

TRAIL MANNERS

Pacifica trailblazer Jim Sullivan shares these guidelines based on input from equestrians (horse riders), cyclists, runners, hikers, and dog walkers. Jim says that shared (mixed-use) trail etiquette can ensure a pleasant time for all:

1. Equestrians have trail right-of-way at all times. All others should slow down, stop, and ask calmly if it's okay to proceed. If in doubt, err on the side of caution. Thorough horse training is imperative when using mixed-use trails. Well-trained, socialized horses are much less inclined to spook, whatever the situation. When coming to a single track, equestrians should look ahead for hikers/runners/cyclists and wait for them to clear the trail before proceeding. When riding downhill, equestrians should yield right-of-way to mountain bikes coming uphill.
2. Hikers/runners/cyclists who encounter an equestrian on a single-track trail should stay on the lower side of the trail and avoid standing on the upper side as this may spook the horse.
3. Headphone/earbud users should keep one ear open at all times. Hearing runners' or cyclists' courteous warning voices or bike bells is important to avoid startled surprises.
4. Cyclists should anticipate meeting equestrians, hikers, or runners around every turn. Slow down; skids are for kids.
5. Dog walkers should control their dogs on the trail, picking up and properly disposing of waste.
6. See trash on the trail? Pick it up and dispose of it at the trailhead trashcan, or report it if it's a large amount of trash.
7. For medical or other emergencies, call 911. For non-emergencies, call San Mateo County Sheriff at (650) 363-4911 or Pacifica Police at (650) 738-7311.

GOT GERMS?

"AARP Bulletin" (January-February 2018) warns grocery shoppers about food safety problems in supermarkets. One health risk is tongs and utensils at the salad bar and hot-food bar. Use hand sanitizer or a napkin to avoid other people's germs. Another danger is the roll of plastic bags for produce. Many

people lick their fingers to get plastic bags off the roll and then handle the produce. So use hand sanitizer and at home, wash your hands and your produce, even organics, which can be just as germy as nonorganic. I will share more of these tips in future columns.

FIRESTARTERS

“Researchers have spotted black kites, whistling kites, and brown falcons all intentionally setting fires. And (surprise, surprise) all three are from the land of the deadliest wildlife on the planet: Australia. What happens is that any time a fire sparks in the plains or forests, the birds (collectively known as ‘firehawk raptors’) will gather to snag a burning branch or stick. They’ll then fly up to an area where the fire has not yet spread, and drop their payload.” (Curiosity.com)

COYOTE SERENADE

On the deck of his Linda Mar Heights home, Scott McKellar plays recorded coyote howls at full volume, which gets local vocal coyotes to shut up.

GRAMMARJAMMER

Q: What should you say to comfort a grammar nazi? A: “There, their, they’re.” (Tatiana Ayazo)

SWAMI SEZ

“You are never too old to learn something stupid.” (Swami Umami)

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