

## Wandering and Wondering

By John Maybury *Pacifica Tribune San Jose Mercury News*

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### GOOD NEIGHBORS ARE HARD TO FIND

My L.A. friend Mikey was pleasantly surprised last week when his twentysomething neighbor dropped by and warned that he was throwing a New Year's Eve party. The young man gave his phone number and promised he would turn down the music if it got too loud. That went a long way toward restoring Mikey's faith in humanity. If only this example of thoughtfulness and courtesy could spread to Pacifica, where I hear from various lovers of peace and quiet that they suffer from loud noises in their neighborhoods.

- My readers who complain to me about noise pollution ask me not to use their real names because they are afraid of reprisals by their thoughtless, selfish neighbors whose barking dogs, loud engines, power tools, leaf blowers, and other noisy nuisances disturb the peace of the neighborhood.

- A Tribune reader who goes by the pseudonym "Restless in Rockaway" says, "I think the city should require humane medications or sprays or electronic collars to stop the constant barking of dogs outdoors. If you don't live next to a barking dog, believe me, you have no idea how annoying and frustrating it can be, especially early in the morning after the owners go to work and leave their lonely, stressed-out dogs in the yard."

- The primary victims of noise pollution are home-office workers, telecommuters, stay-at-home moms and dads, the homebound, and anyone who wants to enjoy Pacifica's natural tranquility. Unfortunately, the city noise ordinance is mostly useless, as even city officials have admitted to me. Several of my readers, including "Sleepless in Paradise" whose comments I quoted in my column last week, talk about getting the city manager and City Council to enhance and enforce the noise ordinance. "Sleepless" says, "Most of us moved here for the slow pace of life and the quiet environment. It used to be like paradise. Now it's time for the quiet people to make some noise politically."

- Meanwhile, RESPONSIBLE dog owners (especially my friends at Bev Kingsbury's POOCH organization, for which I have been honored to act as a canine contest judge) tell me that they would consult a vet or the SPCA, or visit sites like [wag.com](http://wag.com) and [petflow.com](http://petflow.com), for barking solutions that are harmless to dogs but teach or condition them not to bark when they are left at home alone.

### ALANDROME: YOUNGEST TRIB SUBSCRIBER

Pacifica's resident palindromist Alan Wald is at it again. He says that Pacifica's first baby born in 2014 is reportedly a palindrome lover and has decided to subscribe to the Pacifica Tribune, our local newspaper. The baby's first words were: "Birth! Ah, Trib!"

### RULES FOR A PEACEFUL LIFE ONLINE

- Never email, text, chat, or post when you are angry or drunk.
- Never send an attachment unless you know the recipient wants it.

- Never forward chain letters or petitions. No one wants them.
- Pause to carefully reread personal emails before forwarding them.
- Write brief, accurate subject lines without ALL CAPS.
- Always assume that everything you do online is (or can become) public. This includes emails, texts, chats, blog posts, instant messages, etc.
- Think before you hit the SEND button.

(These rules are adapted from a Neva Chonin advice column that ran in the San Francisco Chronicle seven years ago, but today is truer than ever.)

## SITeseer

- Do an Internet search for "rapid packing container" to see stories and videos about two college students who have invented a cardboard box that is easier to pack and less wasteful than conventional boxes. You can find this amazing story on YouTube, Fast Company, Tree Hugger, and other websites.
- Recycle your old keys to help find a cure for multiple sclerosis: [keysforkindness.com](http://keysforkindness.com)
- Find new uses for materials that are hard to recycle: [terracycle.com](http://terracycle.com)
- Foods of the gods, combined into one delicious bar: [chocolove.com](http://chocolove.com)

## SWAMI SEZ

"We are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the Universe. That makes us something very special." (Stephen Hawking, physicist)

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