

Wandering and Wondering

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MERCURY INVADES ARCTIC

Vigorous mixing in the air above large cracks in Arctic sea ice that expose seawater to cold polar air pumps atmospheric mercury down to the surface. This process can lead to more of the toxic pollutant entering the food chain, where it can negatively affect the health of fish and animals who eat them, including humans. (NASA.gov)

FAKE AT&T WORKERS

Linty Marr reports on Pacifica Riptide that two people wearing semiofficial uniforms and carrying clipboards knocked on his door recently, claiming to be from AT&T. They said they were trying to confirm who lived there and wanted to make Linty aware that they were "working on the lines" and thus certain AT&T services were available to him. But Linty said that he saw no AT&T trucks and no AT&T work being done in his neighborhood. He asked to see their IDs. One of them said he didn't have it and the other had a picture ID without an AT&T logo around her neck. Linty asked if they had business cards; they said no, so he ran them off. Good advice: Don't give anyone who comes to your door any personal information such as your Social Security number. Don't even confirm any information they say they already may have on you. You never know what they may do with such information. If they pressure you, close the door and call the police. If these people are not legit, they may be casing your house to come back and burglarize it.

LOST CHICKEN

"There's a lost chicken in our front yard. It's been around since at least last night. It appears to have some of its back feathers torn out. The feral cats are intimidated by it. Anybody lose a chicken?" (Rockaway Beach news item @ nextdoor.com forwarded by Alan Wald)

ALAN WALD'S ALANDROMES

- Former NBA star Dennis Rodman has been widely criticized for failing to raise human rights issues or the plight of jailed American Kenneth Bae during his visits to North Korea and with Kim Jong Un, whom he calls his friend for life. Plain-talking Pacifica palindrome lovers go one further: "Dennis sinned!"
- Some palindrome-loving friends and I, who were passengers caught in the now-infamous George Washington Bridge traffic jam, have little sympathy for embattled New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. I can still hear us shouting to our driver: "Toot, Otto, toot!"
- It is reported that Palestinians in Gaza marked the death of former Israeli premier Ariel Sharon, calling him a criminal and rejoicing. Pacifica palindrome lovers lament: "Sharon, to Gaza, got no 'rahs."

CALIFORNIA BEACHES NOT "HOT"

California Department of Public Health Radiologic Health Branch and its Office of Public Affairs: "There is no public health risk at California beaches due to radioactivity related to events at Fukushima. The

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is not aware of any recent activity at Fukushima, or any new data that would cause elevated radioactivity on California shores from the Fukushima incident. Recent tests by the San Mateo County public health department and CDPH show that elevated levels of radiation at Half Moon Bay are due to naturally occurring materials and not radioactivity associated with the Fukushima incident. The volume of water in the Pacific Ocean has a significant diluting effect on radionuclides that are present and it is not anticipated that the concentration will increase in the waters off of the West Coast. CDPH has collected and will be analyzing sand samples from Half Moon Bay. Results of the analysis will be posted on the CDPH Radiologic Health (RHB) website as soon as the analysis is completed."

HEARTS OF THE DULCIMER

If you missed the screening of Hearts of the Dulcimer in October at Pedro Point Firehouse, here's your chance to see it. The Berkeley Dulcimer Gathering has started a campaign to raise funds to screen the film in May. Now you can support dulcimer culture and buy an advance ticket at indiegogo.com to see the film.

ONLY ONE STAR

I don't understand why Macy's full-page newspaper ads for Elizabeth Arden cosmetics are headlined #ONLY ONE STAR. Seems like having only one star is a bad rating for any business or product. What could they possibly have been thinking (or smoking) when they created that lame headline?

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT

- You need to burn more calories than you eat, whether it's changing your food habits or exercising more.
- Emotional eaters eat high-calorie food. Remove unhealthy temptations and replace them with healthy food. But don't completely give up your favorite foods. Weight-loss author Tom Venuto recommends a "90/10 compliance rule," where 90 percent of your meals are healthy and the remaining 10 percent are your "free meals."
- Emotional eaters can't recognize the difference between biological need for food and emotional need. It takes 15-20 minutes for the brain to get the message that you are full. Slow down and pace yourself.
- Whole fresh fruit is better for you than fruit juice. Especially beware of soft drinks, and don't be fooled by artificially sweetened ones. Studies show that artificial sweeteners can increase cravings for sugar and cause weight gain.
- High-intensity exercise often discourages people from keeping it up. The best exercise is one you like and can stick to. Try interactive exercise videos. Start small and build up over time.
- Losing weight requires discipline. If you struggle or can't stick to healthy food and exercise, you may not be mentally ready to change yet.
- Set reasonable goals. If you aim too high (e.g., losing more than two pounds a week), you set yourself up for failure. Focus on getting into shape and leading a healthy lifestyle, rather than judging your progress by your weight. Muscle weighs more than fat, so you might lose inches and replace fat with muscle

without much change on the scale.

(adapted from Queendom.com)

SITSEER

- See where you hail from: Google "dialect quiz map"
- Find Betty Medsger's new book "The Burglary: The Discovery of J. Edgar Hoover's Secret FBI" and get paranoid all over again
- Help protect a Peninsula treasure, a former island just EAST of Pacifica: mountainwatch.org
- Get Jared Farmer's article "Going out on a limb to defend eucalyptus" in the January 10 S.F. Chronicle "Insight" section: sfgate.com
- Read Eli Pariser's new book "The Internet Filter Bubble" and see why there are no secrets on the Web
- Google "watercar panther" for the lowdown on the latest amphibious speedster
- Visit our state Senator Jerry Hill's website (sd13.senate.ca.gov) to see all his good work on security, privacy, campaign reform, etc. While you're at it, drop him a line and thank him for his service to Pacifica and the Peninsula.

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