



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

LION COUNTRY

A mountain lion was sighted walking along a trail in San Pedro Valley County Park in Linda Mar on November 25 at 8 a.m., approximately two miles into the park. If you see a mountain lion, DO NOT APPROACH IT, especially one that is feeding or with offspring. Most mountain lions try to avoid confrontation with humans. Here are a few tips: Avoid hiking or jogging when mountain lions are most active—dawn, dusk, and at night. Keep a close watch on small children. If you encounter a mountain lion, do not run; instead, face the animal, make noise and try to look bigger by waving your arms and opening up your coat; throw rocks or other objects. (from a county alert by Joe Sheridan, Sheriff's Office, Montara; for more info on mountain lions, go to dfg.ca.gov/keepmewild/lion.html)

OCTOPUS WALK

A family visiting Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in Moss Beach recently videographed a red octopus crawling out of the ocean and scrabbling across the rocks apparently looking for food or friendship. The sea creature moved unsteadily on dry ground and seemed to collapse a couple of times but finally made its way back into the water. The family posted the video on the Internet and it has since gone viral.

ICE PLANT IRONY

"On a hike over Milagra Ridge, NPS rangers and hikers were surprised to discover that Oceana High School, which raises native plants for introduction into the wild, is planting ice plant as the finishing touch to an expansion of its athletic facilities. Ice plant, of course, is habitat to no wildlife but snails, and local volunteers have pulled tons of it so

native plants can reestablish. Looks like the people doing the construction didn't talk to the people who do the instruction." (Bill Collins)

OPEN RAIN OR SHINE

"Coastside Farmers' Market is open until December 21, in Pacifica on Wednesdays from 2:30 to 6 p.m. and in Half Moon Bay on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Swing by for the freshest possible flowers, seasonal fruits, and the most perfect veggies that you can find anywhere on this planet. Just in case you are on your way to a communal feast and stuck for an idea, do you have a notion of how great Sukhi's jalapeño chutney tastes on cornbread, or how lovely La Von's lavender-infused cranberry sauce can transform a tradition? Want to boast that your sweet potato dish is made from Farmer John's grown-on-the-coast sweet potatoes (and they said it couldn't be done!) and topped with homemade-in-Half-Moon-Bay marshmallows (for the traditionalist localvore), or with a sauté of shallots, toasted cumin, and spiked with tangerine for the daring? We are just plain full of holiday spirit and grateful to you, our market faithful, to our sponsors and hosts in both locations, and encourage y'all to consider the wonderful impact on the quality of your own life you are making every time you invest in and spend your money with the members of your community. It makes a huge difference, and one for which we are all deeply grateful. Thanks a bushel and a bunch." (Erin Tormey, founder and manager, coastsidefarmersmarket.org)

HOLIDAY WORKOUT

Join the Weed Warriors for fresh air and exercise, and help weed

San Bruno Mountain's south-slope grasslands critical to resident butterflies. Gloves provided. Wear long pants, layers, and sturdy shoes. Bring water. See mountainwatch.org for volunteer opportunities and special events. Work days are 4th Friday and 4th Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Volunteers welcome either day. For info, email lorettaandchuck@sbc-global.net or call 415-467-6631. Meet behind Mills Montessori School, 1400 Hillside Boulevard, South San Francisco.

NEW PACIFICA PARK

"Devil's Slide, one of the Bay Area's most notorious stretches of road, is on the verge of a family-friendly transformation. This landslide-prone section of Highway 1 that has claimed at least 12 lives in car crashes since 1990 will become a bicycle and pedestrian trail as early as 2013. Locals envision the new park as a jewel that will outshine virtually every other recreation spot on the Peninsula. With the completion of twin bypass tunnels in late 2012, Caltrans will hand over the treacherous ribbon of asphalt to the San Mateo County Parks Department, which will embark on a yearlong project to turn it into a park offering breathtaking views of the ocean and coastline. It's a once-a-generation addition to the county parks system...The park will have multiple draws for outdoors enthusiasts. It will provide a link between McNee Ranch State Park and Gray Whale Cove State Beach to the south and the Pedro Point Headlands to the north. The headlands, a rugged promontory on the southern boundary of Pacifica, will be accessible to the public as never before...Now, after decades of wrangling between Caltrans and environmentalists, years of planning, and one major construction delay, the bypass tunnels are scheduled to open late next year. Once that occurs, Caltrans and the country will begin a year's

worth of improvements to prepare the park for opening. Caltrans will build parking lots and bus stops on the northern and southern ends of the new trail, while the county will spend almost \$2 million preparing the trail itself. The concrete barriers on the western side of the road will stay, and they'll be topped with 4 feet of cable fencing that allows visitors to enjoy the coastal vistas, which on a clear day include the Farallon Islands. Barriers will be erected on the eastern side of the trail as well, along with cyclone fencing, to keep rocks that tumble off the bluffs from reaching the road. County workers will also fix potholes, build restrooms, eradicate non-native pampas grass that lines the cliff, and erect informational signs and kiosks...No one is happier about the opening of Devil's Slide park than the volunteers who have spent hundreds of hours restoring the Pedro Point Headlands to their natural state. The headlands, a sprawling mass of land that towers roughly 700 feet above the sea, are open to the public, but there's no easy way to get to them. With the installation of a parking lot and bus stop at the northern end of Devil's Slide, that will change." (Aaron Kinney, Bay Area News Group)

FOOD FOR FINES

Overdue library book or DVD? Clear your fine and help others by donating food to those in need during December in the Food for Fines program. Take any amount of non-perishable boxed or canned food to any San Mateo County Library branch (including Sanchez and Sharp Park) during business hours, and your library fines and fees will be waived. All collected food is donated to Second Harvest Food Bank. Last year, county libraries collected 30,759 pounds of food and cleared fines for 4,401 customers. Second Harvest Food Bank says 25 pounds of food feeds a family for a week. San Mateo County Supervi-

sor Carole Groom encourages everyone in the community—whether or not they owe fines—to donate food at the library to help people in need this holiday season.

ALANDROME

The recent Pacifica Tribune front-page story about GoGo, the snowy plover baby that was banded and fledged at Salinas National Wildlife Refuge, and that now makes her home on a Pacifica beach, has Pacifica palindrome lovers hoping she'll be lively and multiply: "Rev, ol' Pacifica plover." (Alan Wald)

BRODIES

Local musician and fellow Brink Pool swimmer K. says that when he and his friends were kids they spun their cars in 180s (donuts), which they called "brodies" in honor of 49ers star quarterback John Brodie (1957-1973), who famously would spin around 180 degrees after receiving the center, then run to the backfield to throw the ball.

SWAMI SEZ

"If you are truly serious about preparing your child for the future, don't teach him to subtract – teach him to deduct." (Fran Lebowitz)

SITeseer

- Help feed, house, and clothe homeless Pacificans: pacresourcecenter.org
- Birdwalk, Sunday, December 11 at 1 p.m. Meet in parking lot by south bathhouse and restrooms at Pacifica State Beach, Linda Mar: pacificashorebird.org
- Toxic algae blooms along Pacific coast: sfgate.com, November 27
- Support local food and farms: coastbites.com

MAYBURRITOVILLE

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