



Wandering & Wondering

John Maybury

CONGRATULATIONS

Environmentalist City Council candidates Sue Digre and John Keener won handily November 4 by openly opposing highway widening, a wakeup call to Caltrans, SMCTA, and other widening proponents.

DEER IN HEADLIGHTS

With the change in seasons, there are more motor vehicle collisions with deer, especially along Interstate 280, coastal roads, and Skyline Boulevard. Exercise extra caution and drive defensively to help reduce your chances of colliding with a deer. (San Mateo County Emergency Services)

PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Work to improve the health and safety of the cypress grove at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve has begun. Fitzgerald is a San Mateo County Park. The project biologist will inspect individual trees to determine if bats are present. Tree work will proceed if a tree is found not to contain roosting bats. Work will not begin if the biologist observes bats that have gone into hibernation or if hibernation is anticipated. In this case, tree work will be rescheduled in spring 2015. Surveys will be conducted of other sensitive species known to be in the grove to ensure that protective steps are taken during the work. Approximately 1,068 trees, mostly cypress, comprise the grove. Thirty-four trees are dead and will be removed. Another 56 trees will be trimmed. Trails will be closed during tree work as needed. Trail closures are posted at trailheads and SMCOParks.org.

NORWEGIAN WOODS

Reindeer, sheep, and other grazing animals in Norway show a fivefold increase in levels of the radioactive isotope cesium-137 left over from the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. Scientists believe the cesium comes from this year's bumper crop of mushrooms that the animals eat. (Earthweek)

SUSTAINABLE FIREWOOD

"Fireplace logs are indeed better than wood ones because they're made of wood waste (sawdust), and they burn a lot cleaner. Also, they spare dead wood that hosts critters vital to the sylvan food web. Also, real wood can contain pests like gypsy moths and emerald ash borers that devastate living trees. Before stoking up any fire, make sure that it's legal and that conditions aren't too dry or dangerous. Never burn trash or food (including the artificial log wrapper)—it can be toxic or fail to combust completely. And make sure your fire is truly out by dousing it with water until the ashes are cool to the touch." (Mr. Green, Sierra Club)

SWAMI SEZ

"Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm."

SPEAKING OF DEPRESSION

Growing use of antidepressants worldwide appears to harm birds. A British study of starlings that feed on worms found near a sewage treatment plant tested the birds and discovered the drug Prozac in their systems. The starlings lost interest in feeding and mating. (Earthweek)

BLOG SEEKS CARTOONISTS

Coastside blog PacificaRiptide.com is looking for brilliant, funny cartoonists to liven things up with a little satire and humor. Do you have what it takes? If so, sharpen your pencil and get busy drawing. Riptide does not pay, but getting your work online could lead to other kinds of rewards. Email me at the address below.

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