



# Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

## NORCAL EXPLORER

We rail fans (aka train buffs and rail heads) love nothing more than riding in heritage equipment over rare-mileage routes. So it was no surprise that 600 enthusiasts from all over the country signed up to take the Northern California Explorer around northeast California, June 3-5. In vintage dome cars and "ancient" Amtrak Amfleet coaches, we left the Bay Area and went up the Feather River Canyon (40 years since the last regularly scheduled passenger train ran there), then along the High-Line-Inside Gateway (freight only for the past 60 years), and finally back home on the Shasta route in broad daylight (a rare treat, since Amtrak service northbound and southbound on this line is at night only, missing all the incredible scenery). Along the way, we stayed overnight in hotels at Oroville and Klamath Falls so that all our travel would be in daylight. All the rivers, creeks, lakes, and ponds we saw on the trip were filled to overflowing. Mount Shasta was covered with snow down to the 5,000-foot level. Everywhere we went was green, dotted with wildflowers and teeming with wildlife (deer, antelope, egrets, freshwater pelicans, hawks, eagles, and ducks). I rode in a comfortable Horizon lounge car (leather upholstery) amid a small group of railroaders, including a retired train conductor, a locomotive engineer deadheading home, a joyriding railroad dispatcher, and a knowledgeable railroad blogger, Chris Guenzler, who has traveled more than a million miles on Amtrak, chronicling his adventures on sites such as Train Web and Train Orders. I enjoyed their fascinating railroad shoptalk

and war stories while gazing out the window at the passing wonders of nature. Trains and Travel International ([traintrips.biz](http://traintrips.biz)) organized this excursion in conjunction with the Central Coast Railroad Club. I have included here in the column some of Chris' photos from the trip, but to see them in living color, check out my post on Pacifica Riptide: "Northern California Explorer: Heritage Train Trip and Rare Mileage Through Unspoiled Wilderness."

## BARK FOR YOUR PARK

Pacifica has been selected as one of 25 semifinalists in the PetSafe Bark for Your Park \$100K contest. The next step for Pacifica is to submit a two-minute video (by July 6) highlighting the resources, impact, and enthusiasm for a dog park in Pacifica. The 25 semifinalist videos will be judged by a panel that will select just 15 cities as finalists. The 15 finalist videos will then be posted on the [barkforyourpark](http://barkforyourpark.com) website and Facebook page, and the winner will be based on public voting (much like the first phase, where we earned our spot as a semifinalist). We don't have much time to pull this video together and we need to get as many smart, savvy, creative, Pacifica-loving and dog-loving volunteers together as we can to develop a video that truly showcases our city's collective desire for a dog park. This project has the full support of POOCH and the support of our mayor, city planner, and the director of PB&R, among other fabulous people, so we are off to a great start. Where we need help is with creating the video itself. Do you know anyone who would be interested in helping with this

project? Obviously, it's time-sensitive and it's a volunteer project. Any help or suggestions would be greatly appreciated. (Jana, Beverly, and Marisa; Pacifica Organization of Canine Helpers [POOCH], 415-425-0857, 501c3 nonprofit, website: [www.PacificaPooch.com](http://www.PacificaPooch.com), email: [pacificapooch@yahoo.com](mailto:pacificapooch@yahoo.com))

## DRIVE, HE SAID

Brad Keselowski won the Sprint Cup race June 5 at Kansas Speedway by stretching his fuel mileage, beating Dale Earnhardt, Jr., who ran out of gas before the finish line. Keselowski said, "There are some secrets to it and I just maximized them all. I had plenty (of fuel) left." Maybe we all could learn his secrets and help save gas, money, and the environment.

## WELCOME TO EMIL

Emil Lehan just moved to Pacifica last September and started reading the Pacifica Tribune. Recently, he stopped by the newspaper office to take out a subscription. He said his favorite part of the paper is this humble column of mine. Cool! Welcome, Emil, and thanks. You are my new favorite reader.

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

"For the Souls and Soils of India" by Helen C. Maybury (buy the book or the download on Amazon.com)

## SWAMI SEZ

"Nobody goes there anymore because it's too crowded." (Yogi Berra)

## SITSEER

■ Pacifican Tim Brand's video of raptor Shikra working security at Half Moon Bay Airport: [vimeo.com/23762963](http://vimeo.com/23762963) or [evanflys.com](http://evanflys.com)  
■ Tell Assemblyman Jerry Hill to support Styrofoam ban: [environmentalcalifornia.org](http://environmentalcalifornia.org)

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