# **Presidio Museum?**

## **More Revenues Lost**

By John Farrell

ou might have read recently that Mayor Lee likes the Lucas Plan for a Presidio Museum. Well, here we go again. First off let me say this. I am



a big George Lucas fan and remember being one of the first in line to see Star Wars at the Coronet in 1977. I've watched all six episodes, as well as all Indiana Jones and American Graffiti movies. This matter has nothing to do with George Lucas personally, but with fairness.

...put this in perspective: a vendor selling hot dogs in Golden Gate Park pays property taxes, while a restaurant in the Presidio pays nothing. This is unfair and inequitable taxation."

The \$700 million proposed Lucas Museum is one of three finalists for the former commissary site at Crissy Field now occupied by Sports Basement. If approved, the City will lose at least \$8.1 million annually in property tax revenue, which would otherwise provide funding for our City services. The other two finalists are from the Golden Gate National Parks Conservatory, and a joint proposal of a local architect and museum consultant in Washington, DC.

Why should private users on other government owned properties be subject to possessory interest tax while those using the Presidio properties to their private benefit are not? Let me put this in perspective: a vendor selling hot dogs in Golden Gate Park pays property taxes, while a restaurant in the Presidio pays nothing. This is unfair and inequitable taxation.

This \$8.1 million annual loss is in addition to at least \$10 million annually in property tax revenue currently lost from existing tenants in the Presidio. To date, the City has lost well over \$100 million in just property taxes since the creation of the Trust. This \$100 million does not include other taxes, such as transfer tax; the City is losing an additional \$12.5 million from the recent sale of Lucasfilms to Disney in 2012 (based on a 2.5% transfer tax rate on a conservative \$500 million assessment value).

How is this possible? This is possible due to an unconstitutional loophole in the Presidio Trust Act that allows that all properties administered by the Trust, and all interest created under leases, concessions, permits and other agreements associated with the properties, to be exempt from all taxes.

In California, any private party that leases, rents or makes payments for use of government owned property is subject to a possessory interest tax (property tax).

The City Attorney, as well as our Congressional Representative, has the opinion that all third party interests for private benefit created under leases, concessions, permits and other agreements under the Presidio Trust's jurisdiction are tax exempt, since Congress enacted legislation specifically in the Presidio Trust Act. This is unconstitutional.

We all agree that the Presidio Trust itself is exempt. However, if Congress enacted the Presidio Trust Act to exempt third party use for private benefit in the Presidio, they do not have the authority to do so per Article 1 Section 8 of Constitution, which provides the Powers of the US Congress.

In 1897, the State of California ceded to the United States exclusive jurisdiction on all lands held for military purposes, which included the Presidio. Military installations are federal enclaves and are exempt from state authority. This exemption is no longer the case since the Presidio is no longer being used for military use, due to the federal government transfer of jurisdiction to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) in 1994 to be used for natural, historic, cultural and recreational purposes. The Presidio Trust was subsequently created by Congress in 1996 for a dual purpose: to rehabilitate and repurpose the Presidio's historic buildings and environmental resources; and to operate the site as a vibrant public park, independent of

Cont. p. 14

# **Squat & Gobble Meets with No Opposition**

By Keith Burbank

esidents appear to support the design of the new building at West Portal Avenue and Ulloa Street, the home of Squat & Gobble, which burned down late last year. The concern about the design centered on the building's facade and additional square footage the restaurant is requesting.

"We didn't see anything to object to," said Tim White, a member of the Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association's land use committee. White and two other members of the committee met with the architect, Suheil Shatara, June 25, at Starbucks, 100 West Portal Avenue, to review the design of

"When people come out of MUNI, that's what people see," White explained as his reason for the concern. The new design is similar to what existed before the fire. This time, however, tenant, Issa Sweidan, is planning to hang horizontal steel and glass awnings on the front of the building.

Prior to the fire, the building appeared to have cloth awnings, which hung at an angle on the building's facade. Clerestory windows are planned for the wall above the restaurant building, compared to the building in which his new awnings, and the restaurant will move a little closer to the street, relative to the pre-fire floor plan.

Compared with a previous design presented by Shatara, the latest renderings have wider windows along Ulloa Street. "I'm here to listen to your input," he said, adding that the owner of the building has given Sweiden "as much liberty as possible" in the design of the new building.

Besides the exterior, the committee asked questions about the additional space the restaurant is requesting. The restaurant wants to add an additional 200 square feet to its floor area, which drew no objections from the committee or the residents who attended the meeting. The restaurant does not have approval for this area yet, presumably from the City. In the new design, the contractor will install sprinklers throughout the restaurant.

Besides White, also in attendance from the

# **Homeowners: City Hall's ATM**

By George Wooding

he crushing weight of San Francisco City employees' salaries and benefits is one reason the City keeps pushing expenses onto homeowners.

Mayor Lee's proposed \$7.9 billion City budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 indicates that the City will increase spending by \$710 million, adding 866 more City government employees, bringing the total to 27,722 full-time equivalent employees. [The City actually had 36,761 full- and part-time employees at the end of calendar year

Over one-half of the Mayor's budget — \$3.9 billion will be dedicated to City employee salaries and benefits. The average City employee makes \$99,000 with benefits, while the average citizen makes about \$73,000 with few or no benefits.

[Editor's Note: Most of the City's part-time employees do not earn fringe benefits, although unions want that changed. So to be fair, excluding fringe benefits, of the 36,761 full- and part-time employees in 2012, fully 21,980 employees — or 59.8 percent — earned less than \$73,000 in base pay, and averaged just \$38,820 in base pay and averaged \$42,741 in total pay, including overtime; they're your average secretary, gardener, or nurse's aide. That stands in stark contrast to the 14,781 employees -40.2 percent — who earned more than \$73,000, and who earned an average of \$106,073 in base pay and an average of \$120,762 in total pay, including overtime. And to be more fair, just 7,864 of City employees — fully 21.4 percent — earned more than \$100,000 in base pay, averaging \$124,716 in base pay and averaging a whopping \$143,131 in total pay, including overtime. The total payroll for these





seven-member land use committee were Arthur Perkins and Bob Pressley. The chair of the committee was unable to attend the meeting, White said. In addition to the land use committee members, four people from the community attended, including dentist Frederic Warren of Warren Orthodontics, whose building also burned in the October 2012 fire.

Warren expressed concern about the height of the new office was located. Shatara couldn't say which was higher, the height of the new restaurant or the height of the previous dental office. But Shatara said he will compare the two and get back with Warren.

Though partially designed, the facade of Squat & Gobble is not complete. None of the colors to be used on the building have been chosen. "Sometimes color goes a long way," Shatara said. The owner of the building is considering a colored stucco for the exterior. And the owner is considering tile below the first floor windows.

Cont. p. 7





**Ethical Sunlight** George Wooding—3

Revenue Please John Farrell—3



**Big on Benghazi** Will Durst – 4

*Irritations* Steve Lawrence – 4





**Gold Bugged** Avrum Shepard – 5

**Neiahborhood Beat** Keith Burbank-5





**Dance Hall Gem** Jeanette Copperwaite—7

## Watching the Watchers Rivero & Kerr-8





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#### LAKE MERCED UPDATE

## From Bad to Worse at Lake Merced

By Jerry Cadagan

re haven't done a column since the March issue of the Observer and at that point we expressed some optimism on two fronts – first, District 7 had a new Supervisor and we hoped he might see to it that the \$2 million in Park Bond money allocated for Lake Merced was wisely spent, and second, the long sought SFPUC Commission Lake Merced workshop was scheduled for March 26. Both of our hoped for "New Horizons" have been a disappointment.



would take the lead in having the Board lap. Goodbye \$2 million. Maybe they'll of Supervisors direct that the \$2 million spend some or all of it cleaning up the \$12 on bond money should be managed by million mess they created by not requiring SFPUC, rather than Rec & Park, whose the gun club to carry the right kind of polonly role at Lake Merced is based on 24 lution liability insurance.

We had hoped that Supervisor Yee acting as though it will fall in Rec & Park's

... which agency controls the \$2 million, Rec & Park, Supervisor Yee and, most disappointingly, SFPUC staff are acting as though it will fall in Rec & Park's lap. Goodbye \$2 million."

words in a 1950 SFPUC resolution giving Rec & Park vague "recreational and park" was a different kind of disappointment. responsibilities. We won't now waste your The meeting itself was quite successful, time repeating the litany of mismanage- with a standing room only crowd, time for ment, neglect and other sins that Rec & speakers to voice their thoughts, and an Park has wrought upon the lake since attentive group of all five SFPUC Commis-1950. But despite the fact that the City sioners. The Observer carried an extensive Attorney's office has said that the Super- story about the meeting in its April issue. visors should play an important part in That story named by name at least three determining which agency controls the \$2 speakers who explicitly requested that the million, Rec & Park, Supervisor Yee and, SFPUC take back from Rec & Park whatmost disappointingly, SFPUC staff are ever limited management responsibilities

The March 26 Lake Merced workshop



made the same request who were not that SFPUC take full management conmentioned by name in the story. Yet, trol. The draft minutes inaccurately stated when the minutes of the meeting came that Rec & Park had fishing programs at out, you would have thought the meeting the lake; and failed to mention that one took place in one of the bars on the cruise participant had to correct Phil Ginsburg's ship I was on in the Caribbean on March 26. The minutes made no mention of the

Rec & Park has. There were others who numerous public comments requesting

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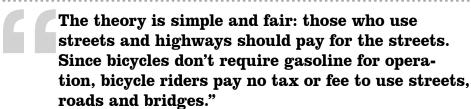
#### RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR



**Getting Around** 

hronicle asked the headline question on two letters to the editor, "Are bikes taking over City Hall?" Of course, they are. A healthy pursuit, it saves gasoline expenditures and it's trendy. The Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) assuredly intends to spend as much as \$6,000,000 to expand bicycle lanes and create other ways to enhance the bicycle "experience" in our city. In

any public discussion of bicycling in San Francisco, one must be sure to express admiration and high regards for such an environmentally benevolent method of travelling. I now do so. I also point out the irony, and unjustifiable fact, that bicyclists, as such, don't pay a penny for the streets and roads they use. Since 1922, California motor vehicle operators have paid a user fee in the form of gasoline tax upon each gallon of gasoline purchased. (In California today, that tax amounts to 39.5 cents per gallon) Motorists also pay 18 cents per gallon gasoline tax to the United States of America. The proceeds of state gasoline taxation are placed in the State Highway Fund. That fund is used to build streets, roads and highway bridges used by motorists. The theory is simple and fair: those who use streets and highways should pay for the streets. Since bicycles don't require gasoline for operation, bicycle riders pay no tax or fee to use streets, roads and bridges.



Motor vehicle owners also pay fees at-large voting for its five city council ment of Motor Vehicles, and drivers pay of Supervisors surrendered to threatened fees for licenses to operate motor vehicles. lawsuits under the federal Voting Rights The proceeds of those fees are specifically Act of 1965 to force abandonment of its Bicycle owners do not pay a bicycle regis- method of electing a county Board of tration fee, or a fee for a license to operate Supervisors or any local governing board bicycles on state streets and highways. Is of the population size of San Francisco or that fair? I don't think so. It constitutes fewer in residents. Until now, a candidate a manifest subsidy to bicycle owners and for one of the five San Mateo County superriders. Meanwhile, people continue to visorial offices had to live in one of five comment over the widely prevalent disre- geographically-drawn districts; as a candigard of bicyclists to traffic control signals date, however, that person was elected by insulted. One other point is relevant: Prior district election system for San Francisco's to my departure after 12 years from the Board of Supervisors. The Voting Rights as Chairman of the Senate Transportation in most respects. (The U.S. Supreme Court members and three Senators to promul- for those who wish to vote and those who gate resolution of differences between leg- wish to assay elected public office. That of the eastern section of the Bay Bridge. usual sources demonstrates cool-headed nia and Bay Area legislators were required one California city of size. respecting financing of the replacement and related accoutrements.

In June, the Anaheim City Council defeated another proposal to establish a district system of electing City Council members. Anaheim contains approximately 330,000 residents and is the largest city in California which still employs

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to register their vehicles with the Depart- seats. In June, San Mateo County's Board devoted to paying the cost of the Depart- long-established and successful one-ofment of Motor Vehicles and defray some its-kind system. In my strong opinion, costs of the California Highway Patrol. its system has always represented the best or stop signs, or even pedestrian crossings. all county voters. To me, it's been the best But if the term "self-entitlement" is applied of both worlds as between San Francisco's to bicyclists, they shouldn't be surprised or historical at-large system, and the current California State Senate, including 11 years Act of 1965 is antiquated and unjustified Committee, I was selected to chair a joint so ruled last month.) Certainly, in Caliconference committee of three Assembly fornia and San Francisco no barriers exist islation in the two houses for replacement Anaheim has resisted demands from the Compromises between Southern Califor- elected local officials do exist, Virginia, in

I am regularly inveighed or asked span. Then-Assemblywoman Carole about restoring San Francisco's at-large Migden was a member of the joint confer- system, which existed until 1977 and was ence committee. Under pressure from the reinstated by voters (not the Board of comparatively nascent bicycle lobbyists, Supervisors) in August 1980 in a special such compromise resulted in inclusion of initiative election. The reason for that a little noticed one-way bicycle lane from resuscitation of the at-large system was Oakland to Treasure Island on the new the tragic murders of Mayor Moscone and eastern bridge section. The alleged cost Supervisor Milk. In my opinion, we will was \$ 50,000,000. The estimated cost of never in our lifetimes (including yours, the incomplete eastern section bicycle dear readers) see the restoration of the ataccommodation is now \$ 200,000,000. large election. The eleven district super-As you know, tolls on the Bay Bridge and visors in our city are now tantamount to the other six state-owned bridges on San "ward bosses," the dukes and duchesses Francisco Bay were increased to pay most of their respective fiefdoms. Whatever of the projected cost of replacing the east- the district supervisor/ward boss wants, ern bridge section. Those higher tolls have for example by way of real estate developbeen paid by motorists, not bicyclists. It's ment, that supervisor/ward boss gets. As one matter for a small portion of gasoline you drive up or down Brotherhood Way tax proceeds to be utilized to subsidize between Lake Merced Boulevard and the public bus and rail transit; it's another mat- 280 ramp, you'll notice an horrendous ter for bridge tolls and gasoline tax pro- excavation and scarring of the north side ceeds to be thusly applied for bicycle lanes of Brotherhood Way for a 182 units of millionaire housing which will change As the Chronicle's editor writer, John Brotherhood Way forever for the worst. Diaz, phrased it on June 23: "If you think Denuded of all but 2 trees on the site, that San Francisco has gone bonkers for bikes development resulted from the acquieswith green-painted riding lanes and a cence and support of then-district superviride-sharing due this summer, get ready sor Sean Elsbernd. Despite the educational and religious history of Brotherhood Way, renamed as such by the at-large Board of Supervisors and Mayor George Christopher in 1957 from Stanley Drive, and the continuous eight year project opposition of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, the Masonic Temple, the Armenian School-(Krouzian-Zekrarian), St.

Cont. p. 5

#### Laguna Honda Hospital Patient Dumping - Part 2

## **Of Mold and Men**

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

Between dumping mental health patients into Laguna Honda Hospital and outof-county, and dumping elderly skilled nursing patients out-of-county to make room for mental health patient admissions, who knew that news of mold in the LHH's new kitchen would be overshadowed by the sudden resignation of LHH's public information officer, Marc Slavin?

And that Slavin's ouster would obscure news that Mayor Ed Lee would be joined by a compliant Board of Supervisors reaching consensus to shut down San Francisco's Mental Health Rehabilitation Facility during budget negotiations?

#### Minister of Misinformation?

If I were a San Francisco Health Commissioner, I'd be furious that LHH's CEO Mivic Hirose appears not to have notified the Health Commission before Friday, June 21 that Marc Slavin, Laguna Honda Hospital's public information officer and communications director, had suddenly resigned days before, since news of his pending resignation was being openly discussed at LHH for at least two weeks, and line staff knew Slavin was physically gone the day before his resignation announcement was made. This is news that clearly should have been shared with the Health Commission to prevent them from being caught off guard.

Slavin, you may remember, creatively spun to I-Team investigative journalist Dan Noyes in May 2010 that "the LHH patient gift fund isn't for patients" when Noyes first broadcast news that LHH's administrators had inappropriately been spending hundreds of thousands of dollars of donations to the patient gift fund on staff, instead.

