

PHONE SCAMS

Aggressive and nasty con artists calling your cell phone day and night threatening to take legal action against you for not paying back taxes? Yes, it is happening with frightening regularity all over the country. These bad actors claim to be from the IRS, but know this: The IRS does NOT call people to collect taxes; it always begins by writing you a personal letter. So when these scammers call, just hang up. If it makes you feel better, you can vent at them, curse, scream, threaten to report them. But you should really spare yourself the aggravation and blood pressure spikes, and hang up the phone. And if you have elderly or frail or easily intimidated friends or family who might be susceptible to this sort of browbeating, warn them that these calls are scams.

BAD BUGS, GOOD BUGS

In my last column, I told you about a January-February 2018 AARP Bulletin article ("How Safe Is Your Supermarket?") warning of places in grocery stores that harbor germs (salad bar scoops and tongs, plastic bag rolls in the produce section). I advised you to use hand sanitizer and caution. Some other germy areas are the deli meat and cheese slicers, shoppers dipping utensils and even fingers in the dressings and condiments at the salad bar, wilted greens, ALL raw sprouts, fish and meat not kept at correct temperature, teriyaki marinade used to cover up spoiled meat or fish, the smell of ammonia being used to cover up spoilage. It's probably wise to be aware of these health risks in stores, and to take reasonable, necessary precautions. But as my reader Dan Gerson pointed out to me, "I think there is a level of consciousness that is approaching hysteria about germs in our environment. I refer you to the New Yorker article (October 22, 2012) "Germs Are Us" by Michael Specter." I read Specter's piece online and it gave me much food for thought. I strongly recommend you google it.

DAN'S MOTEL

Pacifica filmmaker/sculptor Jerry Barrish's noir classic "Dan's Motel" screens Saturday, April 14, at Odd Fellows Hall in Half Moon Bay. Barrish will be on hand to discuss his work. The film was shot on location in Moss Beach at the long-gone Dan's Motel.

FREE LUNCH

For the past 30 years, Pastor Steve Cosgrove has cooked a free lunch every Monday at Pacifica Baptist Church for his homeless, senior, and low-income guests. Reverend Cosgrove was profiled recently on CBS News (KPIX TV 5).

TOPPING OUT

Developer Don Peebles is building the \$1.2 billion Angels Landing complex in Los Angeles, including one of the tallest high-rises on the West Coast. Many Pacificans remember Don's unsuccessful attempt to build hundreds of houses in Rockaway Quarry a few years ago.

GRAMMARJAMMER

When I was a kid, my teacher looked my way and said, "Name two pronouns." I said, "Who, me?" (Tatiana Ayazo)

SWAMI SEZ

"I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness." (Swami Umami)

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