



## Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

### HARDLY STRICTLY PACIFICA

Janet Taylor likes to explore San Pedro Valley Park. She recently met local comedian Jim Giovanni (aka Seamus Kearney) while walking in the park, and he told her about his original protest song video posted on YouTube (search youtube.com for “We’re the 99ers”). You never know whom you will meet in the park, and if people aren’t your thing, there are often deer, bobcats, coyotes, hawks, and owls to enjoy.

### PARCHED AND PREOCCUPIED

The whole state of California looks and feels dry right now. On a drive through the Central Valley this week, I see nothing but brown hillsides. Where I am used to seeing green in January, there is nothing but beige. I pass by an almond ranch where the nut trees look dead. I see cows eating stubble. Mountain ranges to the east and south have no winter snowcaps. It’s not fire season yet, and there is no

smoke, but the air smells like something is burning. I wonder if this is a further sign of climate change that will be more and more common in years to come. Yet new housing developments and shopping centers keep springing up all along the freeways crisscrossing the state. Nobody seems to care. Nobody gets it. If we keep going like this, we are going to kill the California dream. Then all we’ll have left is the California nightmare. So pray for rain and think hard about where we are headed.

### OVERPASS FEEDBACK

Tom Ferro emails: “Just read today’s column and have to agree with Mr. Barber about the old 380 overpass. I’ve been thinking about it for quite a few weeks now and it seems to make good sense. The berm will have to be wider, but you’ll also have to dig into the cut to the north, so there’s your supply of dirt. You can either bring the overpass back down before the location where the pipeline feeds the sewer plant or bring it all the way out to Mori Point Road. There’s room for southbound on/off ramps on the treatment plant side, but the parking lot will need to be moved, which is no problem because it can take over some of the old highway. Northbound on/off ramps can just use the existing highway. The rest of the road can be a frontage road for the buildings from Harvey Road north. Minimal disruptions of traffic, although the southbound Highway 1 slow lane would have to be blocked off for earth-moving equipment to cut into the hillside. If it’s

done in the first part of the day, it would have little effect on traffic. If they widen the road to six total lanes, they’ll have to carve into the Vallemar cut anyway, and I still can’t figure out where the space for six lanes is going to come from on the south end, especially now that the impending Surfspot restaurant is pretty close to the highway. Plus, Boston Bill’s cheesesteak and chowder house spent all that money to open up. I’d hate to see Caltrans screw the owner. There’s probably something I didn’t think of that makes this impractical, but it sure seems like an idea worth considering.”

### SWAMI SEZ

If you come into contact with poison oak or poison ivy, within two hours you can wash the affected area with liquid dish soap to prevent the itchy, red rash and lessen the aftereffects. (Arkansas dermatologist Adam Stibich used medical student volunteers in an experiment to prove his hypothesis. Liquid dish soap prevented a skin reaction in about half of the group, and reduced inflammation in the rest by 56 percent. This is according to the AARP Bulletin, November 2011.)

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