For six years many believe, Slavin essentially served as LHH's shadow CEO, propping up Hirose when not running the entire show, including reports that he intermittently inserted himself into clinical-care decisions regarding specific patients with no medical license to do so, as well as interviewing job applicants and hiring decisions

> Laguna Honda had never needed — and never had for over 100 years — a P.R. department in a public hospital serving what is essentially a "captive audience" of the medically indigent who have nowhere else to go."

throughout the hospital.

staff bouncer. There are reliable reports patient's rooms are washed. that the intense friction between Slavin and on the outs with Hirose.

Previously, Slavin appeared untouchable, due to his benefactress former City Newsom.

But once Katz fled to Los Angles fol-

note that he was resigning in order to com- growing in several rooms. plete his PhD thesis. There was no usual-Slavin's six-year service.

tion, Laguna Honda had never needed and never had for over 100 years — a P.R. late June 2012. department in a public hospital serving what is essentially a "captive audience" of the delay involved determining if it would the medically indigent who have nowhere be covered by LHH's insurance policies,

#### **Emerging Mold Problem**

man Yee attempted to circumvent recom- tects. Thomas further noted that in 2011, mendations by Harvey Rose, the Board's the Replacement Project was directed to Budget and Legislative Analyst. On June 5, redesign the cart wash space, since it was Yee introduced an "emergency" sole-source

contract not to exceed \$595,367 to repair Although staff and patients often won- a cart wash leak that resulted in extensive dered what Slavin's job duties involved, mold in LHH's new kitchen. The cart wash he served alternatively as Hirose's ghost- room is where mobile carts used to transwriter, speech writer, spokesperson, and port food from the main kitchen to the

Although John Thomas, the LHH Hirose had recently escalated. One high-Replacement Project manager from level source has confirmed that Hirose and Department of Public Works (DPW) Slavin weren't getting along anymore, and claimed during the June 5 hearing that during recent public meetings Slavin sat in there is a "temporary cleaning facility" seating for members of the public, not at for the carts used to transport meals to the main table, sending a signal that he was patients, LHH staff asserts that the food carts are now just cleaned using disinfectant wipes, not fully washed.

Mr. Rose recommended that a sole Attorney Louise Renne, and former Direc- source contract not be issued, there was tor of Public Health Mitch Katz. As a 1375 no "emergency" involved, that the amount Special Assistant XVI, a job code typically be reduced by \$266,723 to only \$328,644, reserved for the Office of the Mayor and and that the DPW should seek competitive Board of Supervisors, observers suspected bids from the lowest-responsive bidder to Slavin was brought in by then-Mayor complete the remaining remediation of the mold in LHH's new kitchen.

Although LHH moved into its new lowing a whistleblower complaint that facilities in December 2010, elevator main-Katz had accepted significant consulting tenance staff working in LHH's new Pavilfees from a City contractor to whom he ion Building didn't discover a water leak in had steered lucrative consulting contracts, the elevator's machine room until Septemand after Renne's Laguna Honda Foun- ber 2011. The leak had gone undetected dation imploded, Slavin lost his political and was eventually traced to the hospital's cart wash room on the floor above the Slavin claimed to staff in a goodbye elevator machine room, resulting in mold

But despite discovery of the mold in and-customary "good-bye" party to honor September 2011, the Director of DPW didn't declare an "emergency" until June Along with Slavin's ouster, there are 6, 2012. DPW initially estimated the cost reports that LHH suddenly and completely to repair would be up to \$250,000, the disbanded its Communications Depart- threshold set in Administrative Code Secment at the end of the week, the very three- tion 6.60 that permits City department person empire Slavin created that at one heads to award emergency contracts withpoint was consuming over \$300,000 a year out undergoing competitive bidding proin salaries and benefits. Prior to his arrival cedures. DPW awarded a not-to-exceed in mid-summer 2007 on assignment to sole-source contract for just \$80,000 to "stop the negative publicity about LHH" Belfor USA Group to perform the demofor Louise Renne's Laguna Honda Founda- lition, mold remediation, and reconstruction work; Belfor began the remediation in

For his part, Mr. Thomas claimed that or whether the repairs would be funded through recovery of funds via the lawsuit Freshman District 7 Supervisor Nor- the City has filed against LHH's archi-

*Cont. p. 15* 

## **Another Bite of the Ratepayer Apple**

By Steve Lawrence

our water and sewer rates fund more than you think. It is the new policy of the SFPUC (water-sewer-municipal power) to include in agreements with consulting engineers a provision where the consultant agrees to spend a sum of money for "community benefits."



For example, at its late May meeting the Commission authorized an \$80 million contract to engineer new sewage digesters for one of the City's treatment plants. (That's \$80 million for the engineering, not for building the digesters.) As part of the contract, the engineering firm agreed to spend \$1 million on "community benefits."

What are "community benefits"? Money spent to win acquiescence, cooperation, or forbearance. Some might say "tribute." For example, when the Southeast Wastewater Treatment Plant was built, the community was given the Southeast Community Center, which has been maintained and funded by your sewer charges ever since.

It's one thing for SFPUC to spend directly on community benefits. And SFPUC does. It has an assistant general manager in charge of community benefits, and she and those under her do spend. At least one knows what is spent, and what for.

engineer to spend corruption. and firm does not lion is spent. All please its client, how you would and I shall." How spend for a friend. expenditure; were how much is spent

What are "community benefits"? Money spent to win acquiescence, cooperation, or forbearance. Some might say "tribute."

ing a consulting invites favoritism The engineering care how its milit wants to do is SFPUC. "Tell me like me to spend easy it is, then, to It's an off-budget you to research SFPUC on

community benefits, that would not be included.

It's also an extra bite of the ratepayer apple.

From the tone of voice and attitude of the SFPUC General Manager it was obvious that he is proud of the new policy—this back-door way to spend more on community benefits. This is today's innovative government.

Similarly, in a meeting in early June, the SFPUC Commission authorized the GM to give money grants to homeowners who might benefit from installing protection against flooding. Other homeowners spent their own money to protect their homes. You might well ask why some homeowners get grants while others make do for themselves. Authorizing the GM to give out \$150,000 in grants enables favoritism.

Long gone are the days when courts declared such expenditures "gifts of public funds," a specie of corruption.

All we have today are lame "oversight committees" comprised of political appointees who can be counted on to provide a veneer or appearance of oversight without any real substance. So much money flows that a million dollars here and there is hardly noticed, is often not discussed by the Commission. The matter of the million dollars for community benefits would likely not have been discussed except that a community activist, proving his chops, demanded more money.

The City, 1. spends general funds throughout the city, benefiting a community;

2. SFPUC has an assistant general manager and a team focused on community benefits, spending ratepayer dollars directly on select communities; and now, under a new policy,

3. each SFPUC consultant will spend a portion of its contract monies for community benefits. Strike three: ratepayer is out.

Time was, City government maintained roads, public transit, parks, street lights, water, sewer, justice, and facilitated commerce upon which city life relies.

Then City government expanded. And kept expanding. Now, what doesn't it hope to do?

It hopes to equalize "social benefits" throughout our City, partly through "community benefits."

A recent Policy Analysis Report (to Supervisor Avalos) spells out "the distribution of social benefits." This is foundation for the next phase, which will address how City resources address (you can be sure this means "remedy") the existing distribution of social benefits. Impliedly if not expressly, the City will succeed only if it remedies all disparities and creates equality. An impossible goal; but, impliedly, one worth striving for, according to the policy analysis.

"Social benefits" include income, parks, education, safety (freedom from crime), health and environment.

The policy report confirms what most residents already know: Pacific Heights is rich, the Tenderloin is poorer and less safe, etc.

Is the proper role of the City to try to equalize the distribution of social benefits? Isn't the point of working to contribute to society, and thereby earn social benefits, many of which can be bought with the money earned by working? By redistributing, making equal, does the City not undermine that? While it is in the interests of all to provide a safety net, should equal social benefits for all be the goal?

Steve Lawrence is a Westside resident and SF Public Utility Commission stalwart. Feedback: lawrence@westsideobserver.co

# **Library Time**

By Peter Warfield

month-long campaign helped reverse most of SF Public Library's May 16, 2013 semi-secret plan to eliminate the final 8-9 pm evening hour at all of the 18 branches that currently have open evenings until 9 pm. System-wide, fortytwo evening sessions per week would have been cut short, negatively affecting working people, students, and others who need to use the library in the evening.

But the struggle to get the library to listen to what patrons consistently say they want more of – evenings and weekends – is far from over, the library still plans to spend \$1 million on an hours expansion plan that would not lengthen a single 9 pm evening, would not add a single 9 pm evening to any location, and unfortunately would once again not add, for the general public, a single minute to a skimpy Main Library schedule that provides open hours only three nights per week, and only until 8 pm.

And instead of providing increased choices to patrons for evenings to visit a library, the plan eliminates all Monday evenings after 6 pm by shifting currently-open evenings to another day of the week. That change leaves only three nights per week that SFPL will have branches open until 9 pm. At present, a SFPL patron can find a branch library



## My 24 · Will Durst

#### **ALIEN NO MORE**

ar to the ground, everybody. Listen close. You can hear it coming. Could be a while. Might be a bit beat up. Probably won't look like it does now. But eventually those slight puffs of dust in the distance will slide right down Main Street and America will undergo another face-lift. And yes, after it's over, the

whole country will appear younger and more vital. We might even buy ourselves a red

Talking about the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act, which we, the general rabble, have come to know as The Immigration Bill. Presently it can be found slogging its way through the Senate on a pace rivaling that of a snail nailed to a 2 x 4 with a railroad spike. Minus the alacrity.

Taking so long because the Senate has to vote on every proposed amendment. And there are hundreds. No, seriously. Hundreds. Jeff Sessions of Alabama wrote 49, but he's playing T-ball in short pants compared to Iowa's Chuck Grassley who offered up 77 amendments. And this past Wednesday the Senate managed to vote on... four. To say it's going take a while is like intimating that surgical decapitation tends to inhibit throwing a sinker on the inside of the plate to a left handed batter. And speaking of the House of Representatives... we kid.

Various amendments deal with border triggers, border fences and border security. Restrictions on access to guns and hospitals and schools and welfare. Back taxes. Same sex couples. Stripping responsibility from Homeland Security and giving it to Congress. Ostensibly for reasons of expediency due to Congress' nimble bureaucracy. You can't make stuff up like this.

One amendment involves the library system and one calls for national voter ID. But plenty of obvious issues have been ignored by the Most Deliberative Body in the World. So, as a public service, we here at Durstco offer up a couple of fixes to issues that we citizens living in the real world would like to see addressed. Admittedly, few are crazy enough to make it through the House.

- 1. Before being accepted as a naturalized citizen: Applicants must give up all rights to consort with a Kardashian.
- 2. Anybody desiring to be an American must immediately stop referring to soccer as football.
- 3. Of course we welcome diversity, but weird foreign desserts have to be given American names so we know what we're getting into.
- 4. Prospective citizens must pledge to name every 4th child after a President or First Lady. Barack doesn't count. Michelle is okay.
- When swimming, men are prohibited from wearing those skimpy Speedo bathing suits that make them look like they're smuggling plums. Women are exempt from this rule.
- 6. Prospective US citizens must publicly choose: Ginger or Mary Ann.
- 7. True Americans shake hands, we don't air kiss. Women are exempt from this rule.
- 8. The correct answer to "How many liters in a gallon?" is "who cares."
- 9. Under threat of expulsion, new citizens pledge to cheer for the USA as at least their second team during international competitions such as the Olympics.
- 10. Any US citizen who thinks Mexico and New Mexico are in the same country must immediately leave. Even if they've been here all their lives. Congratulations. And welcome to America where Budweiser is no longer an import.

Recipient of 7 consecutive nominations for Stand Up of the Year, Will Durst's new oneman show "BoomerAging: From LSD to OMG" is presented every Tuesday, at the Marsh, San Francisco. Go to... themarsh.org for more info. Use code "boomer" for discount tix.

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**Guest Editorial** 

# **An Appeal to the Giants**

By John Farrell

The San Francisco Giants Ballpark is a high profile assessment. We all love our World Champion Giants. The Giants built their ballpark for \$350 million in 2000, and lease land from the Port for a total assessment (in 2000) of close to \$400 million. The current assessment for 2012 was approximately \$196.8 million, at least \$200 million under assessed, in my opinion, resulting in a loss of over \$2.3 million annually.

I just got word that the Giants are appealing this \$196.8 assessment to reduce their value to \$140 million, a potential additional revenue loss of an over \$650,000 annually. I guess since they received a big reduction in the past, why not ask for more?

When I worked in the Assessor's Office years ago, one of my areas of expertise was in possessory interest, which is when property tax is charged to private parties that use government lands for private benefit. One of my assignments was to value the Giants



When a taxpayer files an appeal for a reduction in property value (Prop 8), it is due to the value of the property going down...I can understand the Giants asking for a reduction if their revenues were going down..."

After the construction of the Giants Ballpark was completed in 2000, I, along with a principal appraiser and one of the new Assessor's Senior Managers, met with the Giants management in 2003 to finalize the assessment for the ballpark. I had worked with the Giants management numerous times in the past and they had always been professional, courteous and fair.

Both parties agreed that a cost approach would be the preferred method of valuation, and the agreed costs up to that point were around \$350 million. The only difference in the final valuation that was being challenged was a marketing cost of \$7 million in assessed value, which reflects around \$80,000 in tax revenue. The Giants agreed to a middle ground to increase the assessment by \$4 million. I advised the Assessor Senior Manager to accept this middle ground since it was reasonable, and since the Giants already agreed to the approximate \$350 million construction cost. It was a win win for both the Giants and the City.

The Assessor's Senior Manager refused and would not budge on the \$7 million assessed figure reflecting a difference of approximately \$35,000 in revenue. Giant's management left the office very upset. I looked at the principal appraiser who was there, and he also couldn't get over that we wouldn't work with the Giants. I had worked closely with this principal appraiser over the years on management contracts, advertising rights, concessions, etc., and we always got the best and fairest value for the City. I left the office a year later. The Giants subsequently appealed and received a reduction of around \$200 million in assessed value, and have been receiving a reduced

When a taxpayer files an appeal for a reduction in property value (Prop 8), it is due to the value of the property going down as the result of the economy, for example. I can understand the Giants asking for a reduction if their revenues were going down, and could justify it. Without the Ballpark the Giants would not receive their revenues from the tickets, vendors, restaurants, advertising, cable TV, etc. Their revenues continue to grow, which is wonderful. But in my opinion and experience, the Giants should have never received such a reduction in assessment.

The proposed reduction to \$140 million makes no sense. The land assessment alone is at least \$40 million from the capitalization of lease payments to the Port, leaving the balance of \$100 million for the improvements.

Naming rights were never assessed. Pacific Bell paid \$45 million for naming rights in 2000, which was subsequently transferred to AT&T. What are these naming rights worth today? Keep in mind that the 49ers/York and Levi Strauss & Co recently entered into a naming-rights agreement for a 20-year, \$220 million deal at \$11 million annually. Are you telling me the Giants naming rights are not worth at least half this amount when their contract with AT&T expires?

I appeal to the Giants owners and management to withdraw all their assessment appeals, which are insulting to the taxpayers of San Francisco, and to continue to be the class act they are, and to meet with the Assessor's Office to determine a fair value of the Ball Park as we started to do back in 2003 before being derailed. This appeal is from a fifth generation San Franciscan who has been a Giants fan since I can remember, and had the privilege to see the two Willies, Juan, the Clarks, the Bonds and other Giants greats along the way.

John Farrell, MBA, Broker/Realtor\* - Farrell Real Estate Investments. Former Assistant Assessor, Budget and Special Projects, City and County of San Francisco

*Library* (Cont. from p. 4)

four times per week.

The library is using \$1 million of an \$8.5 million increase in its budget to add 36 hours per week to the branches, but at the Main Library extended for the gen-(SF History and Book Arts/Special Coladditional hours so as to be open the same - but don't. hours as the Main.

still eliminate both of Marina Branch's

evening 8-9 pm hours, completely elimisomewhere in the city open until 9 pm nate one of two 6-9 pm evenings at Noe Valley Branch, giving it only one evening open until 9 pm, and eliminate popular Saturday mornings at Park Branch.

Our library is wealthy, thanks to voter mostly during the daytime, with nothing measures Prop. E (1994) and Prop. D (2007) that guarantee its ample income. It eral public. Three internal departments spends far more per capita than 85 of 86 other American libraries serving compalections, Deaf Services, and Library for the rably-sized populations. SFPL's budget Blind & Print Disabled), now open fewer will reach \$100 million in the next fiscal than the Main's 60 hours, would receive year. We should have nothing but the best

This revised open hours plan would

Peter Warfield is Chair of Library Users

# Ain't No Sunshine at Rec and Park

By Katherine Howard, ASLA

he state-level efforts to gut the Public Records Act have shown us that we cannot trust our politicians to protect our right to know what is going on in government. But we don't have to go to the state level to be reminded of the vital role that public disclosure laws play in keeping our government honest. Westside Observer readers will have already read George Wooding's excellent expose of the San Francisco Department of Recreation and Park (Rec and Park) efforts to stifle free speech at a public presentation sponsored by the Commonwealth Club. That fiasco was brought into the light of day because a public-spirited individual obtained copies of the denied Rec and Park e-mails from a non-government source; but what if no one had come forward with those documents? The public would never have known about Rec and Park's behind-the-scenes efforts to censor a public forum.

