says that when her friends and associates talk about the election, especially when race relations is the heated subject, she relates the story of the kind man who helped out a stranger in need more than 20 years ago, years before he had even thought about running for high office. (The blog "Leisha's Random Thoughts" translated the Norwegian newspaper article and reported this story on the Internet.)

WRITE FOR CHANGE

Author Louise Dunlap teaches a workshop on writing for social change, sponsored by San Bruno

Mountain Watch (mountainwatch.org). Louise, author of "Undoing the Silence: Six Tools for Social Change Writing," helps community activists make their advocacy writing more eloquent, powerful, and effective. Her workshop is at SBMW, 44 Visitacion Ave., Suite 206, Brisbane, on Sunday, November 2, from 1 to 5 p.m. Suggested donation: sliding scale \$20-\$30. Proceeds shared between Louise and SBMW. Bring one to two pages of work in progress (or ideas for letters, testimony, or short articles you are working on). Also bring pen or laptop. For more than four decades, Louise has been leading workshops for people in the labor, women's, peace, racial justice, and environmental movements around the U.S. and internationally. Call 415-467-6631 or email sanbruno@mountainwatch.org to RSVP. Visit undoingsilence.org.

SIERRA CLUB ENDORSES

Bill Magavern, director of Sierra Club California, writes: "I don't have to tell you how important this election is. This year, we decide how our nation will address global warming, our energy future, and find out whether we can build up a green economy from the news of financial ruin. We're also making a lot of important decisions here in California, many of them centered around the same concerns. We have a chance to turn back bad energy, alternative fuels and family planning policies, to make a real difference in the amount of greenhouse gases we produce, and to protect our waterways from

factory farm pollution. Please consider these five recommendations this Election Day:

- Yes on Proposition 1A. It's time to get high-speed rail on track! It's our best way of quickly moving people around our great state without producing any pollution. Powered by zero-emission energy, high-speed rail could remove 12 billion tons of global warming pollution from our atmosphere!
- No on Proposition 7. A poorly drafted, poorly vetted measure that actually weakens California's existing renewable power laws and could stall the growth of renewable power in our state. The goals contained within this measure are ambitious, but the proposition lacks the necessary provisions to achieve its target.
- No on Proposition 10. Asks taxpayers to fund \$5 billion in bonds for a scheme disguised as an effort to benefit the environment. Instead, the measure will benefit a select group of natural gas producers and manufacturers, wasting money and time on technologies that won't address global warming or promote clean air.
- Yes on Proposition 2. Not only will this pro-animal initiative make conditions better for farm animals, it will also reduce the concentration of harmful animal-waste pollution from factory farms.
- No on Proposition 4. Let's turn back this bad family planning idea, and send a strong message against this dangerous amateur-abortion-promoting measure."

SHAME ON MCCAIN

A trusted source writes, "You won't believe this. My cousin lives in South Carolina. The robophone calls from the MacSleeze campaign are sending out calls that Obama isn't going to Hawaii to see his ailing grandmother, he's going to go there to destroy the evidence that he wasn't born in the United States." Shame on Senator McCain for condoning these kinds of vicious smears. What happened to the Straight Talk Express and the maverick reformer John McCain?



DEAD MAN WALKING

Tri-School Productions (Mercy Burlingame, Notre Dame, and Junipero Serra High Schools) presents the movie "Dead Man Walking," 7:30 p.m., October 31 and November 1, 7, and 8. The Gellert Auditorium, Junipero Serra High School, San Mateo. Tickets at the door or at serrahs.com: \$12 adults, \$8 students and seniors. PG-13, parental guidance suggested.

OBAMA SURGE

Of 87 presidential projection sites, 86 now have Obama winning the

270 electoral votes required to become president. With McCain's campaign in full meltdown, Obama is reported ahead in Georgia for the first time. Obama now leads in Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Florida, and Georgia—four potential pickups. In a startling new poll, Newsweek has Obama ahead by 12. Among its findings: Obama leads 49-41 among independents, 80-17 with nonwhites, only 2 points behind with whites, and 54-39 with women. Obama also leads all age groups except seniors by 13-18 points, is especially popular among Boomers, and even holds sway among the 65-and-over set by 6 points. Why is he running so strong? Bush's own voters feel betrayed; 16 percent of 2004 Bush voters say they are now voting for Obama, according to Newsweek. Meanwhile, Obama is capturing 63 percent of 2004 nonvoters who are today considered likely voters, plus 60 percent of "early voters." Also significant: Obama endorsements by General Colin Powell, former Bush press secretary Scott McClellan, and members of Barry Goldwater's family. (Gary Leandro, poll watcher and political analyst)

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