



Thousands of years ago, the primitive predecessor of the CB radio was being used to appeal for aid, trace ocean currents, communicate with distant countries, and even pass on messages from spies.

CB is faster than messages in bottles, but it doesn't have random luck or the opportunity to go back in time, as do messages in bottles.

A former war correspondent, writing in Rotary magazine, traces some of the romantic and tragic events that have resulted in bottled messages.

BEN FRANKLIN used bottled inquiries to discover the existence and trace the path of the Gulf Stream. The same primitive but useful method is still being used to trace ocean currents.

Anyone who walks our beaches has seen all manner of stuff: logs, boards, bottles.

Anything that will float long enough will eventually make it to shore somewhere.

Have you ever discovered a message in a bottle on a Pacifica beach? Have you ever sent a message in a

bottle that has been acknowledged by someone far from the spot you deposited it?

I WOULD LIKE to hear about it if you have any stories, romantic or otherwise, about bottled communications that involved a Pacifica beach.

Meanwhile, if you want some good tips on how to send messages bobbing their way across the ocean, see the latest Rotary magazine. Any library or Rotarian will have a copy.

As you munch your Fourth of July hot dog, or enjoy your beer, it's a good time to be grateful that we were not "blessed" with the Bay Area Rapid Transit service.

SAMTRANS IS NOT the ideal answer to our public transit problem perhaps because there is no ideal answer. But think. SamTrans is flexible. It can change routes as need arises. SamTrans can go back into the narrow streets of Vallemar. SamTrans can go around a stalled bus, so the whole system doesn't stop when one bus goes out of service.

If the same amount of money had been spent on a regional bus system as has been spent on BART, we would have a better system, more tuned in to the changing needs of the public, less vulnerable to stoppage, and far more useful to us all.

In the meantime, let's give credit to those of us in San Mateo County who had foresight to run the other way when BART was offered as the panacea for our transportation ills.

SamTrans is fully capable of blunders, but it has the ability to recover from its errors far better than the Bay Area Rapid Turkey, or is that albatross?

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