Having information doesn't always mean you can affect change, but without it the public doesn't even know where to start.

local Sunshine Ordinance.

Sierra Club and the Audubon Society were from that aquifer. opposing the project did not seem to have water saved each year. An impressive figure! Except that it was not true. How do we Department documents that were Sunrush out and tell the Coastal Commission And then turned around and rebuilt it! the actual amount of water used?

the good news is that we are saving water." money to run it.

Misrepresenting actual water usage doesn't think the kids deserve clean grass Sunshine requests. -- but they can get a serious infection if the plastic is not cleaned. So which is it — is Rec and Park not cleaning the grass, or are they cleaning the grass but neglecting to include that water in their calculations?

ignored the negative impact on the aquifer edge.org and learn what you can do.

Rec and Park's continued efforts to and on your sewer bills of the rainwater hide the truth about their actions have going to the sewage treatment plant. The been exposed even more recently, due to SFPUC has required that all of the rainwathe efforts of individuals who used the ter that falls on the artificial turf be sent to the sewage treatment plant for processing, In preparation for the California because of possible toxics in the artificial Coastal Commission (CCC) hearing, Rec turf. (You didn't really believe Rec and Park and Park wanted to prove that the Beach when it said the turf was harmless, did Chalet artificial turf soccer fields were you?) There is a big aquifer under Golden environmentally a good idea. The fact Gate Park, and in a few years a great many that environmental groups such as the San Franciscans will be drinking water

As every homeowner knows from made much of an impact on them. In its their water bills, processing sewer water is efforts to prove environmental benefits, expensive. When you pay your sewer bill Rec and Park claimed that the artificial in a few years, remember that you are payturf would save on irrigation water. It came ing for an additional 4.4 million gallons of up with a figure of 5.7 million gallons of clean rainwater to be purified, for artificial turf fields in Golden Gate Park.

The Public Records Act was also used know? Because Rec and Park's own on-the- when the Haight Ashbury Neighborhood ground staff told it so. This was exposed in Council (HANC) first built a community garden with recycled materials, planted shined this spring. The Department staff it, and staffed it, providing employment had gone out to the fields and measured for community members, all at no cost to the amount of water actually used. The the taxpayers. However one might have Beach Chalet fields need less than 1.5 mil- felt about the HANC recycling center, cerlion gallons of water, not the 5.7 million tainly everyone, especially the many folks gallons Rec and Park was writing into its who had garden beds, would agree that publicity releases. What was Rec and Park's this was a great project. But Rec and Park response? Did department management evicted HANC and bulldozed the garden.

Rec and Park said it could do it for You have probably already guessed \$250,000. HANC's Sunshine Request the answer to that one. Management's found that RPD is actually spending response to its staff person was, "Not sure almost \$1 million on this garden, plus a we need to beat this one up too much . . . city employee \$75,000 a year of taxpayer

Having information doesn't always was just one way that Rec and Park skewed mean you can affect change, but without the numbers. What about the water needed it the public doesn't even know where to to wash off that plastic grass every week? start. The public needs and deserves a It's not mentioned anywhere in the depart- strong, effective Public Records Act and ment's calculations. Maybe Rec and Park the ability to get timely responses to its

> Katherine Howard, ASLA, Landscape Architect, Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance, www.goldengateparkpreservation.org

Editors note: The fight for the Beach Chalet But wait, there is more. Rec and Park soccer fields isn't over. Go to www.sfocean-

Kopp (Cont. from p. 3)

Gregory's Armenian Church, the Lake Merced Church of Christ, the Brandeis-Hillel School and Congregation Beth Israel-Judea and the early opposition of the St. Thomas More Parish Council (until ordered by the archdiocese to desist), all except a few supervisors deferred to that district supervisor's desire and the project was approved by the Planning Commission, then the Board of Supervisors. Brotherhood Way as created to celebrate religious brotherhood, not million dollar housing. That sorry spectacle is repeated on a regular basis in every other supervisorial district of San Francisco, but repeal of district elections sorrowfully won't happen.

Finally, I learned last month of the commencement of a private service in the Marina on a route that follows the Municipal Railway's 30x Marina Express line. Dubbed the Chestnut Express, the service guarantees seats for all passengers, with

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fewer stops and service once an hour during morning and evening rush hours. The cost is \$6 per trip compared to a \$2 fare on a MUNI bus. Few readers will remember that transit services in the form of cable cars, trolley cars and Mission Street jitneys once were privately operated in San Francisco. Only after wage escalation and other expenses, plus advent of universal automobile transportation after World War II ,did those private enterprises cease operation in favor of public purchases of such enterprises and, thereafter, huge taxpayer subsidies for operation. (Taxpayers now subsidize over 75% of MUNI expenses.) One jitney service, from the train station at 4th and Townsend Street to Market Street, remains. I personally wish the very best of success for the new Marina private bus system. Maybe it can be expanded to West of Twin Peaks neighborhoods. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

Retired former Supervisor, State Senator and Judge Quentin Kopp lives in District 7

Senior Smarts

## **Celebrating Independence**

By Anise J. Matteson

Managing at-home living changes when one reaches the season of "old" age [the golden years]. Walking becomes more difficult, hearing and vision decreases, you cannot enjoy some of the foods that you love to eat.

either you nor your loved ones have to experience this season of life alone. Everyone goes through each season. The difference is how it is experienced and who is willing to walk with you.

book for the elderly, their caregivers, hensive, practical, market-specific inforfamily members and friends that would mation about working with older and include a Glossary for non-medical care- maturing adults to remodel their homes givers, I asked a Certified Aging-in-Place for aging-in-place. Specialist to write one page for: The definition of "aging-in-place;" the definition of to your questions. They have been taught a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist; and the strategies and techniques for designing the role of a Certified Aging-in-Place Spe- and building aesthetically enriching barcialist. Michael Menn, a licensed architect, rier-free living environments. The CAPS remodeler, and frequent industry speaker provided the following information.

#### **Definitions**

**aging-in-place** - 1: living in your home safely, independently and comfortably regardless of age, income or ability level; 2: the pleasure of living in a familiar environment throughout one's maturing years; 3: the ability to enjoy the familiar daily ritulives; 4: the reassurance of being able to call ticipating in community service. a house a "home" for a lifetime; 5: using products, services and conveniences to Aging-in-Place Specialist?' allow or enable you not to have to move as physical and social circumstances change.

Universal Home Design - is intended to make the home friendly, or easy to navi- population. gate, for everyone.

Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) - professionals trained in working with older and maturing adults in remodeling their homes to provide comprehensive and practical "aging-in-place," "universal design" and "visibility" solutions.

#### What is CAPS?

The American Association of Retired People (AARP) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) have been working together to create the "Certified Aging in Place Specialists" (CAPS) prosionals meet the needs of the burgeoning market. This training program is offered through individual state homebuilders associations to home remodelers.

The program teaches the technical, business management and customer service skills essential to compete in this fast growing segment of the residential

When I decided to write a reference remodeling industry. It provides compre-

CAPS professionals have the answer program goes beyond design to address the codes and standards, common remodeling expenditures and projects, product ideas and resources needed to provide comprehensive and practical "aging-inplace," "universal design" and "visibility" solutions. CAPS graduates pledge to uphold a code of ethics, and are required to maintain their designation by attending als and the special events that enrich our continuing education programs and par-

What is the role of a "Certified

A Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) has been trained in the following:

The unique needs of the older adult

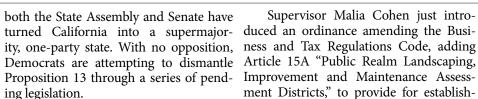
"Aging-in-Place" home modifications. Common remodeling projects. Solutions to common barriers Knowledge of "Universal Design." Knowledge of "Visibility."

While most CAPS professionals are remodelers, an increasing number are general contractors, designers, architects and health care consultants.

#### **Abbreviations**

AIA - American Institute of Architects CRG - Certified Graduate Remodeler © Information courtesy of Michael gram to help home remodeling profes- A. Menn, AIA, CGR, CAPS, Principal, Design Constructions Concept, Ltd.

> Anise Matteson is an elder care consultant, retired Registered Health Information Technician, and writer of reference books for seniors. She can be reached at cfaalo@ yahoo.com



With San Francisco's \$7.9 billion budget and at least 27,722 full-time equiva-

monthly bill today for water and sewage where property will be a Public realm area, assessed value of their home.

Starting in March 2014, PG&E will enroll over 100,000 City homes automatically into CleanPowerSF. The Board of tract with Shell Energy North America to implement the sustainable energy contract with the City. CleanPowerSF will supposedly use only state-certified energy and will add 24% to the average household's residential electricity bill. San Francisco is hoping to add carbon credits to partially effort to do so.

into its own renewable-energy plants and wind farms, much of it within the City an investment that could be backed by the promise of future tax hikes if the facilities can't support themselves.



## New Mural Replaces Lakeside Village Eyesore

By Jonathan Farrell

charming enclave that seems like a little town within a neighborhood is Lakeside Village, just off of 19th Avenue on the way to Stonestown mall. The one short block between 19th Avenue and Junipero Serra Blvd sometimes feels like

graffiti, re-appeared, over and over.

One resident, Mike Ritch who works caused people to take a second look," he structures and fences that line the track. said, "especially for the passengers on the trolley as they glance out the window."

his group of fellow artists 120 hours, or two dio for my canvas work," he said. and a half weeks, to complete. They had to both directions about every 20 minutes.

work, as trolley operators took extra efforts the neighborhood. "I hope to continue to to slow down when moving along that work with property owners to bring new stretch of track on Ocean Ave.

Our first priority is the safety of our manager, on behalf of the SF Municipal have been really supportive. Transit Authority; "and, those who suropportunities for the Arts, moving safely web site at mikeritch.com/ around this project was a no-brainer."

The mural that fills the 12 feet of

In fact, many people know Lakeside building wall along the track is called, Village as the stop along the M-Oceanview Tigers of the Sea." Ritch noted that the MUNI trolley line just before arriving at mural is inspired by visits to Monterrey Stonestown. For years, that narrow corri- Bay Aquarium. Feeling a strong connecdor which allows passengers to step on and tion to nature, "I've always been fascinated off the trolley almost right in the middle with the strange beauty of aquariums and of that one block of Ocean Ave has been have been exploring the theme in my work riddled with graffiti. Residents and mer- for years." In some ways the mural allows chants made continuous efforts to erase people to be a part of it while waiting for the markings. But, like any struggle with a trolley, they blend in as if they too are at the aquarium.

When the Westside Observer talked to and lives in one of the buildings along that Ritch about the mural, he was very confinarrow stretch of MUNI track, decided to dent about Lakeside Village as his home. do something about it. A talented mural With all due respect to building owner artist, Ritch approached property manager Tobriner, Ritch considers that stretch of Harmon Shragge, and the building's owner, wall, "my building." "Since 2007, I have Michael Tobriner. With their permission been the director of the Jean Henry School and help. Ritch created an eye-catching of Art, a small institution founded in mural. "I wanted it to be something that 1962." Its side wall is among the row of

The John Henry School offers fine art classes for adults in various media. "Cur-"I like the idea of bringing art into the rently, I teach oil painting and watercolor neighborhood," said Ritch. It took him and classes there, and I use the space as my stu-

"Recently, I have been very attracted to work quickly because the corridor is nar- the inherent accessibility and scale mural row and the trolley arrives and departs in of work," Ritch said. He recognized the community's struggle with graffiti as a way Ritch said MUNI was helpful in his to put his artistic talent to use in service to projects into the community.

"I had a lot of fun making it," he said, passengers," said Paul Rose, media relations "and the building owner and the neighbors

To learn more about artist Mike Ritround us on city streets. As San Francisco ich, his murals. and his efforts to bring art has a citywide commitment to improve to San Francisco neighborhoods visit his

Jonathan Farrell is a local free-lance reporter

averages approximately \$84.00 per month. and the district will provide landscaping, improvements and/or maintenance; and is only to keep the roads at the same level making environmental findings.

reduce the bill. Citizens can opt out of this Both PID's and CBD's need a defined geo- rates by 21.5% to 33% effective next year. graphical area and a majority vote of sur- Who can stop their rate increases? In two infrastructure such as rooftop solar panels able revenue source for specific open space completely dumped on homeowners. Twoimprovements.

> "We paid our taxes, now fix our streets"? Our infrastructure taxes are used to pay

Supervisor Malia Cohen just intro- employee salaries, not fix roads.

For decades the San Francisco Departity, one-party state. With no opposition, ness and Tax Regulations Code, adding ment of Works (DPW) deferred basic Article 15A "Public Realm Landscaping, roads maintenance while citizens kept pay-Improvement and Maintenance Assess- ing taxes for basic infrastructure needs. ment Districts," to provide for establish- San Francisco's roads became so bad that in ment of assessment districts to finance 2011, citizens were forced to vote for Proplandscaping, improvements, and main- osition B, the Street and Sidewalk Improvelent City employees, here are some of the tenance of public realm areas (outdoor ment Bond. With interest, these bonds will spaces open to the public), including parks, cost homeowners \$360 million for infra-In the next three years, Public Utility parklets, sidewalks, landscaped areas, pla-structure repair that we have already paid Commission water and sewage rates will zas, and gardens; to authorize the purchase for. Each homeowner will pay an increased has the highest-paid employees in the be increasing by over 59%. The average of real property with assessment funds, property tax of \$9.50 for every \$100,000 in

Shamefully, the goal of the roads bond as when the road repair project started. Cohen is quietly adding an assessment Someone should hand Mayor Lee and Mohammed Nuru, DPW's director, a shovel and have them fill potholes for a

Sunset Scavenger, San Francisco's rounding property owners. In effect, the years, Recology will be back for more rate

The cost of maintaining San Franthirds of those trees are the maintenance Whatever happened to the concept of, responsibility of adjacent property owners, even if the property owners didn't plant the

City Hall's ATM (Cont. from p. 1)

7,864 employees in the City's \$100,000 base-pay club gobbled \$1,125,583,168.83 in total pay, fully 41.3 percent of the \$2,724,434,062 in total pay including overtime in calendar year 2012, excluding fringe benefits. You read that right: The 21.4 percent in the City's \$100,000-plus club gobble 41.3 percent of the total payroll, with more \$100,000-er's being added homeowner costs we should expect: every year.]

In many job categories, San Francisco country. We also have more employees per capita than just about any major metropolitan area. According to John Rahaim, director of San Francisco's Planning Department, Chicago has only 7 employees in its Planning Department, while San Francisco's Planning Department had 176 employees at the end of calendar year 2012. The list of useless City departments and overpaid City employees grows daily.

Mayor Lee's FY 2013-2014 budget will also pay for a poorly performing transit system (MTA), a massive Department of Public Health, a dysfunctional Ethics Commission, 146 employees in its program, albeit with a lot of trouble and bloated Department of the Environment at the end of 2012, and a misguided and underperforming Recreation and Park Department.

Outsourcing traditional City expenses in San Francisco is causing homeowners to pay twice for traditional City services. Additionally, California's Democratic Governor, and a democratic majority in

Supervisors approved a \$19.5 million contax called a "Park Improvement District," or PID. The PID assessments are very similar to neighborhood Community Benefits couple of weeks. Districts (CBDs). CBD's are a form of self taxation. Business owners on a commercial monopoly garbage collector — now street agree to increase their taxes so that rebranded and renamed "Recology" to their street will be nicer — for example, make the company more palatable to vot-Polk Street, Ocean Avenue, or 24th Street. ers — will be raising garbage collection

The program also calls for SF to local citizens are creating an extra tax for increases. plough \$1.2 billion of borrowed money a specific geographic area. Funds from a PID tax will supposedly provide a sustain- cisco's 110,000 street trees is about to be

Cont. p. 8

#### OVER-DEVELOPMENT ON TWIN PEAKS?

Taking Away the Last Remaining Green Spaces In Our Neighborhood

dangerous and unwanted precedent has been set by the city's approval and subsequent issuance on May 15, 2013 of a building permit allowing construction on one of the few remaining open green spaces in the San Francisco neighborhood of Vista Francisco, adjoining the tourist hot spot of Twin Peaks. The project sponsor of this proposed over-development is Santos and Urrutia, Structural Engineers. Mr. Rodrigo Santos is the former president of the city's Building Inspection Commission.

