



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

HELP A HORSE DAY

Equine rescues, sanctuaries, and animal shelters across the nation soon will celebrate ASPCA Help a Horse Day. Double J Ranch, a shelter in Montara, hosts an open house on Saturday, April 25 at 1 p.m. Reserve a spot by calling Joe Sarasua at 650-451-6424 or email backahorse@hotmail.com. Learn more about the ranch at supportahorse.org. Sarasua supports rescue efforts through fundraising to help abandoned, neglected, and abused horses.

I SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM

Jean Headley Darmody, your hardworking Tribune proofreader, likes ice cream at least as much as I do, and has taken to the “pages” of PacificaRiptide.com to propose a Dairy Queen, Foster’s Freeze, or other soft-serve ice cream stand for Pacifica. Sonic, anyone? A Riptide reader suggests the site of the former Denny’s. (Coincidentally, the city is polling residents about replacements for Denny’s, and a rumor floating around town has Fresh&Easy becoming Wild Oats.)

PET POISON

The 10 most common poisonous plants for household pets are marijuana, sago palm, lilies, tulip (narcissus) bulbs, azalea (rhododendron), oleander, castor beans, cyclamen, kalanchoe, and yew. (Source: American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, aspc.org)

SANDHILL CRANE COUNTRY

The 50,000-acre Cosumnes River Preserve and its prehistoric-looking sandhill cranes evoke another time, when the Central Valley was a marshy, verdant basin teeming with wildlife. The preserve is still a quiet oasis in the middle of a region rapidly morphing from peaceful farmland into stucco suburbia. Kayak-accessible waterways and 11 miles of footpaths make the refuge an enjoyable escape for ur-

banites looking for connections to nature and California’s past. V-formations of cranes crisscross the refuge at different times of day, but the best times to see the 3-foot-long, red-headed birds are sunrise and sunset. The preserve also is home to more than 200 species of ducks, geese, and other birds, plus 40 fish species, that enjoy the shaded areas or open ponds created by the only free-running, undammed river on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. The preserve is dotted with endangered California oak trees, the last vestiges of the Golden State’s ancient heritage. (Sources: cosumnes.org, dfw.ca.gov)

SWEET SOUNDS

Donald Kroodsma’s book “The Singing Life of Birds: The Art and Science of Listening to Birdsong” is based on his years of biking America’s backroads with recording equipment strapped on his back. A retired biology professor at the University of Massachusetts, Kroodsma’s work on birdsong is legendary. His book won the 2006 John Burroughs Medal Award and the American Birding Association’s Robert Ridgway Distinguished Service Award for excellence in publications on field ornithology. In 2003 the American Ornithologists’ Union called him the “reigning authority on the biology of avian vocal behavior.” Kroodsma received his Ph.D. at Oregon State University. He is a Fellow of the American Ornithologists’ Union and the Animal Behavior Society, and has published hundreds of academic and popular articles. (Source: Houghton Mifflin Company, publisher)

SWAMI SEZ

“The world may be only an illusion, but it’s the only illusion we’ve got.” (Edward Abbey)

MAYBURRITOVILLE

Blog: PacificaRiptide.com

Email: Mayburrito@Goofbuster.com