

USA! USA!

Two factors led to Team USA swimmers winning so many gold medals in the recent Rio Olympics: human evolution and pool technology. According to media reports I followed on this topic (I care because I swim, just not very fast, alas!), smart trainers and coaches have taught their swimmers to adopt more natural strokes and kicks (think streamlined dolphins), leading to faster times in the water. They say it's more about technique and flexibility than about strength and power. Whereas records in other fields like track have not risen much, swimmers have been breaking records in all events. The other major factor in Americans' Olympic victories was improved water pumping and filtering systems, which calmed the waves and turbulence that racers produce. Okay, I am pumped and ready for Tokyo 2020!

CHILL, BUT GO EASY

People respond rapidly to stress, but it can take 20 to 60 minutes to return to a relaxed state. This is why psychologists say it doesn't help to tell someone to relax. Also, trying to suppress or hide your emotions doesn't work, and can actually backfire, raising your stress level. One stressbuster alternative is to acknowledge the upset person's feelings, show empathy, ask open-ended questions, and suggest a timeout or break. (Source: "Don't You Tell Me to Relax," Wall Street Journal, August 17; Wendy Mendes, UC San Francisco professor of emotion)

MILLION-DOLLAR SHACK

"Did you see the Pacifica Tribune real estate ad for a 680-

square-foot, one-bedroom, one-bathroom Pedro Point shack with a great view for \$1.5 million? I can only wonder what they are smoking.” (Scott McKellar)

CONTAGIOUS YAWNING

According to scientists at a leading Midwestern university, contagious yawning is caused by the same part of the brain that produces feelings of empathy. It’s a form of bonding similar to sharing gossip and grooming behavior. We really are not that different from our tree-dwelling primate “cousins.”

MIDPEN HOUSING SCHEMES

Once again, MidPen Housing has written an open letter to the Coastside inviting feedback on MidPen’s plan to stick 80 units of low-income housing in the back of semirural Moss Beach. In doing so, MidPen totally ignores Coastsideers who have said repeatedly in print and in person that this development is a good idea in a bad location. Everyone out here in Fogland is concerned about increased traffic on Highway 1. So-called “affordable housing” should be on an appropriate site close to jobs, shops, and transportation. Moss Beach is NOT that site. MidPen says it “is committed to a transparent and productive community engagement process, welcomes community input, and looks forward to continuing collaboration with the community.” Hogwash! All three MidPen open houses focused on various housing “schemes” (strange choice of words), whereas most locals oppose all such “schemes.” MidPen (midpenhousing.org/moss-beach) ignores the

community's "NO" vote. It just keeps harping on the three "schemes" as if those were the only options available. This artful framing of the conversation is intended to deny reality. (Remember how voting was done in the Soviet Union?)

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

The Lucky Boys teen rock band did a benefit concert last week at Winters Tavern in Pacifica to help raise funds for Clayton Fire victims. The 14-year-old rockers, all freshmen at Capuchino High School in San Bruno, are lead vocalist and drummer Justice James, bassist Anthony Denny, and guitarist Matt Stenson. The event raised some \$1,200, and a GoFundMe drive has raised more than \$5,000, for the Wilsey family, which lost its home in the Clayton Fire. (Source: Rachel Ibanez, KTVU)

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