

# Wandering and Wondering: April 23, 2008

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Article Launched: 04/22/2008 06:18:49 PM PDT

## STAND-UP GUY

Every now and then I hear about somebody who just gets fed up with "the system" and the unfairness of life in general, and then decides to do something about it — nonviolently and creatively. I am talking about San Diego adman James Spring. When he read in the paper recently about the San Francisco couple accused of murdering their roommate and running off to Mexico right under the noses of the SFPD, Spring printed \$150 worth of "wanted" flyers at Kinko's and headed across the border, plastering his flyers all over Tijuana and nearby areas of Baja California. Someone down there recognized the fugitive pair from the posted bulletin, called la policia, and an arrest was made. Police credit Spring with single-handedly busting these two fugitive killers. Now that's what I call personal initiative. Ya gotta love it.

## Wandering & Wondering

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## WHITE BREAD

People who eat too much white bread have larger waistlines than their friends and family who eat whole grains instead, according to a research study done at Tufts University in Boston. That spongy white bread goes straight to your gut and then hangs out as belly fat. In fact, white bread is worse than alcohol, sugar, or cheeseburgers for making you fat. "Waist circumference was very much associated with this high-refined-grains pattern," said lead study author Katherine Tucker, associate professor of nutritional epidemiology at Tufts. (American Journal of Clinical Nutrition)

## FREUDIAN SLIP?

"Hey, John, thought you'd get a kick out of this. The following passage appears on a Celtic wedding ring maker's website: 'The ring is perfect; my finance immediately put it on and has not stopped smiling since.'" (email from Tammy Aramian)

## HITLER & GERBILS

Yahoo user Keith Chandler wrote in a so-called movie review of "Stop Loss" (March 30): "Hitler and Gerbils would be proud of the propoganda that Hollywood is producing today. This film is utter tripe. The Fascist left never support or produce anything that is remotely balanced." (Lyn Lossow loiters online, where he spotted this right-wing nut.)

## RUBBER SIDEWALKS

More and more American cities are installing rubber sidewalks to save their trees and their sidewalks. Where tree roots can crack or buckle conventional cement sidewalks, rubber sidewalks allow tree roots to grow without damaging the sidewalks, and those trees are spared the ax and the chainsaw. Richard Valeriano of Santa Monica came up with the idea of rubber sidewalks after he dreamed about ficus tree roots destroying city sidewalks. When he realized the next morning that the rubber flooring at his gym was the perfect solution, the invention was born. (USA Today)

## PLANNERESE

Nobody loves a NIMBY (not in my backyard), so planning consultant Ric Stephens of Portland, Oregon collected a bunch of silly acronyms and euphemisms related to nimbyism, which he calls Plannerese. Here are some choice examples from his glossary, reprinted from Planetizen: BANANA (build absolutely nothing anywhere near anything), CAVE man (citizen against virtually everything), DUDE (developer under delusions of entitlement), SLAPP (strategic lawsuit against public participation), Bungalow Bill (tract house architect), Landscaper (landscape architect), LOMBARD (lots of money but a real dickhead).

## ANCIENT OIL

Biofuel is nothing new; it goes way back in history. Nineteenth-century soapmakers messed around with vegetable oils to create clean-burning fuel. Rudolph Diesel (yes, that Diesel) experimented with whale oil, peanut oil, and coal tar before coming up with the idea for a fuel and engine that carry his name today. Henry Ford fooled around with ethanol (corn) and hemp oil as alternative fuels. The Philippine government mandates use of biodiesel made partly from coconuts. (Grist Magazine)

## TEA BEATS STRESS

Regular cups of tea can help speed recovery from stress, according to a British research study. In the experiment, men who drank black tea four times a day for six weeks had lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol and had a greater feeling of relaxation than subjects in the control group who drank only a tea substitute. (Reuters)

## CFL BULBS

If every one of 110 million American households installed a CFL fluorescent light bulb in place of an ordinary 60-watt bulb, the energy saved would be enough to power a city of 1.5 million people. One bulb swapped out would save enough electricity to power all the homes in Delaware and Rhode Island. In terms of oil not burned, or greenhouse gases not blasted into the atmosphere, one CFL bulb is equivalent to taking 1.3 million cars off the road. (Fast Company)

## POO POWER

Finnish engineers have poured pig manure into a contaminated pond next to an abandoned mine to clean up the toxic metals in the water. Scientists say that bacteria in the manure bind metals in the mine water and cause them to sink to the bottom, where they can be collected and disposed of properly. It takes two to three years for sulfide-eating bacteria to "finnish" the job, so to speak. (Reuters)

## GREEN COOKS

Save energy in the kitchen by buying the smallest oven possible, keeping appliances clean, cooking with lids on pots and pans, keeping the flame or heat as low as possible, using residual heat to finish cooking covered food, using the right size of cookware, not opening the oven door to peek at food while it cooks, and not preheating unless absolutely required. (Union of Concerned Scientists)

## LEBANON LIVE

Lebanon facts: 40 daily newspapers, 42 universities, 100 banks, 15 rivers, no deserts, 40 percent Christian, 70 percent of students in private schools, one doctor for every 10 people (ten times better ratio than USA and Europe), home of the first alphabet, first people to build and sail boats, world's first law school. (Wikipedia.com)

## BEND BUS BANS B.O.

On the bus in Bend, Oregon, the law says you cannot spit, smoke, skateboard, or give off "grossly repulsive odors."

## SIGNS OF FASCISM

Political scientist Dr. Lawrence Britt identifies characteristics of fascism: extreme nationalism, disdain for human rights, scapegoating and prejudice, military supremacy, rampant sexism, government and/or corporate control of the media, obsession with national security, no separation of church and state, corporate favoritism, disdain for intellectuals and artists, obsession with crime and punishment, rampant cronyism and corruption, fraudulent elections. Hey, sound familiar, anyone?

## SWAMI SEZ

Did you ever notice that people who are always late are much jollier than the people who have to wait for them?

## MAYBURRITOVILLE

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