

Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

WE CLEAN UP NICE

On Coastal Cleanup Day, September 17, IBL students teamed up with parents and volunteers from the neighborhood to clean up every street in West Sharp Park, from Paloma to Clarendon, and from Beach Boulevard to Francisco (see photo from Lynn Adams, Pacifica Beach Coalition).

BEAUTIFUL & WILD

"This is my friend Mike (see photo) with his dive gear, picking up the pieces after getting rolled on the pass-through at Pedro Point. It can be a tricky maneuver getting through there, especially coming back from Devil's Slide. It shot me through, but when Mike came behind me with his tank and stuff, the wave turned him sideways, and the next one rolled him, and he got pinned under the boat against the rocks for a good half-minute. He was out by the time I dragged my kayak onto the rocks, but his boat was half-filled with water. It's a beautiful and wild place, and it's right here at home!" (Richard Shafer, posted on Pacifica Riptide)

CODE BLOOD

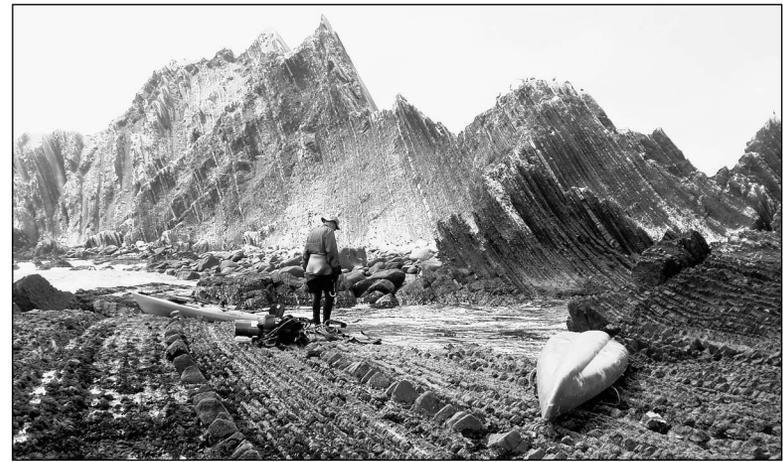
Kurt Kamm's new firefighter mystery novel "Code Blood" is now available. For a limited time, you can buy the book directly at kurtkamm.com at a reduced price. It will go on sale on Amazon and in bookstores October

20: paperback \$9.99 (signed copy); Kindle, Nook, iPad e-book downloads \$5.99 (signed postcard of the cover). The story according to Kurt: "Colt Lewis is a rookie fire paramedic, worried about his skills and obsessed with finding the severed foot of his first victim after she dies in his arms. His search takes him on a wild trip into the interconnected lives of a research student with the rarest blood type in the world and the fetishist who is stalking her. In the corridors of medical research laboratories, the shadowy underworld of body parts dealers, and underground Goth clubs of Los Angeles, Colt uncovers a tangled maze of needles, drugs, and ritual, all of which lead to death. But whose death?"

SENIOR SCAMS

A new phone scam targets vulnerable seniors. The caller poses as a representative of the local court system and warns the senior of a warrant that has been issued for his or her arrest for failure to report to jury duty. The representative offers to find a way to cancel the warrant if only the law-abiding citizen provides his/her complete name, Social Security number, and date of birth. The representative confirms that a follow-up call will be made to cancel the warrant. That call is never made. The identity thief is on his/her way to cashing in on the personal

information collected. In California, more than 38,148 residents filed complaints of identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in 2010, according to the Consumer Sentinel Network Report published in March 2011. The same report showed that 38 percent of all identity fraud complaints filed with FTC in 2010 were from consumers 50 years and older. "Seniors can be prime targets by identity thieves and scam artists," said Mike Prusinski, senior vice president of corporate communications with LifeLock (lifelock.com), the industry leader in proactive identity theft protection. "Often a more trusting generation, seniors are more likely to trust someone who contacts them directly, posing as a representative of their health care provider, government agency, or financial institution. These fraudsters use a false representation to gather the personal information – often a Social Security number – from the unassuming consumer." Considering advances in technology, criminals no longer solely on the telephone as a way to dupe unsuspecting consumers from handing over their personal information. Email and text messages have surfaced as the latest platforms used by identity thieves. "Always remember to never hand over personal information from unsolicited phone calls, emails, or text messages," said Prusinski. "Create a habit of deleting or hanging up, then looking up a trusted phone number to contact the agency that was 'supposedly' reaching out to you. More often than not you will find the original contact was fraudulent." Once an identity thief has pieces of your personal information, the damage that can be done is limitless. Identity theft is far greater than just credit card fraud, which ac-



counts for only 15 percent of the total identity theft complaints filed with FTC in 2010. Know someone who has already fallen victim to a scam? Let him/her know that the National Crime Prevention Council (nccp.org) offers resources to help victims of identity theft and fraud.

SWAMI SEZ

"As a writer, I need an enormous amount of time alone. Writing is 90 percent procrastination: reading magazines, eating cereal out of the box, watching infomercials. It's a matter of doing everything

you can to avoid writing, until it is about 4 in the morning and you reach the point where you have to write. Having anybody watching that or attempting to share it with me would be grisly." (Paul Rudnick)

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