

Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury



STOP LOSS

Nancy Hall recently commented on PacificaRiptide.com about her trip through the Central Valley, where she saw lots of empty houses and storefronts. Her post led to a spirited debate on Riptide about Pacifica's own struggles with the mortgage meltdown and the fiscal crisis wracking the rest of the country. Most commenters agreed that they want Pacifica's storefronts and homes to be occupied, giving the city a robust economy. But there was major disagreement about whether a proposed 1 percent sales tax increase would drive customers out of town. Another big disagreement was about whether the city's commitment to develop and preserve open space threatens the city's economic base. I tossed out this idea: Rockaway Quarry owner Don Peebles calls on his pals in the Obama Administration to help him get out from under his bridge loan and transfer ownership of the quarry to GGNRA, wrapping it into the existing national parkland (Mori Point), which overlooks the quarry. Such a deal! Don gets to walk away with some cash and a nice tax write-off, recouping his investment. To sweeten the deal, the Feds

make Peebles an offer he can't refuse: naming rights - Peebles Park at Mori Point. Quid pro quo, win-win, everybody goes home happy. Steve Sinai suggested the city study exactly who comes to play in Pacifica (surfing, hiking, etc.) and how much money they actually spend here (restaurants, motels, groceries, gas, etc.). And how much does a green-hillsides city like Pacifica add to home values? (A Realtor once told me that an oak tree adds \$10,000 to your home value.) I believe that our natural resources ARE capable of supporting us. We just haven't exploited them to their fullest. We have such an incredible bounty of open space, trails, and beaches, including three national parks (Mori Point, Milagra Ridge, Sweeney Ridge), a state park (McNee Ranch), a state beach (Linda Mar), and a county park (San Pedro Valley). But we have this laid-back, do-nothing attitude that permeates our public and private sectors. Without pointing fingers at anyone in particular, I am saying that we don't make the most of what we have. You can blame City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, local media, even our own negative attitudes toward

Pacifican institutional malaise and depressive despair that retards progress and dampens enthusiasm for change and progress. Both sides in this town complain that nothing happens here. We accuse each other of spreading doom and gloom. We call each other "naysayers." Both sides are frustrated. Perhaps the only solution is for all stakeholders in Pacifica to come together and talk about common goals and how to get there.

FROM THE MINISTRY OF SILLY RULES
If you watched the New York Yankees play Team USA on the MLB Network (Comcast Cable TV 412) last week, you might have heard the comically convoluted explanation for why the American flag on the right sleeve of Team USA's uniform is "backward," or reversed (the field of stars on the right side of the flag). According to an official Department of Defense regulation, the flag on the right sleeve must appear to fly the stars and stripes "in the breeze," i.e., with the stars to the right, or front, with the stripes streaming behind as if the player were moving forward. The only problem with this brilliant policy is trying to understand which way the flag is supposed to blow when the player backpedals to catch a fly ball. Hoo-ah!

EAT YOUR HEART OUT
"On the evening train from Gothenburg to Stockholm, 460 km in 3 hrs, USD 20 in first class, free Internet, and you could buy a bottle of wine from the car attendant! Have a good day!" (Lennart

Lundgren, reporting from a high-speed train in Sweden)
KIDS & RECESSION
Morale is low and tensions are high at a growing number of companies across the nation. The mood is no different at home, with conversations focusing more on money and the recession. Parents, though, must not forget about their children, who may be too young to understand what's going on with the financial crisis but are keenly perceptive. Jerry Shapiro is a licensed psychologist and a professor of counseling psychology at Santa Clara University. He says parents don't have to verbally express their fears and nervousness about the recession for children to realize that something is wrong: "They're so intuitive that they may pick up on the symptoms of fear and nervousness that the parents

subconsciously express. The children then express the family's anxiety in their own performance at school, by acting out to teachers and classmates or by a drop in grades. That's the children's way of saying, 'Help, my family needs help.'" How do you talk to your children about the recession? What do you say to them if you're about to lose your home or if parents have lost their jobs? Jerry Shapiro is an expert on couples, parenting, masculinity, family finances, psychology of money, and family businesses. To contact him for interviews/consultations, call Connie Kim Coutain, 408-554-5126 (office), 408-829-4836 (cell).

SITeseer

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SWAMI SEZ

Due to recent budget cuts and the rising cost of electricity, gas, and oil, as well as current market conditions, "The Light at the End of the Tunnel" has been turned off. We apologize for the inconvenience.

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Pacifica TRIBUNE

Pacificans who are deeply involved in the community, like Jefferson Union High School District Trustee David Mineta, read the Pacifica Tribune every week.

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The advertisement features a smiling man, David Mineta, wearing a floral shirt and holding a copy of the Pacifica Tribune newspaper. The newspaper cover shows the title 'Pacifica TRIBUNE' and several headlines, including 'Disaster declared in Pacifica' and 'Pacifica cops catch East Palo Alto cop killer'. The background is a simple indoor setting.