



Wandering & Wondering John Maybury

HOMELESS IN PACIFICA

A recent San Mateo County human services agency survey reports that Pacifica has 150 homeless people, but I suspect the number is probably higher due to non-responders and others who fall through the statistical cracks. Pacifica Police likely turn a blind eye to well-behaved regulars who sleep/live in their vehicles at various points around town, including Esplanade and Monterey, but law officers might roust anyone who stays in one place too long or is a little too obvious about it. Manor Shopping center has posted signs warning “homeless” RV drivers not to park there. I am pretty sure these “campers” are not tourists. Those visitors rent spaces at the Palmetto RV/trailer park. Linda Mar Shopping Center is frequented by a number of homeless people who mostly shelter out in the wetlands behind the center. Keep in mind that many factors can cause and exacerbate homelessness: unemployment, divorce, recession, physical and mental health issues, and substance abuse. Homelessness can hit middle-class and working-class people whose lives fall apart due to any of the aforementioned causes; our socioeconomic system’s frayed safety net doesn’t catch them as they fall. Less fortunate Pacificans among us have agencies like the Pacifica Resource Center, which uses donated food and other items and services to supplement whatever meager aid the poor receive from the county, state, and federal government. So next time you walk by a homeless person on the streets of Pacifica, give him or her something good to eat (not cash), then write a check to Pacifica Resource Center, 1809 Palmetto Avenue.

DIRTY WATER

My fellow creekwatcher Ruben noticed a gray color in the normally clear water of San Pedro Creek last week, “as if someone had emptied a cement mixer into the water.” Ruben says this happens a couple of times a year. He checked the water coming out of San Pedro Valley Park (the creek’s middle and south forks) and found it was clear. But when he checked at each bridge over the creek flowing through Linda Mar, the water was murky. Ruben emailed me and I relayed his concerns to Lynn Adams of Pacifica’s Environmental Family. She contacted the appropriate city and water district officials. Reminder: It is illegal to dump or flush ANYTHING into the creek, which flows to Linda Mar Beach and is natural habitat for all kinds of fish and wildlife.

STEP ON IT

I just heard from a friend who says he got a speeding ticket on Fassler Avenue from a Burlingame motorcycle cop. This traffic stop was part of the county-wide Saturation Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP), a mutual-aid effort to target speeders, red-light runners, distracted or reckless drivers, and other traffic offenders. In STEP, officers from other communities help our local law enforcement keep our streets safer. Given the way some people in this town drive, I have to say I am happy that we are getting outside help for our traffic cops. Pacifica Police Chief Jim Tasa tells me: “The mission of the program is to increase traffic safety on the Peninsula in problem areas and intersections through saturated enforcement utilizing the combined resources of all agencies participating in the program. Participating

officers are detailed to problem locations in San Mateo County based on collision data, community complaints and expert law enforcement opinion. The expectation is that this collaborative monthly program will yield cities immediate and tangible solutions to traffic issues and make San Mateo County safer for motorists and pedestrians.”

WHAT’S YOUR STYLE, PART 2

(continued from last week) How do you learn to self-monitor? Here’s what researchers at Queendom.com advise:

- Say, “I understand.” This supports your goals if tension is high and you need to find common ground for compromises or agreements with others. You can disagree but still understand their point of view.

- Own your feelings. “You” phrases put the other person on the defensive. “I” phrases allow them to see things from your point of view.

- Take a timeout. It’s important to cool down when things make you angry. You will be more objective once you’ve calmed down and cleared your head. By taking a timeout (just like we do with children), you will avoid the impulse to snap or lash out at others.

- Observe human behavior. Pay attention to how others communicate. Sensitivity to others is a key element of self-monitoring.

- Get beyond black-and-white thinking. Be open-minded, change your way of looking at things, and focus on the best solution for each situation. Put empathy in action. Get involved in helping people, like volunteering for a service organization.

SWAMI SEZ

“The age of a woman doesn’t mean a thing. The best tunes are played on the oldest fiddles.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

WASTING AWAY IN MAYBURRITOVILLE

- Editor: goofbuster.com

- Blogger: pacificariptide.com

- Email: mayburrito@goofbuster.com