



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

Murder of Crows

Animal groups have some pretty weird names, like a murder of crows. Check out the list at thealmightyguru.com/Pointless/AnimalGroups.html. Don't miss the really funny one on the bottom line. And faithful Wandering & Wondering reader Jeff Bagshaw suggests "a slick of teabaggers."

Contradictanym

Bolt the door; bolt for the exit. Flog a horse; flog the merchandise. Garnish a dish; garnish your wages. Buckle a belt; buildings buckle in a quake. Screen a film; screen someone out. The stars come out tonight; the lights went out. Observe a traditional custom; wear a custom-tailored suit. Regret the oversight; an overseer has oversight on a job. Fix the gate; fix the horse race. Got more? Email them to the address at the end of the column. (Source: Ben Schott, miscellanies.info.)

Coyote Standoff

Scott and Patty McKellar's puppy encountered a young coyote in the McKellars' Linda Mar hillside yard. The canids were nose to nose, separated only by a cyclone fence. Patty intervened and got the puppy indoors before things went sideways.

PB2

Recently I told you about PB2, the defatted peanut butter powder. Niki Wise wrote to remind me that the oil in peanut butter is a beneficial monounsaturated fat that raises good cholesterol (HDL) and has other health benefits, as long as it is eaten in moderation (it's high in calories).

Light at the End of the Tunnel

I keep hearing good news about the Devil's Slide Tunnels opening earlier than scheduled (maybe this summer), and the possibility of a pedestrian stroll through the tubes before they open to vehicular traffic. The Little Birdie tweets that discussions are under way, so stay tuned.

Coastside Strummers Ukulele Band

"The Coastside Strummers, Pacifica's own ukulele group, has an informal jam on the second Sunday of every month from 1 to 2 p.m. at Linda Mar Beach. Julie W. Jones and Laura Siegel are participants. It's an afternoon of great music not to be missed." (Tom Sullivan)

Capital Idea

"With regard to your idea to move a government agency into Rockaway Quarry, I think it would have to be a state agency. Pacifica is way too far to the left of the country to get bipartisan support for a federal agency. But your idea gave me a thought the other day while I was swimming at Brink pool: Move Washington to the center of the country. It would be a great opportunity to start from scratch with an entirely new Congress. With serious campaign reform, i.e., elimination of unlimited political contributions and reversal of the recent Supreme Court decision in Citizens United, our representatives could actually make decisions based on what they think their constituents want rather than what their contributors have paid for — in other words, a democracy rather than the current plutocracy. And think of the money that would be generated if Washington were turned into a giant museum." (Cedric Collett)

Alandrome: Double Feature

Pacifica palindromist Alan Wald presents his latest two creations:

- Wal-Mart de Mexico executives are rumored to have bribed Mexican officials for a federal mandate requiring local municipalities to provide free streetcar service to all

Wal-Marts direct from the nearest downtown shopping area. As Pacifica palindrome lovers would tell it: "Wal-Mart asks a Tram Law."

- The recent discovery of California's first reported case of so-called mad cow disease can be traced to an inept farmhand who fed his herd contaminated hay. Pacifica palindrome lovers demand: "Feeble baler -- relabel beef!"

Siteseer

- Soundtracks and film scores: listentoamovie.com
- Summer internships in Bay Area mass transit: mtc.ca.gov
- Free museum, zoo, and aquarium passes: discover.smcl.org
- See which way the wind blows: hint.fm/wind/

Wonky Wisdom

"The big challenge for any retailer is to make sure that the people coming into the store actually buy stuff, and research suggests that not scrimping on payroll is crucial...stinting on employees doesn't actually save you money. It just gets you less for less." (James Surowiecki, "The More the Merrier," *The New Yorker*, 3/26/12) This article says that smart employers like Trader Joe's and Costco have profited by taking good care of their employees and customers, while clueless companies like Circuit City (gone!) and Home Depot that slash jobs and services lose money in the long run. Duh!

Swami Sez

"Read over your compositions, and where ever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out." (Samuel Johnson)

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