

Wandering & Wondering

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LOCAL WILDLIFE

Last week, two hikers in the coastal hills a few miles south of Pacifica encountered a pair of mountain lions on the trail. The men were able to beat a hasty but orderly retreat back to the parking lot, backed up by a stout hiking stick. Rangers said they did the right thing: Don't run, stand tall, make noise, leave slowly. In a separate incident, a wild boar on the loose in nearby Montara was shot and killed up in the hills.

BAD ROADS

San Mateo County roads are threatened by lack of state funding needed to prevent more potholes, cracks, and further costly deterioration, according to a statewide study. The study found that roads in unincorporated San Mateo County are in danger of becoming far worse and far more costly to repair without adequate maintenance funding. The roads are dead average in California – and that's in a state with the second-worst roads in the United States, behind only New Jersey, according to separate study by The Road Information Program. "The results show that California's local streets and roads are on the edge of a cliff," the authors state. "The conclusions that can be drawn from this study are inescapable. Given existing funding levels, California's local streets and roads can be expected to deteriorate rapidly within the next 10 years." The study surveyed all of California's 58 counties and 478 cities in 2007-08. On a scale of zero (failed) to 100 (excellent), San Mateo County's average pavement condition index in the unincorporated areas was 68 – the same as the state average and within the "at-risk category," meaning adequate maintenance is needed to avoid far more costly repairs and replacement later. The full report can be found at savecaliforniastreet.org. That study's findings are reinforced by a 2009 report from The Road Information Program, a Washington, D.C. nonprofit that studies

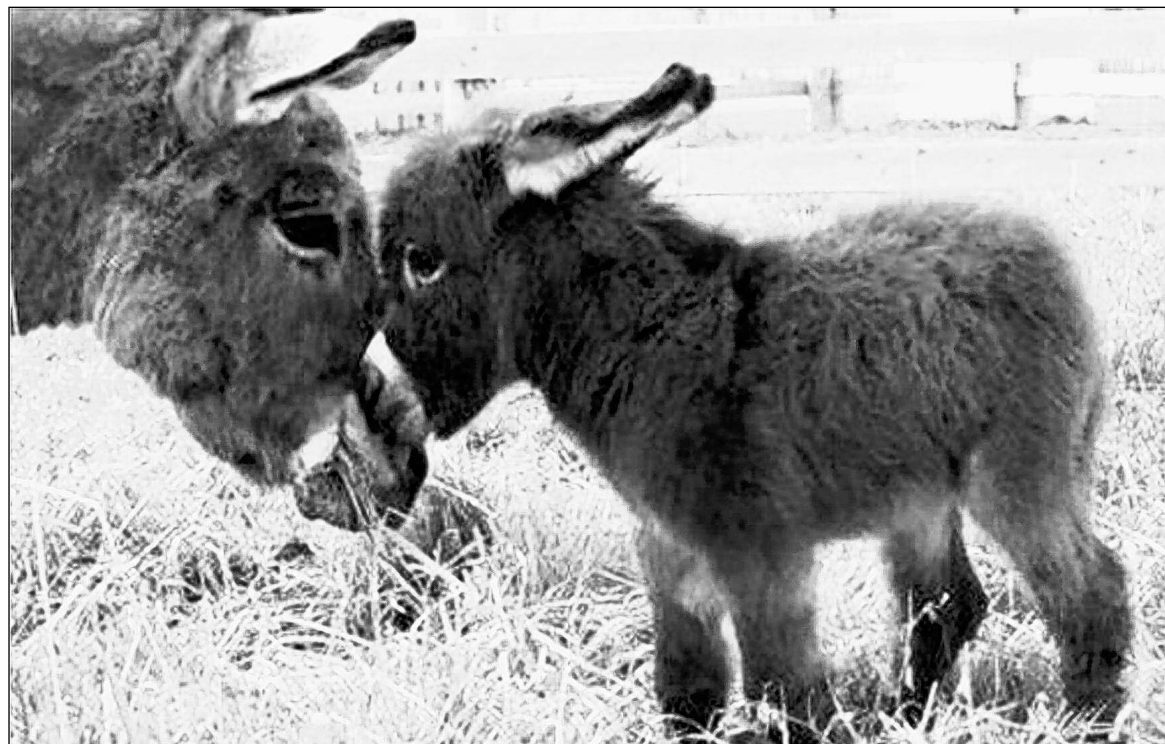
highway transportation issues. It found that in 2007, some 35 percent of major roads in California were rated in poor condition, the second-highest share in the nation, behind only New Jersey. Another 31 percent of the state's major roads were rated in mediocre condition. Driving on rough roads costs the state's motorists nearly \$600 per year in extra vehicle operating costs – a total of \$13.5 billion statewide, according to The Road Information Program, which can be found at tripnet.org.