This building permit will allow a 5-story over garage, 4-unit building to be built at the Twin Peaks bus stop, up against and sharing the public staircase that neighbors and tourists use to get to and from one of the highest points in San Francisco known as Twin Peaks.



Approval by the Planning Commission came over fierce objection by the neighbors, community activists, and

Proposed building at 70 Crestmont

Twin Peaks Eastside Neighborhood Alliance

**Appeal** 

**Board of Appeals** Wed, July 17<sup>th</sup> • 5 pm City Hall Rm. 416.

even the Planning Department, who urged that the Commission deny the application to subdivide and build on the 70 Crestline lot.

The Twin Peaks Eastside Neighborhood Alliance (TPENA) is an organization



The Planning Department opposed the proposed four-unit building with two one-bed- help by sending letters room units with one parking space for each, one three-bedroom unit with two parking addressing the impacts spaces, and one four-bedroom unit with one space

dedicated to fighting the over-development of their neighborhood, preserving the intentional open green space design that offsets the high-density apartment complexes. It has been objecting to building proposals for this site since first put forth in 1998.

Those opposing this over-development can of this building proj-

ect on the residents, neighbors, tourists, etc. Letters must be received by the Board of Appeals prior to July 11th. Ten (10) copies, plus the original, should be sent to the Board with the subject "70 Crestline - Appeal #13-062."

Citizens are strongly encouraged to attend the public hearing and testify on Wednesday, July 17th, at 5 pm in City Hall, Room 416, to oppose this over-development.

Info: 415-643-0480 email tpena.70Crestline@gmail.com or www.socketsite.com/ archives/2012/11/a\_precedent\_setting\_decision\_and\_objection\_for\_developm.html# Contact: Media Relations, Twin Peaks Eastside Neighborhood Alliance (TPENA) /

#### Lake Merced (Cont. from p. 2)

erroneous claim that Rec & Park paid the full cost of a new dock and ramp for the rowers. A number of the errors of omission and commission were called to the attention of the Commissioners in a letter to the Commissioners from the Committee to Save Lake Merced. We were ignored. We're getting used to it.

But since then, the news has taken an even more negative turn. To understand the seriousness of the latest bad news requires a brief lesson in the history of the Committee to Save Lake Merced's involvement with Lake Merced. From 1993 until the mid 2000's, the issue was the declining lake levels. Thanks to the efforts of our partners at CalTrout, and many others, that issue was brought reasonably well under control around 2004, and even now Daly City is working on a project that optimum level. There are no less than

five reports, studies, organizational recommendations that all agree on the same optimum level. But at the June 11 SFPUC Commission meeting, SFPUC staff made a presentation that strongly suggests that, because of other staff projects, so far unapproved by the Commission, that lake level might not be attainable. So, after about 20 years of volunteer work involving hundreds of volunteers and thousands of hours of volunteer time, what we seem to have is a case of "a few inches forward, but a many feet in reverse."

It's hard to say how much more of the pain dealing with the SFPUC and Rec & Park bureaucracy the current crew of volunteers can tolerate. So we encourage others to get involved; it's your lake, it's the Peoples' lake, and it's being neglected, abused and disrespected by your government.

has the potential of getting the lake to the Jerry Cadagan co-founded the Committee to Save Lake Merced in 1993.

#### **Squat & Gobble** (Cont. from p. 1)

Inside the building, Squat & Gobble is planning a second floor dining area. For now the dining area will be private dining until the restaurant gets a conditional use from the City. Also planned for the second level is office space and storage. A portion of the second floor seating area will overlook the ground floor seating area. Outdoor seating is planned as well.

Next door, Warren Orthodontics will be rebuilding, bringing back Vin Debut, a wine shop that occupied space in what was the West Portal Medical-Dental building,

owned by Warren. Avrum Shepard, president of the GWPNA, said Vin Debut has signed a lease on its location.

Shatara said Squat & Gobble's West Portal store was its busiest. Once built, the new store will become the company's new headquarters. The restaurant hopes to complete construction by the end of this year. "I don't see any objections to what they're proposing," Shepard said. We would like to see them move ahead as quickly as possible."

Keith Burbank is a local free-lance journalist.

#### Join The Cliff House in Celebrating its 150 Anniversary

By Mitch Bull

erched on a rocky bluff standing as a sentry to the comings and going on San Francisco's western most overlook, the world famous Cliff House has reached a milestone, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding.

Like the phoenix emboldened upon the flag of the City of San Francisco, the restaurant has survived earthquakes, numerous fires, as well as the rough Pacific

Ocean waters, and even ship explosions. The Cliff House has remained strong and resilient through three renovations. Constructed in 1863, the year of the Battle of Gettysburg, the first U.S. military draft and the creation of the first breakfast cereal, the Cliff House is among a small group of U.S. restaurants that are successfully still in operation.

proprietors Dan and Mary Hountalas, have Francisco landmark in her recent book successfully run the eco-friendly landmark The San Francisco Cliff House. for the last 40 years. Recycling, avid com- Week Long Celebratory Activities Planned posting, buying locally and when possible, organic, the trio have proven that the Cliff its history the week of July 13 – 19. On House may be 150 years old but is still on Wednesday and Thursday, July 17th and top of its game. "Dan and I are honored to 18th, the Terrace Room will be transbe stewards of such an important landmark formed into an historical museum with in San Francisco history. We hope that Cliff local historians, seminars and collectors House will far outlive us as it continues to being present with antiquities and stories thrive into new centuries," Mary Hountalas of the past. It will be open from 1:30 pm commented.

#### A History Lesson

the restaurant as a majestic gothic Victorian structure. Following Sutro's death in house.com/store/ 1898 his daughter, Dr. Emma Sutro Merritt Restaurant Specials throughout the year continued as owner. A fire during remodand Mary Hountalas in 1973 from George Whitney, Jr. of "Playland" fame.

1977, while partnering with the Hountalas a treat! family to create the Cliff House we have brought the structure back to its' 1909 neoclassic elegance.

As the crown jewel of the Golden Gate National Recreation area the Cliff House is part of the largest urban national park west of the Mississippi. The Cliff House, in conjunction with the National Park Service, has installed a wind turbine working towards the parks overall sustainability plan. Complying with SHPO (State His-House Gas savings of 13,408 kg per year.

to work with, Co-owner Mary Hountalas, National Recreation Area." a historian in her own right, has collected toric Cliff House. With over four decades com or call (415) 386-3330. of research Mary has turned her collection

General Manager Ralph Burgin, and into a stunning tour of this captivating San

The Cliff House plans to highlight to 8:30 pm with free admission. For more detail on history exhibits, refer to www. The first Cliff House was a modest cliffhouse.com. The week will culminate structure built in 1863 by Senator John with a grand celebration on Friday, July 19, Buckley and C.C. Butler. It was purchased from 7pm to 11pm in the Terrace Room in 1881 by Adolph Sutro, later mayor of with a ticket price of \$18.63 per person, San Francisco. A fire in 1896 destroyed (the year the Cliff House was first built) the original structure, and Sutro rebuilt and will include tastings and dancing. Tickets may be purchased at www.cliff-

Both restaurants will offer daily dineling brought the "gothic" Cliff House ing specials that celebrate the long and rich to ruin in 1907. In 1909 the neo-classic culinary history of the Cliff House. There Cliff House was opened, designed by the will be a daily lunch entrée in Sutro's and same architects that designed the Palace a daily dinner entrée in the Bistro, both Hotel in downtown San Francisco. Later offered at \$18.63 in honor of the 1863 Cliff remodeled during subsequent decades, the House. A \$150 pre-fixe dinner for two with Cliff House operation was passed to Dan commemorative favors in Sutro's will be offered several times through the end of the year. Editor's Note: If you haven't expe-The National Park Service bought the rienced a Bloody Mary at the Cliff House or landmark and surrounding properties in one of their famous popovers you are in for

The Cliff House is located at 1090 today. An extensive restoration in 2003-04 Point Lobos, the western-most point of the GGNRA's historic Sutro Heights District. It is open seven days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner at the Bistro and at Sutro's, for lunch and dinner. A Champagne Brunch Buffet is offered every Sunday in the Terrace Room, which is also available for private functions. Guests may shop for historical treasures and gift items at the Cliff House Gift shop open daily. Complimentary parking on street is availtoric Preservation Office) regulations, the able or nearby in the El Camino del Mar wind turbine is expected to produce 9433 and Merrie Way parking lots. Valet parkk-W-hours per year amounting to Green ing is available at night. The Cliff House is operated by Peanut Wagon, Inc. and With more than 150 years of history is a concessionaire of the Golden Gate

For Information on special offerings countless artifacts associated with the his- or for reservations, visit www.cliffhouse.



#### MONEY MATTERS · By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan Sure you need life insurance - but how much?

hances are you recognize the importance of life insurance. If you have dependents that rely on the income you generate, there is little question they need the protection life insurance can provide. For most of us, it's not a question of whether life insurance is necessary; it's a matter of how much coverage is needed.



mate your actual need. The face amount an important income earner is no lon-20-30 years or more?

#### Measuring the need **more** road. accurately

A financial professional can help factors that go into the calculation:

#### 1. Covering living expenses

erations is how much money your family from the insurance settlement to meet will need to meet basic living costs over these goals, or devoting a set amount of time if something unexpected happened income annually to fund them as you do to you. Although some expenses may be today, these goals should be accounted lower because one person is no longer for. living, don't automatically assume that all expenses will be lower. For instance, funding together will give you a basis for if one spouse performed a number how much life insurance is adequate, but of household tasks that the surviving there's more to consider. spouse would have a difficult time duplicating, it may be necessary to factor in the cost of hiring somebody to handle be reduced by other factors. A major conthose tasks.

late a ballpark figure for how much life his or her spouse. Also, as a couple gets insurance coverage you may need. One older, the total amount of replacement method is to come up with a workable income required will decline assuming number by calculating your average sufficient funding is in place for retiremonthly living costs. Extrapolate that ment. It's important to re-evaluate your out over 12 months. When you settle on life insurance needs at major life milethe annual cost of living for survivors, stones like a marriage or having a child, multiply that number by 25, and you but it may also be worth it to re-evaluate will have a good sense of the primary life every few years to ensure the coverage insurance need. This formula assumes you have in place is still accurate. that you can draw down 4 percent of using several different coverage estimate level of protection for your family. methods. It's strongly recommended that anyone considering purchasing or changing their life insurance policy meet with a financial professional before making a decision.

#### 2. Paying Debts

In an ideal situation, a portion of the insurance settlement could be used to pay

Like most people, you want to keep off a mortgage, car loans, student loans the costs of insurance under control, and credit card debts. Then the family is but you also don't want to underesti- not burdened with these expenses when of a life insurance policy may look sig- ger in the picture. Depending on the life nificant, but that can be deceiving. For stages of your family members, it may instance, a policy that would pay your be difficult to determine these costs, but family \$500,000 upon your death may creating an informed estimate can be appear to be a windfall, but can it really crucial to providing the right amount of provide for their living expenses over coverage if something were to happen to you tomorrow, or fifteen years down the

#### 3. Meeting savings goals

If part of your income is set aside to you assess whether you have sufficient meet major financial goals such as fundcoverage, but you can do a quick self- ing college education for your children assessment by considering three primary or retirement, those goals remain as important as ever when factoring how much life insurance coverage you may One of the most important consid- need. Whether applying a lump sum

Adding these different aspects of life

#### Adjustments to your estimate

Your family's insurance needs may sideration is whether a surviving spouse There are several ways to calcu- would earn income after the death of

If your current life insurance coverthe lump sum total to meet your annual age is based on simply guessing at how expenses. Note that this formula is fairly much is enough, it makes sense for you simple, but determining how much your to use these tips, and consider meeting family might really need for their unique with a professional, to try to get more needs can be complex. You may consider specific in determining an appropriate

> Brandon Miller, CFP and Joanne Jordan, CFP are financial consultants at Jordan Miller & Associates, A Private Wealth Advisory Practice of Ameriprise Financial Inc. in San Francisco, specializing in helping LGBT individuals and families plan and achieve their financial goals

#### Homeowner ATM (Cont. from p. 6)

trees, don't know how to care for them, and don't want them. The DPW is now planning to release the remaining one-third to property owners. Now the City is charging homeowners huge permit fees and fines for tree maintenance.

A recent City study — produced by AECOM, which receives many lucrative City consulting contracts — shows that tree maintenance could cost a homeowner hundreds annually in sidewalk repairs and maintenance fees.

Naturally, the City is exploring options to generate funding to take care of San Francisco's trees. The three options being looked at are a special assessment districts (PID's), a parcel tax, or a property tax increase called a general obligation bond. To maintain San Francisco's urban forest and gradually increase it by 2,900 trees per year is estimated to cost \$31.3 million annually. All of these taxes and/or assessments will be borne by property owners, not renters who make up 65% of the City's residents.

Also, it used to be that if City-owned tree roots grew into a homeowner's sewer

line, the City would pay claims for any damage to their sewer lines. Homeowners are now responsible to fix and maintain their sewer lines, regardless of whose trees cause any damage.

San Francisco's Transit Authority is preparing a new transit fee/tax that will go to the ballot. Downtown businesses have traditionally paid a transportation fee, but now, residential builders of housing and condominiums throughout the City will be charged a TSF of \$5.53 per square foot for residential buildings. Over a twentyyear period, the Transportation Authority hopes to collect \$138.8 million in residential fees and \$493.8 million in non-residential fees, for a total of \$632.6 million in transportation sustainability fees (TSF).

Cleverly, the Transit Authority will be creating a November 2014 ballot measure to supposedly reduce traffic congestion that will feature Automobile Trips Generated (ATG). The City will tell the public that this is a better transportation system and few voters will realize that they are creating a citywide transportation tax. It is doubtful that MUNI will either run faster

# WHISTLEBLOWERS Dr. Maria Rivero & Dr. Derek Kerr

## **The First American Whistleblowers**

n July 30, 1778, while at war against imperial Tyranny, the Continental Congress empowered whistleblowers to protect the new Republic; "Resolved, That it is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States, as well as all other the inhabitants thereof, to give the earliest information to Congress or other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any officers or persons in the service of these states, which may come to their knowledge."

DONT TREAD ON ME

Protection Act was a Revolutionary War lowed the Country would be ruined..." battle in Rhode Island, aboard the US Navy warship Warren. There, ten whis- Treatment of Prisoners?" tleblowers - Navy and Marine officers

planned to expose incompetence, misconduct and war crimes of Navy Commander-in-Chief Commodore Esek Hopkins. Their mission was as perilous as Hopkins was formidable. Suffocating

under British occupation, the Continental were forced to do Ship's Duty by Commo-Congress had recruited Hopkins to relieve dore Hopkins Orders, and he refused to General George Washington from the exchange them when a Cartel was settled "plague, trouble and vexation" of unruly and other prisoners were exchanged, but naval crews. Owner of a large merchant don't know that it was their Turn. The fleet, Hopkins had reaped a fortune pri- Reason he assigned for not exchanging vateering during the French and Indian them was, that he wanted to have them War. His brother Stephen governed Rhode enlist on board the Frigate." Island, and signed the Declaration of Independence. His son John was captain of the with being a Hindrance to the proper Man-Warren. His flagship flew his personal ning of the Fleet. What Circumstances do standard - a rattlesnake coiled to strike, you know relative to this Charge?" with the motto, Don't Tread on Me.

brash and indolent. Instructed by Con- orders so unsteady that I have sometimes gress to sail "directly to Chesapeak Bay in thought he was not in his senses...it is gen-Virginia" and attack the British fleet, he erally feared that his Commands would be sailed to the Bahamas instead. There, he so imprudent that Ships would be foolsuccessfully raided a British arms depot, ishly lost...The Character that Commobut later allowed enemy frigates to escape dore Hopkins bore was a great Hindrance unchallenged from U.S. waters. Raring to to me in getting Recruits." fight, his officers protested being anchored Months...therein they could not Serve Frigate...?" their Country in its defence". Hopkins struggled to recruit sailors, who made bet- Request of the Officers who signed the ter money with privateers than the Navy. Petition against Commodore Hopkins, So he enslaved British prisoners, giving and from a Zeal for the American Cause." them a choice to man his fleet - or be most inhuman & barbarous manner."

of our country...We are personally well Congress in Philadelphia.

published:

with Esek Hopkins, Esq?"

Acquaintance with him since I came on another investigation ensued. board the Ship."

United States...?

ness...that they were a Parcel of Lawyers

The genesis of our first Whistleblower Clerks, that if their Measures were fol-

**Q**: "Do you know any Thing about his

A: "I was on board the Frigate Proviwhen...Twenty dence Prisoners... were... asked...whether would do Ships Duty? They answered No.... Orders from the Commodore (were) to put them in Irons, to keep them

on Two Thirds Allow-

ance...some prisoners...

