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Death, Taxes, and Your Morning Shower

by George Wooding

San Francisco's new water and wastewater rate increases should be added to the ancient proverb, "Nothing is certain but death and taxes." More certain than death, is certainty of taxation and fees.

Between July 2009 and July 2014, San Francisco single-family residential water and wastewater rates and water service charges will increase an astronomical 61% per household. The average residential bill for water and wastewater is currently \$63.16 monthly for a household averaging 7 units of water monthly. One unit of water equals 748 gallons of water. The same house, maintaining its same water usage, will pay \$101.45 monthly by July 2014 — a \$38.29 monthly fee increase, a staggering \$459.48 annual increase!

Over the next five years, residential water rates will increase on an annual basis by 15.0%, 15.0%, 12.5%, 12.5%, and 6.5%, respectively. Residential wastewater rates, which already cost 6% more than water, will increase by 7.0%, 7.0%, 5.0%, 5.0%, and 5.0%. All of these rate increases will be compounded annually. Fixed water service charges will also be increasing. To help reduce the financial burden on homeowners, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) will soon stop billing customers on a bi-monthly (two-month) basis and will convert to monthly billing instead. The new monthly bills are designed to confuse consumers with the illusion that they will continue paying approximately the same rates.

Almost all of the new SFPUC rate increases fall on the shoulders of homeowners and landlords. A majority of San Francisco's renters live in multi-unit apartment buildings without individual water meters; 69% of San Francisco residents are renters. Tenants without meters can use as little or as much water as they need, without having to pay for their actual usage; by contrast, homeowners pay every cent for their metered water, plus wastewater usage. San Francisco landlords pay

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O'Shaunessy Dam was a gift to San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire

RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR

Where's the Brotherhood?

By Quentin Kopp



Brotherhood Way is a very well traveled street West of Twin Peaks containing six religious institutions, five sectarian grammar schools, four Sabbath religious schools and one Masonic Temple. It wasn't always known as Brotherhood Way; prior to 1958, the thoroughfare was called Stanley Drive. Under the leadership of then Mayor George Christopher, unquestionably the best business administrator to lead

San Francisco in the post-World War II era, the City and County of San Francisco transferred all the property on the south side of Stanley Drive, which it owned except for the present location of St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Church and school, to religious and educational entities, including the Grand Order of Masons in 1957 and 1958, with the unanimous acquiescence of the Board of Supervisors. Stanley Drive's name was changed to Brotherhood Way by a duly adopted resolution of the Board of Supervisors. The intent was clear: Brotherhood Way connoted City government's intent to devote the entire block between Lake Merced Blvd. and St. Thomas More church to a diverse assembly of religions and accompanying schools.

To further that intent, the Board of Supervisors in the 1970s rejected efforts to purchase and develop for housing of senior citizens a portion of a parcel on the south side of Brotherhood Way. The religious institutions flourished, building beautiful places of worship and schools on land essentially donated for that purpose by City Hall. On the other side of the street, Parkmerced and other property owners treated their real estate in a manner compatible with Brotherhood Way's purpose, eschewing development in the neighboring park placement of Benny Bufano's world famous statue, "Peace."

Almost five decades later, in a sorry episode demonstrating disregard for history and the environment, the San Francisco Planning Commission granted permission to a developer to build 182 residential units on land referred to as 800 Brotherhood Way. It did so without requiring an Environmental Impact Report, instead allowing the

Cont. p. 4

Mayor's Cuts Are Taxpayers' Disaster

By Jeff Adachi



The 25 percent budget cut proposed by Mayor Gavin Newsom would make it impossible for the San Francisco Public Defender's Office to carry out its mission of providing legal representation to the 24,000 people the office is assigned to represent each year.

Budget cuts would result in the lay-off of attorneys and staff that would force the office to withdraw from representing as many as

6,000 cases. The Public Defender's Office and appointed attorneys represent 90 percent of San Franciscans accused of crimes. If the Public Defender's Office cannot handle cases due to insufficient staff, the cases must be referred to private attorneys at a greater cost to the city.

On May 6, 2009, over 400 attorneys, criminal justice policy experts, students, activists, community leaders and concerned citizens attended the 2009 Justice Summit: Defending the Public and the Constitution held at the San Francisco main library, to show their support for public defense.

The 2009 Justice Summit, co-sponsored by the California Public Defenders Association, California Attorneys for Criminal Justice, Bar Association of San Francisco, and San Francisco Public Defender's Office, was organized to bring awareness to the national crisis in public defense.

The Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires that an accused person who is charged with a crime and cannot afford to hire a lawyer must be appointed an attorney by the government. Because of budget cuts and staffing shortages, many public defense offices across the nation are unable to provide adequate representation to their clients.

