

# Wandering & Wondering



John Maybury

**MILDRED OWEN, R.I.P.**  
I am deeply saddened by the death of Mildred Owen, the beloved creative force behind Pacifica Performances and Sanchez Concert Hall. Mildred was involved in the local music and arts community for many years, and extended many kindnesses to her friends and colleagues in other organizations, including my Wandering and Wondering, Pacifica Riptide, and Pacifica Peace People. It was always a pleasure to see her at a peace vigil or in the concert hall, where she emceed events ranging from chamber music and classical recitals to Celtic and bluegrass bands. (Please see people's tributes to the life of Mildred Owen or leave your own remarks by going to Pacifica Riptide's obituary posted on Riptide, and click Comments at the bottom of the post.) We all will miss Mildred so much. "She was supposed to be here forever," said a good friend of Mildred's on hearing of her death.

**WILDERNESS WIN**  
Congress has passed and sent to the president a bill to protect more than 700,000 acres of wilder-

ness additions and wild rivers in California, such as: 115,000 acres of public land within Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park, including Redwood Mountain Grove and Old Hockett Trail; 200,000 acres in Riverside County, including additions to Joshua Tree National Park and the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains National Monument; more than 500,000 acres in Inyo, Mono, and northern Los Angeles counties, including the Eastern Sierra and White Mountain ranges; and a 29,000-acre Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest. This is the largest designation of new wilderness since 1994! Bravo to Congress.

**SIGN OF THE TIMES**  
Good friend Bill Khoury of the late, lamented Sam's Deli in Linda Mar shopping center gave me his Bud Light neon beer sign when he closed up shop. Unfortunately, I have no space at home for this fine example of American advertising art (which is in good working order, as you can see online from the photo posted on Craig's List and Pacifica Riptide). I need to sell the sign to raise badly needed cash. If you want to see the sign in person and make an offer, our pal Dave Newman has it up in his shop at 337 Grand Avenue in South San Francisco, open 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

**BIRDS' NESTS**  
Photographs by Sharon Beals, Helen Crocker Russell Library, San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park, April 1 to June 30, opening celebration April 9 from 5 to 7 p.m. Intricately detailed photographs of birds' nests in the research collections at the California Academy of Sciences, the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, and the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology. Preview Sharon's pictures online at Planet Citizen, or look up her cover story in Audubon Magazine from last year. (Let your fingers do the walking, Googlers!)

**REAL UTOPIAS**  
Eric Olin Wright, University of Wisconsin, has written a book called *Envisioning Real Utopias*. The entire book manuscript is online with the consent of Wright's publisher, Oxford Press. Google the book title or his name to find out more. And thanks to Jake Sigg's Nature News for this and other fascinating items of local and world environmental interest. Subscribe free to Jake's email newsletter by writing him at [jakesigg@earthlink.net](mailto:jakesigg@earthlink.net).

**WAR MEMORIAL**  
Jim MacLeod, a homeowner on Reina del Mar in Vallejo, put up an antiwar display in his front yard to honor Middle East war dead, commemorating coalition and civilian casualties in ongoing military actions in Iraq, Afghani-

stan, and now Pakistan. His sign reads: "We are waiting for that 'Change' to come!" Some of Jim's military-style white crosses nearest the road have been pulled up or run over, but neighbors have offered help to replace them and to guard the site. For pictures and details, search in the Google box on the top-right sidebar of Pacifica Riptide.

**IMPORTANCE OF MAMMOGRAMS**  
"San Francisco magazine interviewed me (and some others) about my photography career and experience with Flickr, and especially my use of photography to spread the word about the importance of mammograms. They published eight of my photos, including one of my mastectomy photos. The magazine is on newsstands now and the pictures are available at the magazine's site online and on Pacifica Riptide (use Google search box in upper-right sidebar). My photos documenting my cancer, mastectomy, and chemo experience are available on Flickr." (Deborah Lattimore)

**TRAIL MIX RECALL**  
Back to Nature (Kraft Foods) has recalled Nantucket blend trail mix, due to possible Salmonella contamination of California-grown pistachio nuts in the mix. Costco has been making robocalls to customers who bought the product, asking them to return it to the store for a refund or exchange.

Other stories may follow suit. In any case, do not eat any Nantucket mix until you check with your grocer or go online and check the Food and Drug Administration warning for the dates printed on the recalled packages.

**ODD BOOK TITLES**  
A heavyweight study of the future of soft cheese has won Britain's annual competition to find the year's oddest book title. "The 2009-2014 World Outlook for 60-milligram Containers of Fromage Frais," by Philip M. Parker won the Diagram Prize, awarded Friday by trade magazine *The Bookseller* ([thebookseller.com](http://thebookseller.com)). The runner-up was primate study "Baboon Metaphysics," by Dorothy L. Cheney and Robert M. Seyfarth. Horace Bent, who runs the award, said Parker's volume was a surprise winner, given the competition from racier-sounding finalists like "Curbside Consultation of the Colon" a medical manual and hobby handbook "Strip and Knit With Style." Bent said "Fromage Frais" was a worthy winner that had "turned the supermarket chiller into the Petri dish of literary innovation." Fromage frais literally "fresh cheese" is a dairy product that originated in France and has a similar consistency to sour cream. The book is a 188-page study of the global retail market for the product. Parker's book is published by Icon Group and sells for a hefty \$795 (euro589.) The Diagram Prize was

founded in 1978, and the winner is decided by public vote. This year's other finalists were "The Large Sieve and Its Applications" and "Techniques for Corrosion Monitoring." Previous winners include "Bomb-proof Your Horse," "Living with Crazy Buttocks" and "People Who Don't Know They're Dead: How They Attach Themselves to Unsuspecting Bystanders and What to Do About It." (Jill Lawless, Associated Press, March 27)

## INNER EDIROT

■ CEO with "pull": Dig this crazy headline from the March 19 *Contra Costa Times*, sent to us by G-Man: "AIG CEO a reluctant defender — Despite being on the job for only 6 months, company leader magnate for criticism." Fire the newspaper's spell-checkers!

■ Really dumb idea: NBC-TV'S Sci Fi Channel is changing its name to Syfy Channel on July 7. Fire the network's lawyers!

## SWAMI SEZ

Liquidity is when you look at your retirement funds and wet your pants.

## SITSEER

■ Melting glaciers: [extremeicesurvey.org](http://extremeicesurvey.org)

## MAYBURRITOVILLE

■ [Goofbuster.com](http://Goofbuster.com)  
■ [PacificaRiptide.com](http://PacificaRiptide.com)  
■ [PacificaTribune.com](http://PacificaTribune.com)  
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