Q: "Commodore Hopkins is charged

A: "I think him unfit for command... The imperious Commodore was both his Conversation is at Times so wild and

**Q:** "Had you Liberty from Commodore "in a total state of inactivity for Several Hopkins or Captain Hopkins to leave the

A: "No. I came to Philadelphia at the

Although notables like John Adams "placed in irons" and starved. His officers supported Hopkins, the whistleblowers deplored that he "treated prisoners in the were not demonized as disloyal or arrogant. Accordingly, on March 26, 1777, On February 19, 1777, just seven "Congress took into consideration the months after the Declaration of Inde- paper containing charges and complaints pendence, the ten dissidents signed a against Commodore Hopkins; Where-Whistleblower Complaint: "We are ready upon, Resolved, That Esek Hopkins be to hazard everything that is dearest, and if immediately, and he hereby is suspended necessary sacrifice our lives for the welfare from his command in the American Navy."

Outraged by the "unjust and false acquainted with the real character and complaints" filed by his subordinates, conduct of our commander commodore Hopkins retaliated. He court-martialed Hopkins...we (are)... sincerely and hum- the petition's "prime mover," a Lieutenant bly petitioning the honorable Marine com- Marven, an associate of Thomas Paine, mittee that they would enquire into his who himself fell afoul of Congress for character and conduct for we suppose... leaking that France was supporting the he has been guilty of such crimes as ren- Revolution. Interrogated by both Hopder him quite unfit for the publick depart- kins, father and son, Marven was found ment he now occupies..." Marine Captain guilty of signing "scurrilous papers against John Grannis was picked to go AWOL and his Commander-in-Chief." Expelled from carry their petition from Rhode Island to the Navy, Lt. Marven became the first casualty in a 235-year epidemic of retal-At the time, there was no First iatory firings. Still thirsting for revenge, Amendment to uphold freedom of speech. upon his removal from office in January Whistleblower protections didn't exist. 1778, Hopkins sued all ten whistleblow-For a country at war, insubordination was ers for "criminal libel," demanding 10,000 threatening. Yet, complainant Grannis was pounds in damages. Lt. Marven and midtreated respectfully. He was interviewed, shipman Shaw were jailed without means not arrested. A Congressional investiga- for legal representation. They wrote "to tion was conducted without secrecy, and humbly implore the intervention of Congress" after being "arrested for doing what Q: "Have you a personal Acquaintance they then believed and still believe was nothing but their duty." Their appeal was A: "Yes, I have had a personal read before Congress on July 23rd and

On July 30, 1778, the Continental Q: "Did you ever hear him say any Congress passed America's first Whistle-Thing disrespectful of the Congress of the blower Protection Act, cited above. The Founding Fathers in Congress understood A: "I have heard him at different the dangers of retaliation, and criminal-Times...speak disrespectfully of the Conizing whistleblowers. Despite a wartime gress...that they were a Sett or Parcel of budget crisis, and National Security con-Men who did not understand their Busi- cerns, they noted that the whistleblowers









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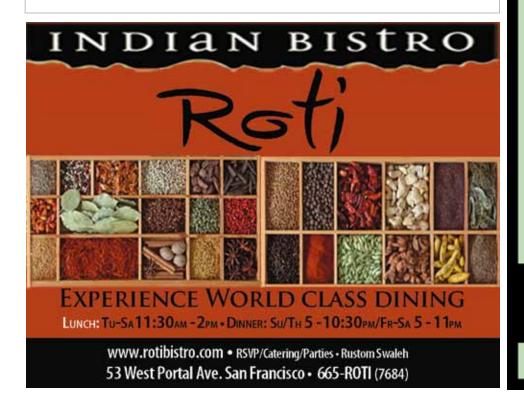




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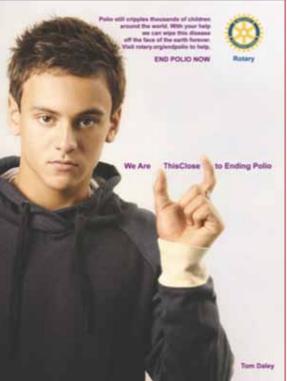
ummer arrived last week, not with a bang, but with tapping, the sounds of raindrops on rooftops...who would have predicted "January-type" rain in June? Anyway, there's a lot going on in our fair city – get out and enjoy!

June Swoon '13 - welcome to July...July cannot get here too soon as far as the SF Giants are concerned. The past 3 weeks have brought back memories of the many "June Swoons" of the past. Hopefully, they will turn it around soon.

Racing on the Bay... The racing season for the America's Cup is finally here and it should be quite a spectacle. The 72 foot ultra-modern catamarans are a sight to see, with masts that stand over 125 feet tall. Try to see the action in person, or if not, catch it on TV. The ship-mounted cameras give a great view of the action.

It's all about the trees (part 1)... Vandals have severely damaged hundreds of trees in Golden Gate Park. The San Francisco Forest Alliance has written to the SF Rec and Park Department to pledge \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the park tree vandals and have called on other environmental groups to match its offer. Our city already has one of the smallest urban forest canopies in the country, and we support initiatives that would expand this, especially in this time of climate change. As it is, our trees are under threat from native plant supporters who wish to fell thousands of trees because they're not native. A lot of trees have actually been killed. On Mount Davidson and elsewhere in the city, trees have been girdled and left to die for this very reason. You can contact them at: SFForest.net.

Save Sutro Forest (Trees – part 2)... I am usually fairly level-headed and try to be open to both sides of the story, but I cannot comprehend the logic of the proposal by UCSF to better "manage" their section of the Sutro forest. While I believe in taking care of trees to protect public safety, (e.g. the Stern Grove debacle) the plan discussed at the WOTPCC meeting seems to be extreme. Unlike, say Yellowstone Park, (or even the East Bay – Oakland Hills), central San Francisco is not prone to large wildfires that would require the removal of up to 30,000 trees and the underlying brush. It seems to me that the removal would create more of a carbon footprint and strip the City of acres of greenery at a time when we are becoming denser with construction and population. I think everyone can agree that "protecting our neighbors, our buildings, and preventing a wildfire" is responsible, but can't we strike an acceptable balance? There seems to be distinctly opposite opinions about the health of the forest and I would like to see a truly independent opinion mediated that both sides can accept. If these were redwoods, would they be doing it? I doubt it. Eucalyptus may not be native to SF, but the "management" of a century old "cloud forest" in an urban setting is something that should be greatly investigated and debated before anything rash is done. I've seen the results of "native plant" experiments and it is not pretty. If the forest is "managed" to a result that creates a windy, slide prone hillside, it's too late to go back. Let the UC Regents and our Cont. p. 14



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# JULY-AUGUST EVEN

#### EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

Farmers Market | Every Sun | 9 am-1 pm | Stonestown back parking lot: at Stonestown Galleria (19th Ave @ Winston).

#### EVERY MON & TUE • JOB SEEKERS LAB

Mon 11 am - 2pm & Tue 10 am - 1 pm | Computers with Internet connection are available for independent work creating or updating your resume, preparing job applications and/or searching online for iobs. Some staff assistance. Bring a flash drive. Main Library, 100 Larkin, 5th Fl.

#### EVERY TUES • QUE SYRAH HAPPY HOUR

Every Tue Happy Hour | 4–8 pm | Que Syrah Wine Bar. Take \$1 off each glass, 10% off each bottle (consumed on site). 230 West Portal Ave 731-7000 Every Thu | 5:30–9 pm | Chef Val's Tapas \$3–7.

#### EVERY WED • FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING?

Every Wed | 7-8 am | Toastmasters helps you become a confidant public speaker. Tennessee Grill, 1128 Taraval. RSVP 564-6069

#### EVERY THURS – NIGHTLIFE

**Thu | 6–10 pm |** The Academy of Sciences is transformed with live music, provocative science, mingling and coctails. GG Park \$12 (\$10 Members). calademy.org/nightlife

#### JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

Fri | 7–11 pm | The Balcony Lounge at the Cliff House hosts jazz performances every Friday night. 1 Seal Rock. Performers: www.cliffhouse.com/home/jazz. html

#### FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

**5–8:45 pm** | Music, poetry, films, dance, tours and lectures. Cafe: special dinner, no-host bar. Art-making children/adults. deYoung Museum, GG Park. deyoung. famsf.org/deyoung/fridays

#### SUN • GLOBAL FILM SERIES

Sun Jul 7 | 1 - 3pm | About 111 Girls (Farsi/Persian and Kurdish, English subtitles). A government official travels across Kurdistan to stop 111 young Kurdish women from committing suicide in protest against conditions that have left them spinsters. Koret Auditorium, Main Library, 100 Larkin St.Global Lens Film Series

#### TUE • PEOPLE OF PARKSIDE/SUNSET

Thu Jun 6 | 7 pm | Formerly Taraval Parkside Merchants Assn. Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave. 1st Thu each month.

#### THU • BALLROOM DANCE CLASSES

Thu Jul 11 | Learn the Samba, Rhumba, Cha Cha Cha, Mambo, Tango, Waltz, Foxtrot, Swing and more! Forest Hill Christian Church, 250 Laguna Honda Blvd. 6 lessons \$70 cple. RSVP 661-2746.

#### SAT • INNER SUNSET WALKING TOURS

July 13 | 11 am | Local historian Lorri Ungaretti leads a walking tour of the Inner Sunset neighborhood. Free. Arguello and Hugo. Info: 415.557.4266 or sfcityquides.org.

#### THU • DIST COALITION MEETING

Thu Jul 13 | 7 pm-9 pm | Meets 2nd Thu each month. Info: 586.8103 or ssuval@sbcglobal.net laraval Station, 2345 24th Ave.

#### SAT • GLEN PARK REC CENTER MTG

Sat Jul 13 | 10:30 am - 12:30 pm | Glen Canyon Park Recreation Center near the Elk & Chenery St. Discuss the renovation funded by the Parks Bond. sfrecpark.org/project/glen-canyon-park-2012-bond/ for a summary of past meetings and to view the latest design. Info: 575.5601.

#### MON • SHARP

Mon Jul 29 | 7 pm | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People. Last Mon each month - sharpsf.com for details. 1736 9th Ave. @Moraga.

#### TUE • HOW TO USE LINKEDIN

Tue Jul 23 | 6-7:30 pm | The biggest professional network on the Internet — experts will take you step by step and tips for how to connect for your professional development. 5th Floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin. Free. 557-4277

#### WED • THE LIZARD LADY

Wed Jul 10 | 2 pm | The lizard lady presents a wildlife experience that children love! Come see

endangered. Ages 3 and older. 355-2825 Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

#### WED • WEST OF TWIN PEAKS

Wed Jul 10 | 7 pm | San Francisco's West of Twin Peaks Local historian Jacqueline Proctor presents a view of San Francisco's development from west of Twin Peaks, home to some of the city's most beautiful neighborhoods and influential citizens. The suburbs that spread from the city's highest point form a unique part of the San Francisco tapestry. 355-2825 Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

#### SAT • GLEN CANYON REC CENTER

Sat Jul 13 | 10:30 am-12:30 pm | Glen Canyon Park Recreation Center—inside the park, near the intersection of Elk St. and Chenery St. Discuss the renovation of the Center, funded by the 2012 Parks Bond. sfrecpark.org/project/glen-canyon-park-2012-bond/ for a summary of past community meetings and mauney-brodek@sfgov.org.

#### TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

**Tue Jul 16 | 7 pm |** MInnie & Lovie Ctr. 3rd Tue of the month. Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 650 Capitol Ave 759-3100.

#### WED-THU • CLIFF HOUSE HISTORY WEEK

**Wed & Thu Jul 17–18 | 1:30–8:30 pm |** the Terrace Room will be transformed into an historical museum with local historians, seminars and collectors being present with antiquities and stories of the past. FREE. Info www.cliffhouse.com.

#### THU • GRUB BREW & JAVA

Thu Jul 18 | 5:30 pm | The Culinary Heritage of SF. The SF Architectural Heritage Society presents Anthony Veerkamp moderator. (National Trust for American art. "His artistic integrity Historic Preservation) at Gold Dust Lounge, 165 Jefferson St. \$12.

#### TUE • AUTHOR C.W. GORTNER

Tue Jul 23 | 7 pm | The Tudor Conspiracy (Elizabeth | scient given the inclusive nature of the Spymaster Chronicles #2). The author of *The Queen's* Vow will read from his second in the Elizabeth I Spymaster Chronicles series – a book "full of breathtaking action, dark twists and unexpected revelations."-Michelle Moran, author of Nefertiti. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. Info 564-8080.

#### MON • GOKHALE POSTURE WORKSHOP

Mon Aug 5 | 6:30 pm | You have a right to a painfree back, neck, hips, knees, feet. The Gokhale Method uses primal posture and movement to help you re-establish your body's structural integrity and regain a pain-free life. 1590 Bryant St Must RSVP gokhalemethod.com

#### WED • PUBLIC LIBRARY FILM FESTIVAL

Wed, Jul 31 | 7:00 pm | Babies - A visually stunning and joyful film that simultaneously chronicles the lives of four of the world's newest human inhabitants--in Mongolia, Namibia, San Francisco and Tokyo, respectively--from first breath to first steps, on a journey at once universal and amazingly original. Rated PG. Popcorn will be served. 355-2825 Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

#### THU • OLD/NEW ARCHITECTURE

**Thu Aug 8 | 5:30 pm |** Susan MacDonald of the Getty Conservation Institute will examine historic urban settings, focusing on the juxtaposition of old and new that gives cities their interesting corners, surprises, and texture. SPUR 654 Mission \$12. SF Architectural Heritage

#### SAT • INNER SUNSET WALKING TOURS

Sat Aug 10 | 11 am | Local historian Lorri Ungaretti leads a walking tour of the Inner Sunset neighborhood. Free. Arguello and Hugo. Info: 415.557.4266 or sfcityquides.org.

#### TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

**Tue Aug 20 | 7 pm |** Taraval District Police Station. 3rd Tue of the month. Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 2345 - 24th Ave 759-3100.

#### THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

Thu Aug 29 | 7 pm | Meets last Thu each month. SF State Warriors and Recology are invited. This meeting is at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street.

Have a local event? Contact: editor@westsideobserver.com Bay Area Figurative Painter

## Richard Diebenkorn Wows

reptiles, some local, some from far away, many The Berkeley Years, 1953–1966, de Young Museum from June 22 – Sept. 29 The first exhibition to explore in-depth the work produced by Diebenkorn



between 1953 and 1966, when he lived in Berkeley will include over 130 of the artist's paintings and drawings assembled from collections across the country, many of them rarely or never before seen in public exhibitions. Diebenkorn's engagement with the unique settings of the Bay Area, along with his personal history, ties this exhibition deeply to the region.

Diebenkorn underwent a remarkable metamorphosis during what is now known as his "Berkeley period," beginning with an abstract phase influenced by the Bay Area's natural environment, and then moving to figurative works, including figures, interiors, and still lifes. Fiercely independent, Diebenkorn continued to explore his shifting conceptions of abstraction and figuration over these

to view the latest design. Info: 575.5601 or karen. years, and rejected allegiances to schools or movements.

His challenge to prevailing orthodoxy also helped to elevate Diebenkorn's national

profile. As contemporaries like Willem De Kooning and Jackson Pollock wrestled publicly with Abstract Expressionism, Diebenkorn's work offered another important perspective in the critical conversation of the time. His appearance in Life magazine, as well as an article titled, "Diebenkorn Paints a Picture" in ARTnews magazine, both published in 1957, further expanded the painter's influence.

"It was during this period that Diebenkorn really became Diebenkorn," says Timothy Anglin Burgard, the Ednah Root curator-in-charge of rendered him immune to external pressure to conform to either abstract or figurative styles, and set a liberating example that seems remarkably precontemporary art world."





#### At the Theater • By Flora Lynn Isaacson

#### The Beauty Queen of Leenane

A Mother/Daughter Tug of War at MTC

The Beauty Queen of Leenane by Martin McDonagh is set in the Irish countryside where a woman in her forties tries to gain control of her life and destiny from her mother. This play is a blend of black comedy, melodrama, horror and tragedy. The story is set in the Irish village of Leenane, Connemara, in the early 1990's. It takes place in a shabby, poorly lit kitchen and living room resulting in a claustrophobic sense of entrapment.

The play centers on the life of Maureen Folan (Beth Wilmurt), a forty year old virgin who takes care of her selfish and manipulative seventy year old mother Mag (Joy Carlin). Maureen's sisters have escaped into marriage and family life, but Maureen, with a history of mental illness, is trapped in a seriously dysfunctional relationship with her mother.

