



## Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

### Remember the Alamo 1

The cold-blooded murder of a California Highway Patrol officer on a freeway in Alamo last week was a tragedy in every sense of the word. A decent civil servant lost his life. His family, friends, and colleagues lost an important person in their lives. Law enforcement lost one of its heroic peacekeepers. And finally, civil society lost one of its guardians. In a senseless killing like this, everyone loses. Everyone is a victim of the deranged motorist who fired his Glock point-blank into the head of the uniformed highway patrolman who was there to protect and to serve the public. Every time something like this happens, we all slip a little deeper into chaos and anarchy. Cops feel more vulnerable, less trusting, more anxious in their encounters with the public. And the public now senses danger and feels a little less secure during traffic stops. Law officers should not have to fear civilians. We don't want them nervously unsnapping their holsters when they walk up to our cars. We don't want them to think the worst when they approach us. And it's a two-way street. If you get pulled over, keep your hands in plain view on top of the steering wheel. Do not leap out of your car to confront the officer. Remain calm and cooperative. The lack of trust on both sides can erode the sense of security that all of us, including police officers, should be able to feel as we go about our daily lives. The deadly freeway attack last week was an attack on society as a whole. So let's all do what we can to make life safe and sane for civilians and those who wear the badge.

### Baseball Brainstorm

Oakland Athletics pitcher Brandon McCarthy suffered a skull fracture and possible brain damage last week in a game at the Coliseum when he was hit in the head by a line drive. Fortunately, he is slowly recovering after surgery, but it was a frightening moment. I got to wondering why

equipment manufacturers could not design a hat or helmet that would protect pitchers' heads without hindering their pitching. With the strong, lightweight materials now available, it seems like a literal no-brainer to come up with a comfortable skullcap for pitchers. It doesn't have to be a clunky helmet like batters wear. Any ideas out there, inventors? Put your thinking caps on.

### Underwear Run

When I attended UC Santa Barbara in the Sixties, it was known as a party school, but the serious business of academics and activism kept many of us occupied during our time there. Now I think my alma mater has returned to its frivolous roots. I just watched a video widely available on the Internet of students staging an "underwear run" around campus. Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose.

### Worst-Case Scenario

Surviving yet another fireworks summer season in Pacifica, most peace-loving citizens say to themselves (because it is seen as uncivilized to say it out loud) that it would take a fatality or major injury to get fireworks outlawed. So once again next July Fourth (and several weeks before and after), the big explosions will rock the casbah, and we will hope nobody gets blown up.

### Widening Debate

More than 200 suggestions flowed in from the public to Caltrans/SMCTA during the public comment period on the proposed widening of Highway 1, but all those ideas have been given short shrift at the transportation agencies. I have posted some of the alternatives and discussions about them on my Pacifica Riptide blog, but now a group of citizens has formed to fight the highway widening and look for constructive alternatives. If you want to get involved, email Pacificans for Highway 1 Alternatives at PHWY1A@gmail.com and visit "Pacificans for Highway 1 Alternatives" on Facebook.

### Follow the Money

Find out who controls the purse strings in local, state, and national politics. Visit followthemoney.org and search for your locale.

### Siteseer

Front-page photo in the Kuwait Times of "Pacifica farmer's market" organic radishes: kuwaittimes.net, September 4. (Chris Fogel spotted this)

### Swami Sez

"The bigger they are, the harder they fall." ("Ruby Roberts" Fitzsimmons, world heavyweight champion boxer, 1902)

### Image Search

Did you know you can search photos and drawings on Google, entering either a verbal description of the image or an actual image to match? Just click Images at the top of the Google search page and give it a try.

### Your Inner Editor

Do you have an eagle eye? Do you correct your relatives, friends, and colleagues when they mangle the English language? This three-hour class is about making a living as a copyeditor and proofreader. It offers career tips and lively discussion about the tools of the trade. Instructor John Maybury is an experienced editor, writer, blogger, and newspaper columnist, working in the Bay Area since the days of typewriters and carbon paper. See John's work online at Goofbuster.com and PacificaRiptide.com. Get information and sign up for classes: Saturday, February 15 from 1 to 4 p.m., College of San Mateo, Community Education, 650-574-6149, email communityed@smccd.edu, communityed.smccd.edu; Tuesday, September 18 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., City College of San Francisco, Mission District Campus, Continuing Education, Kirk Stoller and Don Seyasu, 415-561-1840/1860, ccsf.edu/continued; Saturday, September 29 from 1 to 4 p.m., De Anza College, Community Education, Michael Heggglund, 408-864-8817, communityeducation.fhda.edu

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