



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

CALTRANS NIGHTMARE SCENARIO

Caltrans created an illustration (see photo, below) in the 1970s of its plan for a coastal freeway. To my knowledge, the state transportation agency never showed this picture to the public! This was Caltrans' vision of Highway 1: six freeway lanes from Pacifica to San Diego. I bought this "art" from a junk dealer who "acquired" it from a dumpster in Oakland. Note the four or five bridges over San Pedro Creek. Classic Caltrans. On the back of the picture it says "Rockaway Beach 1970." I did not live here in the 1970s, but I guess that significant public involvement at the time kept Caltrans from realizing its freeway dream. The current proposal to widen Highway 1 needs to be discussed in detail by the public. (Mitch Reid on PacificaRiptide.com)

HERON ADDICTS

Each year since 1993, great blue herons have returned to Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park to court, mate, and raise their young. Five nests are active now. Chicks are expected in early April. San Francisco Nature Education middle school and high school

interns have spotting scopes to show these magnificent birds to the public and answer questions. Free. Naturalists lead separate guided nature walks for adults and another for families around Stow Lake and Strawberry Island from 10:30 a.m. until noon. Adults \$10, but no one is turned away for lack of funds. Follow sign from Stow Lake Boathouse to the observation site nearby. Saturdays: April 17 and 24; May 1, 8, 15. Open at 10 a.m. and again at 1 p.m. Families with children especially welcome. Free heron mobiles for children. (info@sfnature.org or 415-387-9160 or sfnature.org)

DISNEY OCEANS MOVIE

Mark your calendar: Disneynature, the studio that presented the film Earth, brings OCEANS to the big screen on Earth Day 2010. Directors Jacques Perrin and Jacques Cluzaud dive deep to show us this spectacular underwater world. Check your local listings for showtimes. (Disney.go.com/disneynature/oceans/)

BAY AREA NATURE GUIDE

The Laws Pocket Guide Set: San Francisco Bay Area puts the abundance of Bay Area natural life at

your fingertips. Created by the author and illustrator of the popular Laws Field Guide to the Sierra Nevada, this set of habitat guides makes plant and animal identification fun and easy. The box set contains four user-friendly foldout guides and is small enough to tote along in a pocket, yet durable enough to weather abuse at the bottom of any backpack. Ask for it at Florey's Books on Palmetto across from Sharp Park Library.

BANS BUTTS ON BEACHES

They're gross, they're annoying, they can harm or kill animals, and they even contribute to the Pacific Garbage Patch. I'm talking about cigarette butts, the most common form of beach litter. How common? On one day in 2009, volunteers pulled 340,221 cigarette butts off California beaches. That's why we're joining the call to ban smoking on state beaches. The ban has already passed through the Assembly, but the governor needs to decide whether to sign this ban — so far he's kept mum. Join us in calling on the governor to ban smoking on state beaches. Cigarette butts are designed to take a host of poisonous chemicals out of the cigarette smoke. But these chemicals accumulate in the filter, and when that filter is floating in the ocean those toxic chemicals leach out and harm animals. A San Diego State University study found that "just one filtered cigarette butt had the ability to kill half the fish living in a 1-liter container of water." (cigwaste.org) Many smokers incorrectly believe that cigarette filters are made of biodegradable cotton. In fact, cigarette filters are made with cellulose-acetate, a type of plastic that never fully decomposes. Because cigarette butts float, they get taken out to sea by the tide or by wind and rain. Like Styrofoam takeout containers, once in the ocean, this plastic tends to accumulate in giant garbage gyres, like the Pacific Garbage Patch 1,000 miles off our coast. Banning smoking is a small step, but one with a big payoff. We can dramatically cut one of the most common forms of beach litter, protect the tourism industry by keeping our beaches clean, and we can save money on beach cleaning. The governor's silence

so far on this issue means that he isn't sold one way or another. That's why we need as many people as we can get to call on the governor to sign the bill. Add your signature by clicking on the link at environmentalcalifornia.org. (Dan Jacobson, Legislative Director, Environment California)

AUTISM BENEFIT

f-eleven announces the release of the f-eleven volume 2 photography book to benefit the Autism Research Institute. Coinciding with the month of autism awareness and to bring attention to the effects of the Fragile X Syndrome, 100 percent of the proceeds from the sales of f-eleven volume 2 will be donated to the Autism Research Institute. The coffee table quality photography book, edited by internationally published photographer and art director Wolf189, features the work of 19 talented photographers of multiple genres. The result is a trend-challenging, and visually stimulating collection presented in a luxurious format. Printed on 100-lb. coffee table book standard paper with a silky finish, the book will handle many years of viewing. "We hope that this book would help raise awareness and provide some financial assistance for this worthy cause," said Leo Lam, a fashion photographer in Seattle, and one of the contributors of f-eleven volume 2. f-eleven is an exclusive private photography group. The book project was started by its members in late 2009, and since then has produced two book releases. The books are diverse and progressive, with the fundamental aim to affect small positive changes in worthy causes; one shutter click at a time. For detailed information, please visit f-elevenbooks.com. (Mariah Carle on PacificaRiptide.com)

OCEAN PROTECTION

California's Fish & Game Commission has voted unanimously to move ahead with plans to protect Point Reyes Headlands, Bodega Head, Farallon Islands, Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, and other Northern California ocean hot spots with a new network of underwater state parks. Last August the Commission approved a carefully crafted marine protected-area

plan for state waters between Pigeon Point and Point Arena. The plan, designed by local stakeholders and based on the best available marine science, will set aside some of the region's richest kelp forests, rocky reefs, and canyons to boost the health and productivity of the entire coastline. It will go into effect on May 1, 2010, and the commission has already approved plans for university and citizen scientists to monitor the new protected areas to track their effectiveness. The network includes 21 marine protected areas designed to protect the region's most sensitive sea life and habitats while leaving almost 90 percent of the coast open to fishing. Studies show that protecting the areas where fish and shellfish feed and breed benefits both fish and fishermen, boosting the sustainability and profitability of local fisheries. This marks the latest step in a five-stage process to implement the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA), which requires the state to develop a network of marine protected areas down the entire 1,100-mile coastline. California is the first state in the country to propose such a comprehensive plan to protect its marine resources. The MLPA planning process is well under way in the far north and south coasts, with statewide implementation expected by 2011. (caloceans.org)

SWAMI SEZ

For my neighbors with the barking dogs: "Wolves, ancestors of the modern dog, howl to communicate their whereabouts and reassemble the pack after they've traveled apart. Your (dog's) yowling is his canine way of saying he wants you to return. Since our dogs cannot spend every minute with us, we need to help them learn how to be comfortable when we're away." (Pat Engel, Co-Pilot Dog Training, Sonoma Humane Society, sonomahumane.org)

MAYBURRITOVILLE

■ Web Sites: Pacifica Tribune, Wandering & Wondering, Goofbuster
■ Blogs: Pacifica Riptide, SF Gate (Peninsula Coastside)
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