The Folan cottage is visited by Pato Dooley (Rod Gnapp) and his younger brother Ray (Joseph Salazar). Pato is a middle aged construction worker fed up with having to live and work The glimmer of a last chance romance between Maureen and Pato sparks up in the first act and continues in the second one with a notable monologue by Pato. The plot, full of deceptions, secrets and betrayals keeps surprising the audience. Hopes are raised only to be dashed.

In this play, much credit must also go to a flawless cast in Mark Jackson's finely tuned production. Beth Wilmurt is compelling as Maureen—she is waspish, witty, passionate and vulnerable. We are no less delighted to be in the company of Joy Carlin's manipulative Mag. Rod Gnapp's Pato is the most sympathetic of the four characters. His younger brother Ray is too impatient to wait to put Pato's romantic letter into Maureen's hands.

Martin McDonagh is an interesting and good storyteller. This production owes much to Mark Jackson's finely paced direction, York Kennedy's perfectly targeted lighting and Nina Ball's wonderfully grungy set—and worth repeating—a superb cast!

The Beauty Queen of Leenane played at Marin Theatre Company, May 23-June 16, 2013. Coming up next at Marin Theatre Company will be Good People by David Lindsay-Abaire and directed by Tracy Young, August 22-September 15, 2013.

Off Broadway West Stages Comeback with Harold Pinter's Betrayal

Off Broadway West Theatre Company

is delighted to present the revival of this great classic here on the west coast as the first full production after a year's hiatus of successful staged



Betrayal begins Flora Lynn Isaacson in 1977 with a meeting between adulterous lovers, Emma (Sylvia Kratins) and Jerry (Brian O'Connor), two years after their affair has ended. The play ends as we move back in time through nine scenes of the play to 1968 in the house of Emma and her husband Robert (Keith Burkland), who is also Jerry's best friend.

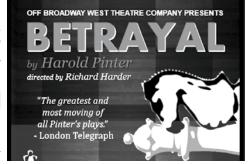
Although all three actors do a marvelous job portraying their characters convincingly and consistently, Sylvia Kratins tackles the play's more challenging role with striking emotional clarity. Her Emma is a woman torn between husband and lover who must justify lying to Robert, but more significantly, must justify lying to herself. We see in Emma a dynamic character that evolves from an innocent girl into a haunted, bitter woman. Burkland's Robert is particularly impressive in conveying the darkness that makes him the sort of man who's not above hitting his wife. Brian O'Connor's Jerry is charming but very much smug about considering anything beyond an affair impossible.

Bert van Aalsburg's set is sparse--a pub, a sitting room, a hotel room--each is suggested only by chairs and a table.

By the final episode, which is the beginning of the story, but the end of the play, the three actors have infused their now youthful characters with glowingly exuberant energy.

Critics and audiences made Betraval one of London's most popular plays when it premiered in 1978. It won several major awards, including the Olivier Award for Best New Play, and the New York Drama Critic's Circle Award.

Betrayal runs at Off Broadway West Theater Company, June 21-July 20, 2013. For tickets, call 800-838-3006 or go online at www.offbroadwest.org.



#### Now At the Movies • By Don Lee Miller

Teen Mary Katherine (M.K.): voice of time to get a blessing Amanda Seyfried returns for her annual from James of their summer visit to her eccentric inventor- disapproved courtfather's home at the edge of a forest. The ship. Most of the voice of Queen Tara: Beyoncé Knowles \$3-million budget (who also composed and wrote "Rise was spent on luxu-Up" which she sings) proves central to riating the home, the storyline when she reduces M.K. to the primary set-piece with many cameras finger-height. The leader of the protec- and a central control masterboard. Enter tors of the forest, the Leafmen, Ronin: v.o. Colin Farrell; an armed archer, Mandrake: things up as sides are taken. As home invav.o. Christophe Waltz; and Nod: v.o. Josh Henderson figure prominently in her res- breathless only part of the time. Strong cue. William Joyce wrote the screenplay disturbing violence. Profanity. from his book, The Leaf Men and the Brave Good Bugs. Director Chris Wedge also contributed to the story, William Joyce and James V. Hart wrote both story and screenplay, with help on the latter from Daniel Shere, Tom J. Astle and Matt Ember. Well worth seeing in 3-D! Interesting scenes of animated Sci-fi action.

#### MONSTERS UNIVERSITY

This prequel to Monsters, Inc. gives viewers the college background of Mike the way, there are also friends, v.o. Randy: Helen Mirren, v.o. Terri: Sean Hayes, v.o. Daniel Gershon. The 3-D is put to good Women in undies. use. Mild action. Some scary images. Brief profanity.

#### THE PURGE

Set in 2022, when for twelve hours one night per year any crime, including mur-

and plans to use this



the Bloody Stranger: Edwin Hodge to stir sion films go, this one leaves the viewer

#### THIS IS THE END

If James Franco's friends want to make his home movie, definitely a vanity project, they should not expect viewers to pay while they display the vile side of their personalities and endure their teen fantasies as they tackle the apocalypse near his SoCal home. Many do not survive and die horribly. The potty talk and overt sexual dialog confirms how desperate they were to make this "film". Everyone plays Wazowski: Billy Crystal and James Sul- themselves, exposing gutter conversation livan: John Goodman, both returning rather than anything that could approach voices. When the now best-of-friends intellectual content. Why Emma Watson first met as teenagers it was hate at first would want to destroy her Harry Potsight. This tale explains how the change ter image with this crap is inconceivable. occurs, as they gradually mature and find This is solely for die-hard fans of Franco, their true selves. To liven things up along Josh Rogen (co-writer/director with Evan Goldberg), Jonah Hill, Jay Baruchel, Danny Steve Buscemi, v.o. Dean Hardscrabble: McBride, Craig Robinson, Michael Cera (who gets skewered by a falling light pole), Terry: Dave Foley, v.o. Prof. Knight: Alfred and David Krumholtz. Joining Emma are Molina, v.o. Johnny: Nathan Fillion, v.o. Rihanna and Mindy Kaling. Some of the Ms. Squibbles: Julia Sweeney, v.o. Mrs. intended humor does succeed. Viewers Graves: Bonnie Hunt, v.o. Frank McCay: are warned: a half-hour post-sudsing of Bill Hader, and v.o. Yeti: John Ratzen- the ears is required. Crude profanity!! Sciburger. Dan Scanlon directs this animated fi violence: people wounded, bleeding and adventure, as well as co-writing the story dying. Strong sexual content re organs, and screenplay with Robert L. Baird and masturbation and intercourse! Drinking.

#### **WORLD WAR Z**

Zombies are rapidly spreading throughout the world! Can Director Marc Forster, with screenplay and screen story writers: Matthew Michael Carnahan and der, robbery and rape, is permitted with- Drew Goddard with J. Michael Straczinout punishment as all pent-up frustrations sky, based on the novel by Max Brooks, are released. James Sandin: Ethan Hawke build enough interest in a zombie movie and wife Mary: Lena Headey are envied by set in the current world so it is successtheir neighbors. Their teens, Charlie: Max ful with today's fickle audiences? A strong Buckholder and Zoey: Adelaide Kane, are opening weekend gets it off to a good start. viewed as spoiled brats. James has sold Grizzled long-haired Gerry Lane: Brad the neighbors the protective devices they Pitt, wife Karin: Mirielle Enos, sexy Segen: need to withstand The Purge, but now Daniella Kertesz, hunky Captain Speke: they are envious of his wealth. Zoey's boy James Badge Dale, Parajumper: Matthew friend, Henry: Tony Oller has snuck into Fox and an ex-CIA agent: David Morse the house before the lockdown begins head the cast that thinks it can. It's in 3-D.

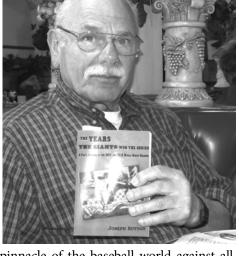
#### Summertime Reading

By Jonathan Farrell

o doubt about it, local author Joseph Sutton is a San Francisco Giants fan. The Years The Giants Won The Series: A Fan's Journal of the 2012 and 2010 World Series Season, is his second book on the subject. To say Sutton is an avid baseball fan might be an understatement of his admiration for the SF Giants themselves. For as he states, "who'd a thunk the San Francisco Giants would win two World Series titles in three years?" And as he as he points out, "after the team moved from New York to San Francisco in 1958, it took them 53 years to win their first title in 2010."

This past May 13, Sutton read some excerpts from his latest book to a small gathering at Green Arcade Bookstore on Market Street. The author of over a dozen books, he strives to express the best and deepest of his feelings and understandings to an audience that listens. And, Sutton pondering on various aspects of life, especially simple joys like baseball.

only fascinate Sutton, they enthrall him. He ponders in the book, "how a collection



pinnacle of the baseball world against all odds." This Sutton considers remarkable, and is something he wanted to write down. This book is also interwoven with the story of how baseball has influenced Sutton's relationship with his son Ray, and how it enhances the importance the game plays also reaches out to an audience that enjoys in cementing relationships between fathers and sons, and some daughters, too.

Being a parent is something that Sut-Baseball and the SF Giants, they not ton, a West Portal resident, takes very seriously. "My son is a big part of my life," said Sutton. "I have bonded with him in many of castoffs in 2010 and a young bunch of ways, especially in athletics." Sutton not ballplayers in 2012 took the Giants to the only went to school games but also helped

coach Ray's school and team games. "That Growing up Together. adds up to a lot of games," he said. And, he admitted that he simply volunteered as the joys and honor of fatherhood. But, coach "just so I could be with him, to see also a shared love of baseball. "Wonderful his progress and help Ray if he needed it."

knows, "What does it take to be a dad today? It takes great patience," he noted. In previous chats and interviews with Sutton for the Westside Observer, this reporter remembers how dedicated he was when it had to do with teaching. His novel, A Class of Leaders, detailed his experiences as a teacher in the late 1960s South Central Los Angeles. "A teacher's job is to help inspire students and to help them think critically and indepen-

"baby-sitters, with the only aim to ensure mer is beginning. students get high test scores." He reiterated, that students must think critically and independently for themselves. This is also something he has worked to instill in his son Ray, who inspired the book from last year, Father and Son: Thirty Years of

THE GIANTS WON THE SERIES

A FAN'S JOURNAL OF THE 2012 AND 2010 WORLD SCRIES SCASO

JOSEPH SUTTON

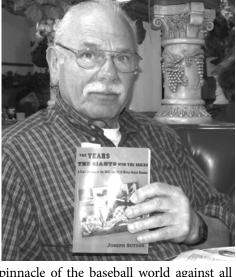
Here again, Sutton illustrated not only book," said, John Rothmann of KGO AM Also from his years as a teacher Sut- talk radio. "It's not just the celebration of the

San Francisco Giants' climb to win the World Series, it's also the celebration of being a father and a son." Besides Rothmann, Sutton's latest book has received over a dozen accolades, one claiming that she missed her flight at San Diego Airport. "I was so engrossed reading," said artist Ann Walker.

> Summer and baseball definitely go together and The Years The Giants Won the Series: A Fan's Jour-

dently." He also said that teachers are not nal... debuts at the right time, just as sum-

For more information about Sutton's latest book, visit his website at: joesutt.com Or, the book can be purchased at Bookshop West Portal on West Portal Avenue. Call 415-564-8080 for details.



#### SECOND THOUGHTS / By Jack Kaye

## What Are Americans Willing and Able To Do?

was raised believing that America was the greatest country on Earth because its people were self-reliant, hard-working, honest, intelligent, creative, well-educated and generous. American workers are still said to be the most productive by far, many times more than their Asian counterparts, including those in India and

I am now being told that 47% of our people pay no income tax, and that billions a year are paid to ineligible people for unemployment benefits and earned income credit, programs set up to help those of us who were not quite as self-reliant. I am learning that many of our most successful Americans are hiding their assets in foreign countries to avoid paying their fair share of taxes, while their money does not circulate in our economy.

My once-held beliefs about the American Character are now also being challenged by our elected officials.

#### Where did we get the idea that certain work is beneath us? Who said that we cannot even bother to take care of our own everyday chores?"

Representatives in the House and Senate are champion gender equality? working hard to craft a comprehensive immigration policy. On the Senate side, eight members allow more scientists to come to work and evenhave cobbled together what they think might be tually become citizens in our country. Do we not a good plan. The plan disregards the fact that we have enough well-educated scientists? If so, why have more than ten million Americans out of are so many being underemployed now, working work and tens of thousands of high school seniors as research assistants and post doctorate fellows? who want to get into the college of their choice, And don't we have enough qualified college appliand that most of our unemployed have limited cants to be science majors? Are our students just education and needed skills, and that we have a not intelligent enough? good number of well-educated scientists out of their normal work.

don't want to do many jobs like working in hotels, ing our dogs, caring for our infants, and to do the restaurants, construction, domestic service, jobs unemployed Americans would not or could farming and gardening; are not smart or diverse not do? enough for many colleges and graduate schools; are not qualified for high level scientific jobs; and just don't want to. are not productive enough to provide manufactured goods or even customer services.

bring more temporary, unskilled workers in to is wrong with vacuuming our carpets ourselves? work in hotels, restaurants, construction, domestic Why do we have a dog if we pay others to walk service, farming and gardening. The crafters of the it, and we leave it alone all day while we're away? bill want foreign students who go to American col- Why do we trust a stranger who can't even speak leges to be able to stay to put their education to use English to take care of our most precious ones, or here instead of their native lands.

Is it true that our fellow Americans feel themselves too good to do the kinds of work that must hood each day, I can't help but notice that all the be "insourced" by document-free residents? Is workers speak Spanish, except for roofers who are it true that businesses are finding it hard to find usually Asian and speak Chinese or Korean, and Americans to fill their available jobs? Is it true people who work at nail salons, all of whom it that while American factory workers are said to seems must be Asian - Korean or Vietnamese. be many times more productive than their foreign counterparts, who are paid low wages and sub- correct code violations and pass inspection. The jected to unsafe working conditions, it is still better American electrician spent a little time here, and to outsource our work? Are our colleges finding it the rest of the time he had undocumented workers hard to attract qualified American students, or are that he picked up for three days have free reign of foreign students needed to provide even greater my apartment to do work that they had obviously diversity to what must be the most overwhelm- never done before. I asked that their sloppy work ingly diverse country on Earth since the Tower of be repaired and it was - by another group of work-Babel?

So what can we Americans do for a living and for ourselves? If we are unemployed and unable becoming more like the ancient Romans, who to find work in our field of choice, can we do this became too good to do any work themselves, and other work?

or can it only be done by the document-free, as empire. We now call those barbarians Germans. we have been repeatedly told? What did Cesar Chavez, born in Phoenix, do for farm workers? by Iraq. They were defenseless and had foreign Did he set up a union for American farm work- workers doing everything that needed to be done ers to ensure that they had better pay, benefits, and in their land. Were it not for Saudi Arabia and U.S. working conditions? Why did he do it if only the intervention, Kuwait would have been Iraq's Tibet. document-free could ever do the hard labor? Who did he unionize? Hello?

in hotels, restaurants, supermarkets, construction becomes the master. sites, gardening, and domestic work? Is this not the very population that is most likely to be unem- too important or inadequate to be the self-reliant, ployed, and of minority status? (Black youth have independent, hard-working, creative people that a 42% unemployment rate and minority youth in general are at 20%, while college graduates 25 or the echoes of our own narcissism to fully live our over have a 4% unemployment rate.) Are these not own lives? the people in greatest need of jobs that are now being filled by those not here legally?

students to enter our colleges? Why is it that high be deemed beneath us? school students with perfect grade point averages and SAT scores can't get into our top universities and graduate schools, while the offspring of rich, told me that they are going on break and won't be powerful and/or famous foreign parents with back until sometime next week between 8 a.m. and much less to recommend them academically are 6 p.m. I would have asked them to stay longer, but accepted and accommodated? The current president of Egypt attended USC. What good did it ing this text is deaf. do him except to let him meet some American coeds, albeit very short ones? Do we think that he has learned to love freedom of speech and to

The senators' comprehensive plan also would

And do we need undocumented workers to do things we feel too busy to do, like cleaning This plan is based on a thesis that Americans our own homes, maintaining our gardens, walk-

Is this true? I still don't believe it, or maybe I

Where did we get the idea that certain work is beneath us? Who said that we cannot even bother Based on these assumptions, the plan is to to take care of our own everyday chores? What even our children for that matter?

As I walk around my San Francisco neighbor-

I had electrical work done in my apartment to ers who spoke no English.