HELP SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

Donate to Pacifica Education Foundation (PEF) at pacificaeaf.org. Most public school systems on the Peninsula have a foundation that helps schools, and the relatively new PEF already helps with the budget gap and is very close to reaching its funding goal to provide the district with a credentialed technology teacher. Join the Saving Pacifica Schools page on Facebook. Saving Pacifica Schools, run by PSD parent Kalimah Salahuddin, tries to effect change in Sacramento by educating legislators, supporting ballot initiatives, writing petitions, and arranging demonstrations. Please join and look under "links" and "events" for things you can do. Our state Assemblymember Jerry Hill and state Senator Leland Yee both have been extremely supportive when it comes to education. But the governor needs to hear from Californians that eviscerating public education is not something we will stand for. Go to his web site and write him a letter: gov.ca.gov/interact. (Matt Levie post on Pacifica Riptide)

SICK, DYING PELICANS

Wildlife rescue centers in California have written to state and federal authorities to request their urgent attention and support in dealing with an unprecedented number of sick, dying adult California Brown Pelicans being recovered from the California coastline. To date,



four organizations (International Bird Rescue Research Center, Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center, Pacific Wildlife Care, and Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network) have received nearly 500 pelicans since January 1, creating a severe strain on human and financial resources for each organization. The wildlife groups ask the public to support rescue efforts by donating money and volunteering to help. Contact ibrrc.org.

WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?

"Last Sunday when I grabbed the paper off the front porch, I found a Comcast flyer lying there with a channel lineup and bundled pricing offers. The expiration date on the flyer was December 31, 2009, but it said it was extended to January 15, 2010. Whoopie! Only two weeks past the pull date. Talk about spoiled goods." (Dolores De Cabeza post on Pacifica Riptide)

JIMI HENDRIX

"The long-awaited official release of the lost archive track Valleys of Neptune by Jimi Hendrix is scheduled for February 9 on the Sony Legacy label. The single, which will be available commercially, will then be followed by an album of 12 previously unreleased Hendrix recordings. The album, also called Valleys of Neptune, will be released in March. It features versions of Stone Free, Fire, Red House, and a nearly seven-minute cover of Sunshine of Your Love. Bootleg copies of the Valleys of Neptune track have

been around for years, but this is the real deal, and it's almost shocking that it's been under lock and key this long." (Phil Reser, music journalist)

TRAD JAZZ

Karen Brooks and Scott Anthony had a blast at the traditional jazz concert at Nick's of Rockaway Beach on January 11. Pacifica Riptide had posted the concert on its event calendar, which Karen says really helped boost attendance and make Nick Gust very happy. At sfradjazz.org you can see the YouTube video of the concert.

CELEBRATE WISELY

Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) is encouraging residents not to pour fats, oils and grease (FOG) down the drain this Lunar New Year. Many traditional Chinese dishes like sweet and sour pork, and Korean dishes like mandus or fried dumplings are prepared in cooking oil and will be part of Year of the Tiger celebrations on February 14. This marked increase in cooking oil use poses a potentially severe threat to Bay Area sewer collection systems. When poured down the drain, FOG solidifies and can clog pipes, costing cities and sewer agencies tens of millions of dollars every year for cleanup, as well as from fines resulting from sewer overflows into a creek or the Bay. The dollars add up for residents too: clogs in sewer lines can result in sewage backups and overflows into the home, causing

costly repairs to the pipes and your property. An even better reason to recycle: In many cities around the Bay, recycling cooking oil not only reduces waste and unclogs sewers, it also serves as an alternative fuel source that powers many city-owned and operated vehicles. What should you do with fats, oils and grease? Follow the simple step-by-step disposal instructions: Use food strainers in kitchen sinks to catch food particles and scrape leftover food waste into the garbage or compost container, not the garbage disposal. Pour cooking oil into a clean, sealable container. Check baywise.org for free drop-off locations near you.

SITSEER

- Images of old Cliff House, Sutro Baths: cliffhouseproject.com
- Take a quiz to see how well informed you are: pewresearch.com
- Stop state raids on local funds: savelocalservices.com
- The original RV: gtamarketing.com/1937FordHousecar.html

SWAMI SEZ

"When drinking rum, the ONLY thing a pirate adds is more rum." (Pirate Law #54)

MAYBURRITOVILLE

- Web Sites: Pacifica Tribune, Wandering & Wondering, Goofbuster
- Blogs: Pacifica Riptide, SF Gate (Peninsula Coastside)
- Email: mayburrito@goofbuster.com