

Wandering and Wondering

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NO PEACE IN PACIFICA?

In response to my recent items on making Pacifica more peaceful, I have heard from a variety of readers who all share one thing in common: neighbors from hell. My readers are telling me their bad-neighbor horror stories: harassment, loud noises, bad odors, gas leaks, litter, weeds, blight, barking dogs, bright spotlights, security cameras, and perhaps worst of all — unresponsive and/or ineffective city code enforcement. As our lead regulatory body, the city needs to step up and protect the rights of citizens to enjoy the lifestyle implied in the name of our little burg on the beach: Pacifica=Peaceful.

CALTRANS CULTURE OF FEAR

"Caltrans today is significantly out of step with best practice in the transportation field and with the State of California's policy expectations. It is in need of modernization." So says a report by the State Smart Transportation Initiative, as reported last week in the San Francisco Chronicle (sfgate.com) and the Sacramento Bee (sacbee.com). The California State Transportation Agency, which oversees Caltrans, commissioned the report, which also cites Caltrans' "culture of risk aversion and even fear."

PACIFICA PATCH LOSES EDITOR

When AOL recently sold its hyperlocal Patch blogs to a faceless holding company called Hale Global, the handwriting was on the wall. Yet another round of layoffs hit the news sites last week, coldheartedly executed with a conference call (hear audio of the call on Jim Romenesko's media blog). Those on the Hale hit list included Pacifica Patch editor Christa Bigue, who also covered Half Moon Bay Patch. Christa's farewell message said she did not know how (or if) Patch was going to continue covering the coastside. Meanwhile, our little town continues to enjoy a veritable smorgasbord of blogs, with the locally owned and operated, non-corporate sites published and edited by Chris Fogel (Pacifica Index), Steve Sinai and Kathy Meeh (Fix Pacifica), and yours truly (Pacifica Riptide, P-Town's original social media, with help from a cast of characters from all parts of the community).

YOSEMITE MOUNTAIN SUGAR PINE RAILROAD TRIP

On May 31 and June 1, Central Coast Railway Club (CCRC) operates an excursion on the Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine RR at Fish Camp, California. The trip for \$95 per person includes bus transportation from Fresno to Fish Camp, a ride on the tourist railway behind a genuine steam locomotive (featuring photo runbys not normally offered), a box lunch, and return transportation to Fresno. Passengers can ride Amtrak's San Joaquin train to and from Fresno (not included), and attend a Fresno Grizzlies minor league baseball game (not included). Passengers are responsible for their own hotel reservations Saturday night in Fresno. Tickets and info:

goldenstaterails.com and traintrips.biz

LINDA MAR BOULEVARD BLUES

Rick Bauman writes: "Have you seen the latest improvements on the median sections of lower Linda Mar Boulevard? All that manpower, topsoil, plantings, and city tree chippings. Talk about half-assed. If the city is going to waste our money, please at least do it all the way and get the pretty, long-lasting, store-bought chips with the three-year colorfast warranty. By the way, the weeds are poking through already, and that's with no rain! Also, need we even consider the aspect of watering these ill-advised plantings? Man, unless you're putting cacti in, what were they thinking? As I said before — cement, once and done. I'm still pining for a little asphalt on the boulevard. I can almost smell the oil in the potholes." Editor's Note: the work is being done by the local water district and other groups, not the city.

MILAGRA RIDGE TRAILWORK

Lower Milagra Ridge, dedicated to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 2007 and connecting Milagra Ridge to a trailhead at the Connemara housing development, is undergoing restoration to protect and restore habitat for the endangered Mission Blue butterfly. These fragile creatures lay their eggs on silver leaf lupine plants growing in open grasslands. The newly hatched caterpillars will feed only on the lupines. Invasive plants such as pampas grass, broom, and Monterey pine and cypress trees overrun these critical areas needed for the lupines, caterpillars, and butterflies to survive. This project will remove the most aggressive plants in the most critical areas. For public safety, there are temporary trail closures. The National Park Service appreciates the public's patience during removal of invasive vegetation. Work occurs Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Info: 415-561-3054 or trailsforever@parksconservancy.org

SWAMI SEZ

"It is of interest to note that while some dolphins are reported to have learned English -- up to 50 words used in correct context-- no human being has been reported to have learned dolphinese." (Carl Sagan)

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