I am beginning to wonder if Americans are became more reliant on what they called the "bar-Can legal American residents do farm work, barians." Eventually the barbarians took over the

I remember in 1991 when Kuwait was attacked

I think of the Pinter play, "The Servant," in which an effete aristocrat becomes ever more Can Americans with minimal education work dependent on his servant until the servant

> Is that the way we are headed? Do we feel we are cracked up to be? Are we too distracted by

Will we soon be hiring people to eat and digest our food for us, or to eliminate our waste in Meanwhile, why are we encouraging foreign our stead? Will these natural functions soon also

> I'd write more, but the person typing these words and the other one who is dictating them the typist knows no English and the person recit-

It's so hard to get good help nowadays. Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

Whistleblowers (Cont. from p. 8) Adams." Lt. Marven was granted had protested "while in the service of the United States." Therefore, Congress "Resolved, That the reasonable expences of defending the said suit be defrayed by the United States." Further, the whistleblowers were furnished, without having to ask, the Commodore's personnel file, and all records of "the proceedings of Congress upon with funds for attorneys and depoincluding "letters from President content&task=view&id=1251 John Hancock and others," they were vindicated by a Jury. Hopkins was ordered to pay Court costs. In May 1779, Congress disbursed \$1,418 for the whistleblowers' legal fees, "to be paid to Mr. Sam.

court-martial for being a detractor. A decade later, trusting that "Freedom of Speech" and the "Right to Petition" would protect the people, the Founders enshrined these principles in the First Amendment of our Constitution. Acknowledgement: Research by Stephen M. Kohn, Esq., Director of the complaint of the petitioners the National Whistleblower Center against Esek Hopkins, Esq." Armed (www.whistleblowers.org) inspired

his Navy pension, despite his

this article. see: whistleblowers. sitions, plus investigative files org/index.php?option=com\_ Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr were senior physicians at Laguna Honda Hospital where they repeatedly exposed wrongdoing by the

Department of Public Health. Con-

tact: DerekOnVanNess@aol.com

Presidio Museum (Cont. from p. 1) to Disney. Per the CA Rev & Taxaannual taxpayer funds.

The issue that needs to be challenged is whether the transfer from the Department of Defense to the GGNRA caused a retrocession of jurisdiction to the State of CA, in order to permit the City to tax the third party beneficiaries at the

Should the City look further into this matter, which could result in at least \$100 million in revenue to the City from current and back taxes, and increase tax revenue annually to the City by a minimum of \$10 million? And \$8.1 million annually more if the Lucas plan for a Presidio Museum is approved?

I recommend the Assessor impose a transfer tax on the sale of Lucasfilms' property in the Presidio

tion Code this is a transfer, with which the State Board of Equalization (SBE) will concur. There is no rationale for not doing so. How does the sale of Lucas to Disney have any effect on the operation of United States government, and what right does Congress have to deny a transfer tax of at least \$12.5 million that every entity outside the Presidio pays? Per Article 1 Section 8 of the constitution of the United States, Congress has no right. This matter needs to be challenged in a higher court. It is unconstitutional. John Farrell, MBA, Broker/Realtor®

- Farrell Real Estate Investments. Former Assistant Assessor, Budget and Special Projects, City and County of San Francisco

**Homeowner** (Cont. from p. 8)

The real disaster for homeowners is the endangered Proposition13.

Proposition 13 was passed as an initiative in 1978 to protect homeowners from being financially driven from their homes due paying under current law. to ever-increasing taxes.

Under Proposition 13 tax reform, property tax value was rolled back and frozen at the 1976 assessed value level. Property tax increases on any given property were limited to no more than 2% per year as long as the property was not sold. Once sold, the property was reassessed at 1% of the sale price, and the 2% yearly cap became applicable to future years. This allowed property owners to finally be able to estimate the amount of future property taxes, and determine the maximum amount taxes could increase as tax for any purpose. long as they owned the property.

Proposition 13 also requires taxes raised by local governments for a designated purpose to be approved by two-thirds of the voters. San Francisco's parcel taxes and General Obligation Bonds (GOBs) all need a two-thirds majority.

current Democratic

majority has proposed six bills that will lower the current 66.6%, two-thirds majority vote to a 55.0% level to have a parcel tax or GOB pass. These "add on" parcel and bond taxes/GOBs are on top of the property tax homeowners already

The two most dangerous amendments to Proposition 13:

- Senate Constitutional Amendment 9 (SCA 9), Ellen Corbett (D-San Leandro) will lower the threshold from two-thirds to 55% to increase special taxes, including parcel taxes, to fund community and economic development projects.
- Senate Constitutional Amendment 11 (SCA11), Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley) will lower the threshold to 55% to allow for voters representing any local government entity to approve a special

Renters will often not have to pay any of these tax increases, as they own no property.

San Francisco's homeowners are about to become the City's newest ATM, if they haven't already.

George Wooding, Midtown Terrace Homeowners Association

#### **Around Town** (Cont. from p. 11)

elected officials know about their responsibility to do what's acceptable for everyone. The UCSF draft EIR elicited over 200 comments. I hope they listen.

Finally...I want to thank the readers, contributors, advertisers and staff as this issue marks the end of the 5th year of my stewardship of the Observer. When taking the reins in mid 2008, the economy was in shambles, and we all know that "Print is dead." Thanks to everyone who makes it possible for us to continue this most-local form of journalism. I am humbled. It's also the 25th anniversary of the San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association, the loose confederation of all of the free district monthlies. May we continue on for 25 more years.

Do you have an event, a neighborhood fact or just an observation to share? Drop us a line at mitch@westsideobserver.com and share your ideas or just let us know what you think.

#### Laguna Honda (Cont. from p. 3)

"incompatible with its use," and the space had to be redesigned.

In January 2013, Belfor submitted invoices for \$328,644 for remediation work completed through November 2012, and Belfor estimated it would cost an additional \$266,723 to reconstruct the facilities, for a total not-to-exceed cost of \$595,367. This lead to the Resolution Yee introduced in May, four months after the City received Belfor's revised costs to complete the remediation.

But Mr. Rose noted that the emergency was not officially declared until June 2012 and that Belfor estimated the project would be completed in September 2013, fully two years after the emergency leak was first discovered. Rose had to point out to Supervisor Yee and the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee that Administrative Code Section 6.60 defines emergencies as those which demand immediate action for "conditions that involve clear and imminent danger to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to, life, health, property or essential public services."

As such, Rose questioned whether the mold problem at LHH met the City's definition of an emergency, and concluded that in his professional judgment it did not. Rose recommended that Yee's Resolution be revised to put the remaining \$266,723 in uncompleted work out to competitive bid to seek the lowest-responsive bid to compete the remaining reconstruction.

Yee charged ahead, ignoring Rose's recommendations. Yee had his Resolution calendared for a hearing, proposing to bypass competitive bids by awarding Belfor an amendment to complete the full \$595,367 in work. But following astute questioning by Supervisor John Avalos, Mr. Thomas admitted the work was not an emergency; Avalos got Thomas to agree to accept Rose's recommendation to seek competitive bids.

When Harvey Rose speaks, the Board of Supervisors typically listens.

Louise Simpson from the City Attorney's Office advised that San Francisco has sued Stantec, the LHH Replacement Project architect, for "total estimated damages in excess of \$45 million," but she provided no explanation as to why that lawsuit initially reported to recover \$70 million has been reduced by \$25 million to just \$45 million.

#### **Behind Patient Dumping**

underway in early 2013, Mayor Ed Lee has the acute-care hospital beds, using the been quietly working with the Department MHRF as transitional housing to quickly of Public Health (DPH) and its Health Commission to "reconfigure" the Mental hospital and trauma center. Health Rehabilitation Facility (MHRF) the mentally ill to keep them in-county.

DPH submitted a list of "Bielenson" lion and \$39 million, mostly in cuts to misinformed the Board of Supervisors. mental health services, that the Mayor Supervisors Support Dumping? appears to have incorporated into his budget submission for the upcoming two-year budget cycle.

DPH proposed — and the Mayor appears to have accepted — cutting \$12.7 million (43 percent) of the \$29.6 million, by "reprogramming" the MHRF into housing and dumping patients into Laguna Honda Hospital; cutting \$1 million (3.5 percent) from tuberculosis control programs; cutting \$8.8 million (30 percent) from various community-based services, most of which are mental health services, which cuts will grow to \$17 million beginning in July 2015; and cutting just \$7 million (23.7 percent) from HIV health services. The HIV cuts are the only ones being aggressively backfilled, and will likely not occur.

Because it will effectively eliminate all but 24 of the mental health rehab beds at the MHRF on the campus of San Francisco General Hospital, submitting such a budget proposal harkens back to Governor Ronald Reagan who shut down California's mental health hospitals and ended federal

community mental health centers while President. It appears Mayor Ed Lee and the Board of Supervisors may reach consensus to shut down the MHRF.

As reported in "Who's Dumping Grandma?" in last month's Westside Observer, the Board of Supervisors was required to conduct a State-mandated Bielenson hearing on the DPH's proposal to cut the remaining 47 mental health beds in the MHRF down to just 24. The MHRF had opened with 147 mental health beds, but was "reconfigured" to only 47 in 2003. How long before those remaining 24 beds are simply eliminated altogether?

During the Board's Bielenson hearing held on June 18, Director of Public Health Barbara Garcia tried to reassure the Board of Supervisors that only 12 of the mental health patients at the MHRF would be transferred to Laguna Honda. She claimed — falsely it seems — that the remaining 22 MHRF patients would be placed "in the community," but Garcia failed to inform the Board of Supervisors that the plan appears to be to dump them into out-ofcounty facilities, not "into the community." Managers throughout DPH are aware the plan will most likely use locked psych facilities out-of-county.

At the start of the Bielenson hearing and prior to taking public comment, Garcia repeatedly acknowledged that "in preparation for healthcare reform [ObamaCare] to reduce costs and increase revenue generation, in the coming fiscal year DPH needs to reduce services that are not revenue generating." Most of the \$17 million in the proposed cuts to communitybased services are because DPH does not generate revenue by providing those services. Later in the hearing, following public testimony, Garcia indicated that "one of the important things we've been looking at this facility [the MHRF/BHC] it's about \$19 million [to operate annually] with only about \$2 million in revenue."

Garcia testified "We will be closing one of the two skilled nursing facilities on the SFGH campus, and organizing those services to support discharges from SFGH, [which] we believe [will] increase revenue." This means that, by closing skilled nursing beds for psych patients in the MHRF, SFGH will gain vacated space in the MHRF to be converted, essentially, into "housing" to more quickly discharge acute-care patients from General Hospital into. DPH will be able to increase SFGH revenues by being able to more quickly accept paying, Since plans for the two-year budget got revenue-generating new admissions into dump patients out of the City's acute-care

A few senior managers at LHH are renamed the Behavioral Health Cen- claiming to community leaders that only ter — on SFGH's campus. The MHRF was 6, not 12, of the MHRF patients are slated supposed to be a long-term care facility for to move to LHH; the senior managers have also acknowledged the remaining MHRF patients will be placed out-of-county, not budget cuts that totals between \$29.6 mil- in "the community," as Garcia may have

Only four of the Board of Supervisors bothered to ask Garcia questions about the Bielenson cuts; the remaining seven Supervisors raised no questions. Supervisors David Campos and Scott Wiener asked only about the \$7 million in HIV service cuts, both men knowing that well over half of those cuts had already been backfilled, and all but a handful of those cuts will likely also be backfilled. Neither man asked about the mental health cuts.

Supervisors Malia Cohen and London Breed asked Garcia questions about the mental health cuts and Laguna Honda Hospital. Supervisor Cohen asked about the mental health cuts. Garcia lamely claimed "many of those individuals will be going into community placement," for those who need "locked facilities." San Francisco has few, if any, in-county locked

Cohen pushed further, asking if "the number of folks who need [skilled nursing

Cont. p. 17

#### WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL By Mitch Bull

he WOTPCC meeting of June 24th featured election results, pros and cons on several controversial issues, and important local updates, all squeezed into two hours in its final meeting before the traditional summer break.

Following the opening of the meeting by President Matt Chamberlain, Avrum Shepard gave an update on the "gold buyer" pawn shop that is proposed to fill the vacant space that was formerly Just Because card shop. The West Portal Avenue Merchants Association contested the permit due to a lack of posting timeliness, and with public outcry against the project, the permit approving the use was revoked. In other WPA news, Squat and Gobble is progressing on Quentin Kopp and Art Agnos expain the Arena project to the WOTPCC its application to reopen

being investigated.

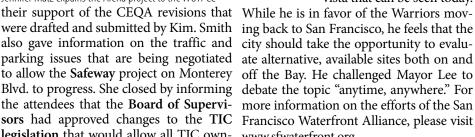
WOTPCC sent a letter to both Supervi- today. sors Scott Weiner and Jane Kim stating



to refurbish the piers and build the arena, with a slightly larger space; Supervisor while having the city "borrow" the Norman Yee is working to have a WPA money at 13% annual interest, resulting beat cop reinstituted; and the accreditation in an additional interest payment of over committee that is "judging" CCSF is itself \$13,500,000 per year for decades. In addition, they cited the inclusion of a parcel, Estelle Smith gave an update on Plan- Seawall 330, at an appraised price that is ning and Land Use Committee issues. The much lower than what the parcel is worth

Agnos stated that he "came out of

retirement" to join this fight against the project because the citizens have not been given a voice about the project and the city has moved forward to push it through without a funded plan for mitigating the huge increase in traffic through transit and parking solutions. He cited the fact that he, as Mayor, championed the unpopular (at the time) decision to demolish the double-decked Embarcadero Freeway, thus opening up the access and the vista that can be seen today.



The opposing viewpoint followed to 4/2013 to move forward by paying a with a presentation by the SF Office of \$20,000 fee. Any new TIC projects would Economic and Workforce Development. Jennifer Matz, Director of Waterfront On the public health front, George Development, and Jesse Blount, the Proj-Wooding reported that the Laguna Honda ect Representative, gave a narrative on public relations spokesman, Marc Slavin, the project, joined by Peter Albert from has been dismissed. He detailed other the MTA, who is anchoring their efforts issues at the hospital related to its handling from a regional transportation-planning standpoint. Showing a different schematic Following a call for any nominations rendition of the arena complex, they spoke from the floor for WOTPCC officers, and on the project as an opportunity to build hearing none, current President Matt a "world class" entertainment venue for Chamberlain called for a voice vote to re- the city. Both the SF Hotel Council and SF elect all of the current officers for another Travel (formerly the SF Visitors and Convention Bureau) support the project, as a

Ms. Matz discussed the wholesale dent: Matt Chamberlain, Vice President benefits that the building of AT&T Park Roger Ritter, Secretary Sally Stephens, brought to the city, but stated that the neighborhood stretching from the Giants venue to Piers 30-32 is pretty desolate when there is no game, liking it to "tum-

She stressed the need to build a "Water-Piers 30-32. The session opened with an front for the 21st century" and explained unlikely team, former Mayor Art Agnos the dilapidated condition of the piers, and and former Supervisor, State Senator, and that the rent credits, the value of the seawall lot, and the forgiveness of property ing the case on why the proposed project is taxes will still not make up for the costs not good for the citizens of San Francisco of rebuilding the piers (the \$120,000,000). from both a financial and livability stand- In the plan, San Francisco will continue to point. The duo spoke for 20 minutes (their own the land, with the Warriors leasing allotted time) on the size of the project, the site for 66 years. Once completed, the a 12-story arena, an additional 17-story project is estimated to generate between condo tower and luxury hotel, as well as a \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000 per year, funds shopping district as large as Union Square. that could be used to fix the city infrastruc-Kopp stressed the "giveaway" of over ture and items such as graffiti removal, etc.



Jennifer Matz expains the Arena project to the WOTPCC

also gave information on the traffic and city should take the opportunity to evaluparking issues that are being negotiated ate alternative, available sites both on and to allow the Safeway project on Monterey off the Bay. He challenged Mayor Lee to Blvd. to progress. She closed by informing debate the topic "anytime, anywhere." For the attendees that the Board of Supervi- more information on the efforts of the San sors had approved changes to the TIC Francisco Waterfront Alliance, please visit legislation that would allow all TIC own- www.sfwaterfront.org. ers of properties registered as TIC's prior be "frozen" for the next 10 years.

of psychiatric patients from SF General.

year. The voice vote was quick and unanimous. The current officers will again serve large "arena" is needed to host events. the organization for another year. Presiand Treasurer Carolyn Squeri. The President will name the parliamentarian.

