

Wandering
&
Wondering



John Maybury

Nawlins

Honk if you like jazz, gumbo, jambalaya, crawfish, andouille sausage (that's hot links, cuz), beignets, po' boys, Jax beer, coffee with chicory, anything Cajun or Creole, James Lee Burke mysteries, Mardi Gras, zydeco music—well, you get the idea. Last week, Hurricane Katrina hammered the Gulf Coast east of New Orleans. Floodwaters punched through levees containing the mighty Mississippi River and swamped The Big Easy. While bureaucrats fiddled for five days, ordinary people drowned or died slowly of starvation and dehydration. Finally, on Sept. 2, federal troops rode to the rescue, and the president posed for pictures out at the airport, but only after New Orleans' mayor had cursed the authorities on live radio for failing to heed the dying city's

cries for help. In the aftermath of one of the nation's worst natural disasters, many question the government's slow response to the humanitarian crisis, and the lack of advance planning and prevention for such a worst-case scenario. Immediately, the blame game began, with finger-pointing and scapegoating. Meanwhile, those of us who mourned this body blow to a favorite place started writing checks to the Salvation Army, Red Cross, and other legitimate relief agencies.

Ideas for Action

New Pacifican Cynthia Kaufman has written "Ideas for Action: Relevant Theory for Radical Change," a book that should interest all kinds of activists and community organizers. Kaufman, a professor of philosophy and women's studies at De Anza College in Cupertino, examines historical and theoretical origins of social change and liberation movements, then brings her insights to bear on our present need for workable, sensible strategies. Published by South End Press, Kaufman's book is available from Amazon.com.

Works for me

Kris Aurilio, head "locksmith" at Illusions hair salon in Park Mall, is dead serious about helping Mister Peebles make a killing on the Rock-

away Quarry property he just bought. Kris suggests he turn it into an upscale cemetery: quiet neighbors, low maintenance costs, minimal traffic, zero environmental impact. And what more perfect ending could there be for a rock quarry than to wind up full of headstones!

War and peace

After her soldier son Casey's death in Iraq, Cindy Sheehan started a personal blog, a vigil outside George W. Bush's dude ranch, and now a nationwide tour to rally her own troops against the war. She is on her way to Washington to ask the president what noble cause Casey died for. Tim Williams has looked at Sheehan's Web site (<http://crawfordpeace.nfshost.com>) and is impressed with its grassroots approach. Locally, Pacifica Peace People has notified people to ask their elected state representatives to support Assemblywoman Loni Hancock's resolution to bring the California National Guard home from Iraq. Info: Sam at 510-524-2776 or www.bayareacodepink.org. Don't forget: antiwar rally, Saturday, Sept. 24, 11 a.m., Dolores Park, S.F.

Eagle eye

Mar Kaden is on a roll. First she noticed a red curb in Eureka Square

saying "FIRFLANE NOPARKING." Then she read in the San Mateo County Times about school test scores; the list included Linda Mar Elementary School, which closed more than a year ago.

Oops

If you bank at Coastside Credit Union, you might want to double-check your account balance. Last weekend, the credit union posted two window signs saying it would be closed Sept. 4 "in observance of Memorial Day."

The Butler did it

Ian Butler would have Pacificans eat more mint to help the city's stinky Calera Creek water treatment plant smell better. While you're at it, Mister Whiffersniffer, why not raise a sympathy fund for the poor police department, which is downwind from the sewer. Ye gods, anyone who has driven through the Mori Ridge gap on Highway 1 knows how bad it smells in there.

Home, boy

When a black Labrador named Archie became separated from his owner in a crowded Scottish train station, security cameras showed Archie watching trains come and go until the one going to his hometown

arrived. Archie jumped on board, rode the train to the right stop and got off the train, where a railroad signalman checked Archie's dog tag and phoned his grateful owner. (Earthweek)

Great Scott

Only a tall dude like Scott McKellar would notice a crow flying in a flock of seagulls and a vulture circling with hang gliders. OK, back here on earth, Scott got the Ikea idea and went to the Swedish big box for a bookshelf (I got one, too, it's called Billy, for some odd reason known only to the Swedes). Scott was blown away that the assembly instructions come in 17 different languages.

Haiku Kitty

Today the rule is
Touch my tail I shred your hand
New rule tomorrow

Swami Sez

You can't teach an old dog new math.

Wasting away in
Mayburritoville

Write:
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