

KEEPING UP WITH THE CHANGES

“When my mom first got email, she always used all-caps. It made sense—this is the woman who sent an actual telegram to my dorm room in college when I had gone a few weeks without calling. (None of us had ever seen one before.) When I suggest apps to her, she tells me that her iPad has only Scrabble and Netflix on it, as if that is all it could ever do. She’ll never change. But some institutions can, and do. The Associated Press announced recently that it will finally stop capitalizing ‘Internet,’ reducing the cringe level of the English-using world by about 30 percent. And this week the National Weather Service tells us that it will ‘stop shouting’—i.e., issuing weather dispatches and warnings in all-caps. No more HIGH SURF ADVISORY IN EFFECT, just a more measured ‘High Surf Advisory in Effect.’ It will still use all uppercase when a threat is imminent, or for advisories with international implications, but for the most part, expect your forecasts to be less panic-inducing and more conversational. So if these big institutions can change the ways that they talk about the Internet and the way that they behave on it, why does it seem so hard for individuals to do the same thing? I don’t just mean my mom. Are there times when trolls become decent conversationalists? Could a constant self-promoter ever stop and read what others have to say? I wonder. I’d like to be hopeful. But for now my forecast is no.” (blogger Mikki Halpin on Fusion.net, April 13; lightly edited for clarity by goofbuster.com)

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

Pacifica palindrome lovers have nothing against Rockaway Quarry -- just its development: "Anti Pacifica pit? Na!" (See Alan Wald's other Alandromes on PacificaRiptide.com.)

IS THERE "LIFE" ONLINE?

The San Francisco Chronicle "Insight" section (April 17) carried two great articles you should dig out of the Chronicle/SFGate.com archives: "Narcissism: In public, we're all preoccupied with ourselves" and "Social Media: Confessions of a troll." Both articles explore the dark side of smartphone addiction, selfies, Internet trolls, and other media obsessions.

MOW NO MO'

Being a good droughtbuster, I took out my front lawn two years ago and replaced the thirsty grass with drought-tolerant native plants. Good for me! But for those lazy lawn-lovers among you, I bring good news: quiet(er) electric robot lawnmowers, similar to the Roomba. Check out these models: Robomow (robomow.com), Husqvarna Automower (husqvarna.com), and Worx Landroid (worx.com). These will set you back a grand or two, but no doubt the price will come down as the technology advances. Plus, no gas fumes!

FROM MY INBOX

"Dear Mayburrito: Still collecting Pacifica uses? I just

finished a novel by Brian Doyle titled 'The Plover' that uses it extensively. No mention of the town or statue, but a good read all the same. Please excuse my grammar and/or typos. It's a Sunday, it's sunny and too beautiful to care." (Nancy Heiser)

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