

Wandering and Wondering

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HIGHWAY OF TEARS

I want to fix Highway 1's traffic problems as much as the next manjack. Honest I do. I just don't think adding more lanes and doubling the width is the way to go. Why? Because as the corollary to the old saw goes, if you widen it, they will come. Nature abhors a vacuum. If you widen the highway, it will just fill up, same as now, and you merely shift the traffic jam down the road. The current backup bottleneck between Reina del Mar and Fassler will move farther south and north of those intersections. So in the spirit of exploring the gray area of creative alternatives rather than black-and-white thinking, I commend to you "Don't Concrete Our Coast," a flyer fluttering around town from the determined foes of highway widening. These folks bundled up and held a spirited roadside rally last Saturday, greeted by many positive honks and thumbs-up, plus a surprise sandwich tray presented English-style by nearby Lovey's Tea Shop. The opposition's flyer says Caltrans' plan to more than double the highway's width is not the best solution for Pacifica's traffic problems, because it would harm the hillsides, create its own traffic jams during years of construction, disrupt local businesses and homes, create enormous pedestrian-unfriendly intersections, block our coastal look-and-feel with huge retaining walls and sound walls, and destroy the memorial garden in the quarry. The flyer calls on City Council to pursue alternatives to widening, such as retiming and coordinating traffic lights, modifications to the Reina Del Mar intersection, a flex lane with moveable cones, increased public transportation, increased school bus service, car- and van-pooling, and changes to school schedules. (Info: Pacificans for Highway 1 Alternatives, ph1a-pacifica.weebly.com, phwy1a@gmail.com)

MAVERICKS AND PACIFICA

I agree with Victor Spano (My Turn, February 12) about Pacifica needing to capitalize on Mavericks traffic in our restaurants, hotels, and entertainment venues. We have been missing many tourist revenue opportunities over the years. But let me take it a step further and suggest that Pacifica needs to create its own surfing, fishing, and other Pacifica-appropriate festivals to draw visitors and their money to our local businesses. This is what the Pacifica Chamber of Commerce needs to be working on instead of promoting futile highway widening. Fog Fest is a model for this kind of economic development, but it happens only once a year. Isn't it past time to clone Fog Fest and jump-start our economy with other profitable, themed events?

FROM MY MAILBOX

"I support a peaceful Pacifica. We need to develop appropriate nuisance laws that protect the rights of folks to live in peace without going too far into the lives of others." (Dan H. Burgoon)

VISUALIZE CLIMATE CHANGE

I say we start calling climate change what it really is: climate extremes. England just suffered its wettest January since 1766, while California had its driest January on record. Megastorms continue to pound England in February, with major flooding, high winds, falling trees, and washed-out railroad tracks.

California, despite the recent Pineapple Express delivering several inches of badly needed rain, still faces a drought of historic proportions, as farmlands, lakes, reservoirs, rivers, and creeks dry up. Expect water rationing and higher food prices, among other impacts from the drought. Hey, you water wasters out there, start taking shorter showers and stop hosing off your car and driveway. As a regular swimmer at Brink Pool, I am glad to see management has posted water conservation signs in the showers, and I know that some of my fellow swimmers have joined me in taking shorter showers, also known as navy showers. Look it up online if you don't know what I'm talking about. We all need to take this thing seriously and start saving water now. Otherwise, we will wind up in full crisis mode later this year. Turn off the tap!

KEEP PACIFICA BEAUTIFUL

Dave Martinez of the city beautification task force points out the "Keep Pacifica Beautiful Campaign" in conjunction with the Publics Works Department and the North Coast County Water District. (See related story in last week's Tribune about how this joint venture is sustainably landscaping and planting the Linda Mar Boulevard medians. Look for details on this campaign and water conservation tips in my next column.)

NO COMMENT

Pacifica seeks an assistant city manager at a pay rate of \$13,000 to \$15,000 a MONTH. Are we living in a parallel universe here?

ALANDROME: HAIL TO THE CHIEF

Alan Wald says: With Pacifica's soon-to-retire Police Chief Jim Tasa sure to be given a good-bye party in his honor, ask Pacifica palindrome lovers where they'll be that evening, and of course they'll reply, "At a Tasa ta-ta!"

SWAMI SEZ

"Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad."

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