The next section of the program featured a lively debate about the proposed bleweeds blowing down the street." Warriors arena that is being proposed for Superior Court Judge Quentin Kopp, stat-

\$120,000,000 to the owners/developers



History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

<b>1886 Sunset District</b> , Notes: Written on Dack: "Inner Sunset for sale." Source: Greg Gaar • Permission obtained from the San Francisco																	
6	4		1			7	8		Sudoku-fun!								
1		7	8						Each puzzle is a 9 by 9 grid of squares divided into nine 3 by 3 square blocks, with some of the numbers filled in for you.  The Object: Fill in the blank squares so that each of the numbers 1 to 9 appears exactly once in each row, column and block.  Answer:								
	5				6												
4			9	7		3	2	1									
	1			2			3		The answer appears below.								
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	'	J			<b>'</b>		3		S	8	2	2	6	ι	3	b	9

## BRAIN FÜD

#### A Baked Treat

Riddles are little poems or phrases that pose a question that needs answering. Riddles frequently rhyme, but this is not a requirement. (Thing 1) (Thing 2)

I, at the start, am old Many centuries I've been told **Used by the Greeks** For counting techniques

After things were bought and sold Later is when I became known As an infinite figure, when shown You've counted my spaces Over two billion places And still, my amount is unknown

I, too, am not young I'm almost as old as Thing 1 I'm just a frog On the natural log But I can make counting fun

(Thing 1 and Thing 2) When you combine us two In the order of Thing 1 and Thing 2 We'll be a baked treat That's painful to beat Whether cherry, peach, or aloo

(an aloo pie is a potato pie)

Thing 1 and 2 are, together, "Pie."

Thing 2 is "e," the base of the natural logarithm.

"iq" si l gnidT

Answer



I don't want to wait an hour for some bacon and we can get a seat in 30 minutes or less.





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## **Pick Up A Book This Summer**

By Carol Kocivar

am a book club drop out—searching in some way for a recovery plan.

For the past few years, my curiosity about all things high tech left me reading from my iPhone and my ipad but alas, hardly any time with something we all remember as a real book.

You could find me up late at night **Eleventh and Twelfth Grade** reading Secrets for the iPhone on that small screen.

Just a click away from another these so I can really dive in. discovery.

But in the last few months, I am interesting choices: making a slow comeback to the real Ninth Grade thing. It may have to do with all the research on the importance of summer learning. The ultimate "use it or lose it" Honors challenge in education.

I walked past our local bookstore Manifesto so often with Sonia Sotomayor smiling **Tenth Grade** out at me from the cover of her book My Beloved World that I ran in and purchased it. Wow. It reminded me of why I fell in love with books in the first place.

Madeleine Albright then beckoned me with Prague Winter, a personal story of remembrance and war-words in Eleventh Grade many ways more shocking and impactful than a 1000 pictures.

So I wondered—with my new read- **Honors** ing renaissance, what books are we recommending our kids to read over the summer...and should I jump into that reading pool?

Ever the inveterate public school **Honors** supporter, I am still on an email list serve from my kid's high school. So here are the summer reading suggestions for Lowell:

#### **Ninth Grade**

When the Rainbow Goddess Wept Haroun and the Sea of Stories

#### **Tenth Grade**

The Bean Trees The Color of Water

#### **Tenth Grade Honors**

Housekeeping **Great Expectations** 

Bel Canto

Lucky me. I have only read one of

School of the Arts also has some

The Hobbit

Animal Farm, The Communist

The Alchemist

The White Castle, The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist

The Great Gatsby

On the Road, Season of the Witch

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

Genesis, Exodus, Mathew and John The Unbearable Lightness of Being

You can also check out Balboa High School for a wide number of really interesting summer reading choices.

bhs-sfusd-ca.schoolloop.com/ summerreading

Of course, for the kids, there is that "what did you read this summer?" accountability at each school.

For me, I think I have the start of whole new book club...Keep your fingers crossed

#### Laguna Honda (Cont. from p. 15)

facilities] will outnumber the beds that are available at Laguna Honda Hospital." Garcia indicated that, as individuals leave LHH, DPH will transfer people over. But Cohen understood that every bed, formerly housing the elderly who need skilled nursing care, that is converted into beds for mental health patients, there will be one fewer bed for elderly demented patients needing 24/7 skilled nursing care.

Repeatedly, Garcia noted that the Mayor had restored all of the mental health cuts. But the mental health beds at the MHRF/BHC were not restored. and there are \$17 million in looming community-based cuts, which haven't even been identified yet, and won't be san Francisco's MHRF, all in the name of increasing revenue? until an RFP is issued in 2014.

LHH's admissions policy, but she didn't accountability advocate, a patient advoacknowledge that LHH is — by reliable cate, and a member of California's First report — internally considering chang- Amendment Coalition. ing the admission criteria to its North monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.

Mezzanine patient neighborhood from "dementia" to "cognitive impairment," potentially paving the way for an admissions policy change, which internal conversation Garcia chose not to share with Supervisors.

At the end of the hearing, President Chiu simply moved the agenda to its next item, without taking a vote. State law only requires that a hearing by County supervisors be held, they are not required to vote on proposed cuts.

Is cutting mental health services in San Francisco to the tune of over \$100 million across the past decade really a San Francisco "value"?

Who will be responsible for the death of in-county mental health beds at

Garcia indicated DPH is following Monette-Shaw is an open-government Feedback:

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**Jour 26: Fundamentals of Public Relations 3.0 units** 

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WOTPCC (Cont. from p. 15)

Albert took the floor and spoke about the efforts of the MTA to do a 3-phased assessment of the transit needs and requirements of the complete SF waterfront for the next 10-50 years. The assessment would focus on three things; an inventory of current conditions, short term and long term capital projects planned (including BART, CALTRAIN and SF Bay Ferry services); the timeframe of the development projects; and the cost of these projects (and the infrastructure needed).

Their presentation was capped by remarks from Blount, the Project Director. He cited the world-renowned architectural firm that has been contracted to design the project, and its work on the Alexandria (Egypt) library, the Oslo Opera Center and the 9/11 Memorial building in NY. He also spoke about the 13 acre site, of which 53%

will be "permanent public open space," calling it "the next great park in San Francisco." Addressing the opponents of the 13 story (135 feet) height of the arena, he explained the arena would be located on the piers, but 400 feet from the edge of the Embarcadero, and therefore "it feels like it is only 50-55 feet tall." To put this in perspective, he cited the height of AT&T Park, 125 feet to the top of the bowl and 180 feet to the top of the light

**Blount** finished by dismissing the claims of subsidies by stating the project will be "100% privately funded, with no impact to the general fund and with no new taxes to the public, while generating 5000 new jobs and generating upwards of \$20 million dollars in future city tax revenue."

The last group of speakers for the evening gave differing accounts of the Mt. Sutro

Cont. p. 18

## WEST OF TWIN PEAKS PROPERTIES SOLD SINCE 5/31/13

FACT: INVENTORY HAS NEVER BEEN LOWER WHEN COMPARED TO BUYER DEMAND

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50 Taraval St	Forest Hill	4	1.5	1	1,100,000	1,385,000	125.91	
179 Mendosa Ave	Forest Hill	3	4.5	2	1,650,000	1,590,000	96.36	
90 Santa Ana Ave	St. Francis Wood	3	2.5	2	1,789,000	2,000,000	111.79	
491 Ulloa St	Forest Hill Extensio	2	1	2	879,000	1,020,000	116.04	
255 Westgate Dr	Mount Davidson Manor	4	3	2	1,595,000	1,750,000	109.72	
99 Eastwood Dr	Westwood Park	5	2.5	1	1,249,000	1,625,000	130.1	



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#### THE REAL ESTATE ANSWER MAN By Kevin Birmingham

I have damage to my fence from a storm this winter. Is the damage covered by my homeowner's insurance policy as a standard loss?

Francine Keogh

Fencing is usually covered by the other structures coverage on your policy. They will pay to replace the fence minus the deductible. You may want to get an estimate first to dis-

cover if it's even worth making a claim. Every claim can raise your rates for 5 years so you want to make sure it is worth it.

#### What are the market conditions are in this SF Bay area at present?

Paul Lynsch

It's a great time to sell. Inventory is at an all-time low and multiple offers over the asking price are common. According to the SF Association of Realtors; about 30% of purchases are being made all cash. If you're a buyer, you need to be aggressive with your price and terms and make sure you're fully pre-approved with a local lender.

Last year we tried to sell our home but the potential buyers cancelled because of extensive termite work that needed to be done. Must we disclose this report if all repairs have been made?

Evelyn

The law is clear on this, you must disclose this report. You can let buyers know that this work has been completed. It would be a good idea to have the property re-inspected by the pest control company that issued the report prior to putting the home on the market.

The Real Estate Answer Man, Kevin Birmingham, is a local real estate expert who answers your questions. He is also a broker and realtor. For more information please contact him at the following email address: kevin@kevinbirmingham.com

#### WOTPCC (Cont. from p. 17)

Forest, and UCSF's efforts to create a different environment than exists today.

Damon Lew, Community Relations Officer for UCSF, spoke about the responsibility of the University to keep the area safe, and the challenge is that after years of growth the forest cannot "self manage" by way of wildfires, etc. so that it has to be managed in a planned manner. UCSF's plan is to take 7 and ½ acres to create four "demonstration plots" to examine and test different methods of managing the eucalyptus, acacias, blackberry bushes and poison oak plants that grow on the site. He stressed the need for community outreach and getting feedback from the public.

He spoke about the completed draft environmental impact report (EIR) in March and said that UC had received over 200 comments to the EIR. When asked about the timetable, Lew said that the demonstration plots could start in 2014, after bird-nesting season. In finishing, Lew stated that the forest needed to be managed to protect the safety of the neighbors to the forest, the residents of the UCSF community, and the UCSF buildings.

Rupa Bose of the SF Forest Alliance followed Lew's presentation, stating that the draft EIR states that up to 30000 trees could be removed from the entire 46-acre site, as the site currently has an average of 740 trees per acre and this could be thinned to only 2-3 trees every 30 feet. She stated that after the initial demonstration plot projects are completed, the next phase is to expand the effort to the entire 46 acres.

Mt. Sutro is currently a dense, century old forest spread over 80 acres in the center of SF, with UCSF the owner of 61 acres containing approximately 45000 trees. Ms. Bose estimates that the plan to clean the forest would remove or clip approximately 90% of the trees and mow down 90% of the underneath blackberry, acacia and fern foliage. She also said that UCSF plans to use chemical herbicides to retard regrowth within the forest.

Her presentation contrasted with the one by UCSF in that the SF Forest Alliance has statements from an arborist citing the health of the forest, and a Cal Fire diagram citing a low fire hazard. With the ever-present fog on the mountainside, the Alliance makes the case that the forest is moist and in good health, while thinning it out would cause wind problems and dry the forest floor, creating a greater fire danger than exists today in its natural environment. In addition, it will increase the carbon load into the atmosphere.

For more information on the SF Forest Alliance, go to: www.sutroforest.com

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30. The next meeting of the WOTPCC will be on Monday, September 23rd at 7:30 PM at the Miraloma Park Clubhouse, located at 350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd. It is expected the meetings will return to the Forest Hills Clubhouse for the October scheduled meeting.

For more information see the WOTPCC website (www.westoftwinpeaks.org).



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#### Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi

## **Bittersweet Boston**

he last couple of times that we visited Boston were either at the beginning or at the end of a trip through the New England states for the fall colors. This time it's for another joyous occasion, the graduation from Dartmouth of our oldest grandson, Bob and Meg's son Trevor. As trivial as it sounds, it seems like yesterday when he was born and now we have three other grandchildren in college. What is it that they say about getting old?

Our early morning Virgin flight was flawless and so far, two and a half hours into it has been "living room sofa perfect." What tornadoes? With four days planned in Boston I'm sure we'll get a chance to visit the usual sites while using the Liberty Hotel, which was once the notorious Charles Street prison, as our home base. Sadly, I'm sure that we'll get the opportunity to see the sites that brought so much sadness to this beautiful city, not unlike visiting the site of the twin towers in New York City after nine eleven.

20 minutes and within moments we were comfortably settled in our 13th floor room overlooking downtown Boson and a setting sun over the Charles River.

With Monday morning's rain, we decided to start with the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum instead of a get-acquainted walk around the area. Our newly built hotel tower was built on land owned by Massachusetts General Hospital, which is right next door, and with it comes the sirens all day and all night long. We later found out that Mass General was recently voted the best hospital in America. Good to know, just in case we develop calluses from all the walking!

The biggest surprise of the twice visited in Dubrovnik, which housed the oldest It's touted as one the most expenpharmacy in Europe. The enclosed atrium opens to sive streets in the world and we three floors of galleries full of priceless art treasures. had no reason to doubt that for The museum is also famous for the 1990 heist of a moment. In the Public Gardens more than 13 pieces of art valued at more than 500 million dollars, while the perpetrators and the loca- boats or visit the bronzed ducktion of the art still remain a mystery.

While touring the galleries we had a chance almost always surrounded by encounter with two lovely young women from Italy. small children. With just enough Deborah had just finished her master's in Italian lit- time left in the afternoon we erature from Boston College, and was now headed to New York with her husband for her PhD to further her studies. Her friend Barbara was visiting for see some of the 450,000 works of the week and then heading back home. A quick art. The museum was beautiful, stop at the Café G for a bowl of Boston clam chowder brought another surprise. The handsome young was a nightmare, but patience man by the name of Roland Mills, who had also just prevailed and once settled back in finished his master's in opera, spontaneously started at our hotel we treated ourselves singing for the couple in front of us and later with a to a cold drink and a casual dinlittle coaxing did a beautiful rendition of "La Donna ner at Alibi, where the brick cell e Mobile" for us. All that for the mere price of a bowl walls and steal gates are still very

By mid-afternoon the skies had cleared and we finally got a chance to walk the length of Charles Street and visit the boutique shops and restaurants. Our dinner that night was at Clink, the hotel's main dining room where the food was excellent and the service first rate. We had

Once again, our kudos to Virgin American heard so much about the Duck Tours that we just Airlines, never have we flown so far so smoothly, had to give it a try. Our tour left from the Museum especially with all the storms across this wonder- of Science which was just a ten minute walk from ful country of ours. Not a ripple, not a bump other our hotel, and after a short wait we embarked on than the usual bit of turbulence during our final our 90 minute land and water tour. Our driver/ approach. The ride from the airport took barely narrator was straight out of central casting and

within minutes we were all "quack, quacking" at his command. Going from city streets down a narrow ramp into the Charles River was a bit strange, but once fully afloat a handful of young kids were given a chance at steering the old landing craft around the water.

We had a chance to visit Boston University, where our granddaughter Katrina just finished her freshman year, and Boston College, where our grandson Michael Strem will be starting in the fall. On the way back we were dropped off at the beginning of Newbury Street, not far from where the Boston Marathon ended. Somehow we chose not to see the site and settled for the driver's description; it was

Gardner Museum is the old and the new. The too nice a day to spoil it with all those incredibly main entrance is in a glass and aluminum atrium, sad moments. Newbury Street is a shopper's parawhich is part of the new and very modern addition dise lined with 19th century brownstones, most of by award-winning and world renowned architect which have been converted to high end shops or Renzo Piano. A glass enclosed corridor leads to the restaurants. Continuing along Newbury we found museum building itself, which is patterned after a our way to the Boston Public Gardens and Bos-15th century Venetian palace, and is almost identi- ton Commons, but not before passing some of the cal to the Franciscan Monastery Museum that we've most expensive and up-scale stores in the world.

> you can ride around in the swan lings all neatly lined up in a row, grabbed a quick taxi ride to the Museum of Fine Arts and tried to finding a taxi back to the hotel





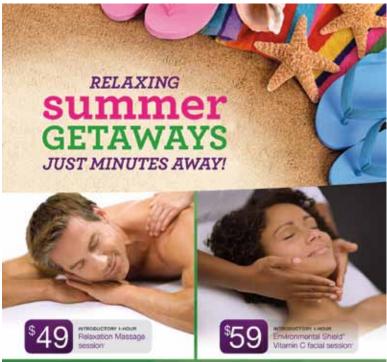


much part of the ambiance, and yes, Karen took a picture of me standing behind the bars.

Sergio and Karen

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Discount is off suggested retail. Previous purchases excluded. Sale ends July 30.

# IT'S LIKE A **FARMER'S MARKET.**



# **ONLY IT'S** IN OUR STORE.

The whole idea of a Farmer's Market is to get things grown nearby and just-picked. That way you know that they're hours fresh and that they haven't come from some agribusiness megacorp or from some other country.

We like that idea, too, enough so that we search out local foods, organic and otherwise, in their seasons. Local jams. Local eggs. Local coffee. Local petrale. Local pickles. And on and on, all gathered from places as far-off and exotic as Petaluma and Half Moon Bay.

When it comes to fresh foods, there's no place like home.



In the Castro In the Fillmore In Twin Peaks

