



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

DUCKBURGERS

French fast-food chain Quick will sell foie gras "burgers" at bargain prices as a treat for customers before Christmas. Quick's "Supreme Foie Gras" consists of normally expensive duck foie gras, beef, relish, and lettuce for only 5 euros (\$6.57) at more than 350 outlets across France from December 17 to 19. Foie gras, a luxury dish in French cuisine, is made from the livers of ducks or geese that have been force-fed corn mash, a practice denounced by animal protection groups, which say the animals live in constant stress because of the force-feeding. To compete with McDonald's, Quick's business strategy includes offering unusual burgers and opening halal (similar to kosher) restaurants serving meat and poultry approved for observant Muslims. (Reuters)

TEA PARTY RACE-BAITING

State Senator Leland Yee (Democrat), who represents Pacifica, issued the following statement in response to a Belmont man's proposed ballot initiative to enact a California law similar to Arizona's controversial immigration statute (Yee's Senate district includes Belmont): "Once again, local tea party activists want to push a xenophobic initiative on our community that would devastate California. Unfortunately, this is not the first time they have turned to the obscene use

of race-baiting as a means to promote their cause. Last year, they employed anti-Semitic posters for their events and now they are going down a similar path in an attempt to strike fear within immigrant communities. In order to advance their repulsive and extremist objectives, the sponsors are trying to leverage our current economic situation to foment resentment against undocumented immigrants...If this initiative qualifies for the ballot, we will fight to ensure that the people of California vote it down and send a very clear message that such bigoted policies are unacceptable in our state." (In related news, the head of the national Tea Party has called for restricting voting rights to property owners, according to ThinkProgress.org.)

HILL'S BILLS

Assemblymember Jerry Hill (Democrat) announced his third annual "Oughta Be A Law...Or Not" contest for San Mateo County. The contest is open to all constituents of the 19th Assembly District (including Pacifica) and allows residents to submit their ideas for improving the quality of life in San Mateo County or the state of California. Ideas can vary from local community improvements to statewide reforms. Applicants can submit their ideas for the creation of a new law or the repeal or revision of laws already on the

books. Hill will select a winner and then introduce the idea as legislation. The individual who submits the winning idea will have the opportunity to testify in Sacramento at a hearing on the legislation. Obtain applications by calling 650-349-1900 or at assembly.ca.gov/hill. Submit completed applications before January 1, 2011. Email to assemblymember.hill@assembly.ca.gov, fax to 650-341-4676, or mail to 1528 South El Camino Real, Suite 302, San Mateo, CA 94402.

FARMERS' MARKETS STILL OPEN

Coastside Farmers' Markets are open, rain or shine, through Saturday, December 18. So, if you have yet to begin a winter day with a breakfast of toasted fig and pistachio sourdough with a generous schmear of Harley Farms fromage blanc topped with thin slices of yellow bellflower apple, you still have a few weeks left to change the way you feel about getting out of bed on these chilly--no, let's face it, freaky cold--mornings. Or if your homecoming has not yet included p-soup (in this case, pumpkin, parsnip, potato, pasilla pepper, and pear, cut into chunks, roasted together with onions then popped in a soup pot--omnivores can add a piece of prize-winning pot-roast--and stewed in its own juice with peppercorns and peeled cinnamon for a bit while you slip into PJs), well then, you still have a remarkable new experience to anticipate. Follow it up with one perfect piece of glaced organic Valencia orange peel tucked in a cozy robe of dark sweet chocolate and it is really just about too much. Oh, yes. The early-winter weather has hurried a few folks out of the market until next year, but for the rest of the season we'll have a lush selection of the most local of local produce you

can find anywhere, plus fresh pressed cider from the foothills, perfect chocolates, Left Coast Grass Fed beef, and we are still the only farmers' market on the planet that features Harley Farms. (Erin Tormey, Founder/Manager, Coastside Farmers' Markets, Half Moon Bay at Shoreline Station, Saturdays 9 to 1, Pacifica at Rockaway Beach, Wednesdays 2:30 to 6)

VANQUISH VIOLENT VIDEOS

Citing potential harmful effects on minors, state Senator Leland Yee (Democrat), who is also a child psychologist, urges parents, families, and friends to avoid buying violent video games for children this holiday season. Yee says, "There is significant evidence demonstrating ultra-violent video games have negative effects on children, and can cause real behavioral changes." Several studies by the Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychiatric Association, and American Psychological Association conclude that adolescents who play violent video games may become increasingly aggressive over time. Yee's 2005 law to prohibit sales of extremely violent video games to minors in California is being litigated and is under consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court. Another law, also authored by Yee in 2004, requires retailers to post signs to inform consumers about the video game rating system, which indicates age-appropriateness of the games. Yee urges adults to:

- Be aware of advertising and marketing to children. Advertising pressure contributes to impulse buying.
- Check age ratings and descriptions found on video game boxes. Read reviews at commonsensemedia.org, parentstv.org, and whattheyplay.com.
- If violence and sexual themes

are in the title or cover art, assume that these themes are also in the game.

- Avoid "first-person shooter" and "third-person shooter" games, which usually focus on shooting hundreds of targets.
- Discourage games that reward players with extra points and/or new scenes for antisocial, violent behavior. Several media sources urge parents to avoid the following best-selling violent video games: Call of Duty: Black Ops, God of War III, Fable III, Battlefield: Bad Company 2, Mass Effect 2, BioShock 2, Assassins Creed: Brotherhood, Red Dead Redemption, Army of Two: The 40th Day, Dante's Inferno, and Fallout: New Vegas.

300-YEAR-OLD SLANG

The Bodleian Library has published "The First Dictionary of Slang" (1699) based on a 17th-century guide for well-to-do Londoners who needed or wanted to know underworld slang so they could communicate with the riffraff for whatever reason (commerce, crime, or cootchy-coo).

SITeseer

- Tips for health, wealth, and happiness: aarp.org
- Best-ever hummingbird photos: fredmiranda.com
- Kid rescues bird: wimp.com/babyhummingbird
- Electronic pickpockets scan credit cards: wreg.com
- Land's End labyrinth: yahoo.com
- JFK assassination book & movie: legacyofsecrecy.com
- Now you see 'em, now you don't: IslandsofSFBay.com

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Columnist: Pacifica Tribune, Loma Prieta (Sierra Club)
Blogger: Pacifica Riptide, SF Gate Peninsula
Copyeditor: Goofbuster.com
Teacher: Inner Editor classes (mayburrito@goofbuster.com)