



Wandering & Wondering John Maybury

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Happy New Year to all my loyal readers. Keep in touch in 2013. You are my eyes and ears in the community, so remember to email me your news and views. My email address is in MAYBURRITOVILLE at the end of this column.

CAR ALARM: SECURITY SOLUTION

Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a suspicious noise outside or inside your house, just press the panic button for your car alarm. The alarm will go on and the horn will continue to beep until you turn it off or the car battery dies. It's a security alarm system that you probably already have and requires no installation. Test it. It will go off from almost everywhere inside your house. It works whether you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off when someone is trying to break into your house, odds are the bad guy won't stick around. After a few seconds, the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there. Also, remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there. This is something that should really be shared with everyone. It could also be useful for any emergency, such as a heart attack, where you can't reach a phone. (adapted from an Internet posting)

LOWER SCHOOL TAX PASS RATE TO 55%

State Senator Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo) has introduced legislation that would lower the threshold for voters to approve school parcel taxes from two-thirds to 55 percent. If approved by the Legislature during the new session and voters on the statewide ballot in 2014, Senate Constitutional Amendment 3 would allow local school districts, community college districts, and county offices of education to approve a local parcel tax with the same 55 percent vote required for local school bonds used for capital expenses. "This legislation provides local control for school funding and gives school districts flexibility to prioritize spending on programs critical to students, teachers and parents in each community," said Hill, who served two terms in the Assembly before being elected to the Senate in November. "Voters in my district identified education funding

as their top priority and I'm committed to addressing this critical issue which impacts the future workforce of our state." Since voters approved Proposition 39 in 2000, reducing the voter threshold for approval of bonds from 67 percent to 55 percent, 80 percent of local school bonds have passed. By comparison, during the past two decades only 55 percent of parcel taxes have met the required two-thirds threshold.

HERO PILOT

Scott McKellar says he recently took down an old book from the shelf. It was a Jack London novel published 1904. Inside the front cover, Scott found the signature "Rudolf Anderson." On the Internet, Scott discovered several articles about Anderson, the U-2 pilot shot down over Cuba while flying a reconnaissance mission for the U.S. Air Force. It is generally accepted that Anderson's high-altitude photographs of Soviet missile bases in Cuba helped bring an end to the Cuban missile crisis and possibly prevented World War III.

SWAMI SEZ

Pierre Messerli passes along a new word making the rounds: ineptocracy. Pierre says this pretty well describes most forms of government today.

FREE CREDIT REPORT

Don't forget to order your free online credit report for this year or next year at Annual Credit Report. This one covers all three credit bureaus: Experian, TransUnion, and Equifax.

SITeseer

Harmonica ace Buddy Greene wows 'em at Carnegie Hall, playing classical-music favorites and other tunes. Just google his name and check out the videos of this plain-talking mouth organ maestro.

HILL'S BILLS BECOME LAW IN 2013

State Senator Jerry Hill's signed legislation goes into effect January 1. Google Jerry Hill for contact information and details on all of his bills, including gas pipeline safety, consumer rights, and education reform. Hill is Pacifica's newly elected representative in the state Senate, and formerly our state assemblyman.

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