



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

Circle the Wagons

Thanks to Tribune writer Jean Bartlett for her story last week about New York real estate company Kimco jacking up rents at Linda Mar shopping center, which drove out popular Round Table Pizza. In recent times, Sam's Deli and Patty's Hallmark store suffered similar fates at Linda Mar. Jean provided Kimco contact info in her story, so I urge all Pacificans to protest Kimco's greedy gouging. The Tribune and Chamber of Commerce should help defend local businesses against predatory corporations. The health of Pacifica's economy depends on diversity, just as is true for our environment. We need to protect our own economic interests as fiercely as we protect our natural resources. There really is no dichotomy between our economy and our environment. They are interdependent. One cannot survive without the other.

Clarification: Compost Bags

Reading through Recology's new service guide (2012-2013), I noticed the instructions for organics say that compostable/biodegradable bags are not accepted. I was puzzled because since composting began last year, I have put kitchen scraps in brown paper bags before depositing them in the green compost bin. I emailed Recology's Chris Porter for clarification, and she promptly replied that regular brown paper bags are okay (along with greasy cardboard takeout containers, stained pizza boxes, and waxed milk cartons), but NO specially made so-called compostable/biodegradable bags, which Chris says contain plastic, rendering them UN-compostable. Perhaps the manufacturers and sellers of these "special" bags need a wakeup call!

Spoken Like a Real Columnist

"Every time I write a column about electoral politics, I am sure to get at least one letter saying 'your bias is showing' and excoriating me for said bias. But I'm a columnist. I'm supposed to have bias. My views on a wide

variety of matters are known, and I make every effort to argue my case forcefully, even using (dare I say it?) rhetorical devices to further my arguments. This is not illegal or unethical; it's my job description. I'm not here to argue that point (although the media sure did go along with the war on Iraq and the bank bailout, so they're not that liberal) (jeez, I seem to have just argued that point), but just to say that columnists and other opinion-mongers are supposed to have opinions, if only to give you something to write angry letters about. So what you call a hit piece on Mitt Romney I call an exploration of certain interesting facts. I'm not saying who's right or wrong; I'm just saying I'm supposed to have opinions. The newspaper reports stories objectively; I come in with a big stick and muddy the waters. It's honest work, I feel. Not only is everything on the Internet true, but I myself am a much younger man."

(Jon Carroll, San Francisco Chronicle, August 10)

Super Service Station

Once again, Dave & Lou's service station in Linda Mar proves it is more than just a gas station. They give you honest advice without any obligation to get the work done there. Example: I consulted Dave & Lou's about my 6-year-old car battery, and the test turned up positive: time to replace. I comparison-shopped on the Consumer Reports website (I subscribe to the print magazine and the online edition), got its Best Buy recommendation on Kirkland Signature (Costco), bought the new battery, then paid Dave & Lou's reasonable labor charge to mount the battery correctly. A win-win for everyone. Best of all: no waiting. They did the installation right on the spot. Please let me know about your positive consumer experiences in Pacifica. I would like to feature other local businesses that practice good customer service.

Student Park Stewards

Student Conservation Association (SCA) is a nationwide nonprofit workforce of college and high school volunteers who protect and restore parks, forests, refuges, seashores, and communities. The 50-year-old organization aims to continually develop the next generation of conservation leaders, inspire lifelong stewardship, and save the planet. Partnering over the past four summers with San Mateo County Parks to serve San Pedro Valley Park in Linda Mar and Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, SCA

has provided needed jobs to low-income youth. This summer, 16 Peninsula youth (ages 16-19) participated in the five-week program doing habitat restoration and trail maintenance for a \$1,000 stipend. They learned "green job" readiness, work ethics, money management, basic ecology, environmental justice, leadership, and teamwork. "I had one of the best experiences working outdoors through the program. The crew leaders were awesome. They guided us through many things such as teaching us how to use different types of tools, constructing trails, and learning about ecology and the environment. Every time I talk to my friends at school about the program, I get excited and it brings a smile to my face. I believe it's a great way to help communities and protect wildlife," says Abdulai Bangura, crew member at San Pedro Valley Park. Info: Student Conservation Association's Bay Area Programs, 510-832-1966 or www.thesca.org

Infantilization

"The dynamic that is set in motion when primal childhood is projected by one group onto another is infantilization. The group in the authority position projects its own unconscious primitivity and spiritual darkness onto another group that serves as a hook for this projection, and then insists that this group needs to be tamed, civilized, and reared from its childhood condition. This has been the thrust behind all white-supremacist forms of racism." (Michael Gellert, *The Evil of American Racism*)

Stones: Help Wanted

The Unauthorized Rolling Stones need a drummer, a video technician, and a sound engineer. Visit the bandleader's website at rudycolumbini.com.

Swami Sez

"The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

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