The 2009 Justice Summit, began with a dramatic announcement by Federal District Court Judge Thelton Henderson — who was scheduled to deliver the keynote

Cont. p. 4

Herrera Should Get Serious About Sunshine

Our public-records laws are broken. When we need information from the City, it's far from certain that we will get it. Many citizens are learning the hard way that the law may be on their side, but enforcement has been left to the good faith efforts of the Ethics Commission. The commission, relying on advice from the City Attorney, has dismissed every alleged violation since San Francisco voters passed Prop G (Sunshine) in 1999 by a 16 point margin. In truth, the enforcement of the law is based on decisions made behind the City Attorney's closed doors.

No Department has more influence on the level of city entities' compliance with open government laws than the City Attorney's Office, and since we were invited to meet with City Attorney Herrera (see "Guess Who's Not Running for Mayor" on this page) we decided ask a few questions—especially after Herrera's comment about his department's involvement in everything City Hall, "...you name it—we're involved in it."

Our question was, what was the City Attorney going to do about the sad state of open government in the City with what some consider the most powerful sunshine laws on the books? Herrera's response was typical political banter — he loves sunshine and provides his calendars, etc. This may or may not be true, but the ultimate responsibility for compliance rests on his shoulders. In fact, the City Attorney's Office has itself been the subject of numerous complaints to the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, the 11 member body responsible for monitoring open-government laws. And the task force has upheld many of those complaints as violations of the law.

City voters spoke clearly in 1999, despite the opposition of then-City Attorney Louise Renne, who publicly opposed the stronger laws. Herrera, Renne's protégé, appears to have defeated the laws behind the scenes, so bureaucrats can ignore the laws with impunity. (Please read the Task Force Report for 2008 on their website: sfgov.org/sunshine).

The task force is empowered to interpret the laws and recommend enforcement, not the City Attorney. The taxpayers pay to maintain that body; but day to day, City entities receiving public records requests must rely on the City Attorney's advice to determine whether a given piece of information must be disclosed. In the eyes of the law, seeking such advice constitutes a good-faith effort to comply with the sunshine laws.

The problem is that the City Attorney at times gives advice that seems to run counter to the task force's interpretations, and there is no recourse, short of a lawsuit, without cooperation from the City Attorney. We encourage Mr. Herrera to step up to the plate.

AROUND THE TOWN...

Comings and Goings

By Mitch Bull

As we move past the Memorial Day holidays, Spring is finally here and with that the end of the school year. This is the time of year to honor all of the soon to be graduates and wish them well, as they are our future.

What kind of future they will have to work with is the big question. The resounding defeat of the "Governator's" fiscal **ballot measures** will probably mean draconian cuts in both Sacramento and the cities and counties. It's a tough balancing act to try and fund all of the programs that we want (and vote in by Proposition) without having a solid and stable plan on where the revenues are coming from. When times are flush, Californians are really good at spreading the wealth, with little regard to how this will work when times are not so good...welcome to today. It's easy to blame the legislators, but any of us who continue to vote yes on every Proposition that sounds great without a clue to where the money is coming from share in the process. Several ideas have been forwarded from revising Prop 13, to going after corporate loopholes... I sincerely hope the group in Sacramento can hammer out some reasonable answers and work together as Californians...not just sticking to failed party ideologies.

Lots of merchants had tables and wares out for the "Show and Shop" **street fair** on West Portal Avenue on May 16th. It was a great chance to see the variety of goods and services that our shops and service providers have to offer. From Optometry, to Games, to Spa services, to Banking, many merchants participated. I was kind of disappointed that the banking table wasn't handing out free samples...

Speaking of free...the winner of our "Great Westside Observer Survey" is John Zinn of 21st Ave. We will be sending John 2 movie tickets for participating in our survey. A big "THANK YOU" to everyone who sent in their comments and ideas, some of which we have already tried to incorporate into the paper.

Bart and Judy Lewis have announced a new series of "Social Ballroom Dance **Classes for Couples**." From the Cha Cha Cha to the Waltz they will be teaching classes on Thursday evenings at the Forest Hill Christian Church, Fellowship Hall. The location is 250 Laguna Honda Blvd., and classes begin on June 25, for 6 weeks. The 6 one-hour lessons will be \$70 per couple. To make reservations call 661-2746.

Are you 60 plus? If so you are wanted on the campus of SF State. "Sixty Plus" of SFSU welcomes anyone with a lively mind who is 60 years of age or older to join in a variety of activities at this lifelong learning organization. The annual membership fee is \$75, but interested people are encouraged to go to a meeting and "try it out" before the next year starts in September. For information, contact Eileen Ward in the Sixty Plus office at SFSU, 1600 Holloway Ave. HSS 242, or e-mail sixty@sfsu.edu.

What about you? If you have an interesting snippet, or some other fact you'd like to get into the paper just drop it to us. You can reach me at: mitch@WestsideObserver.com. Be sure to check out the *Observer* online @ www.WestsideObserver.com.



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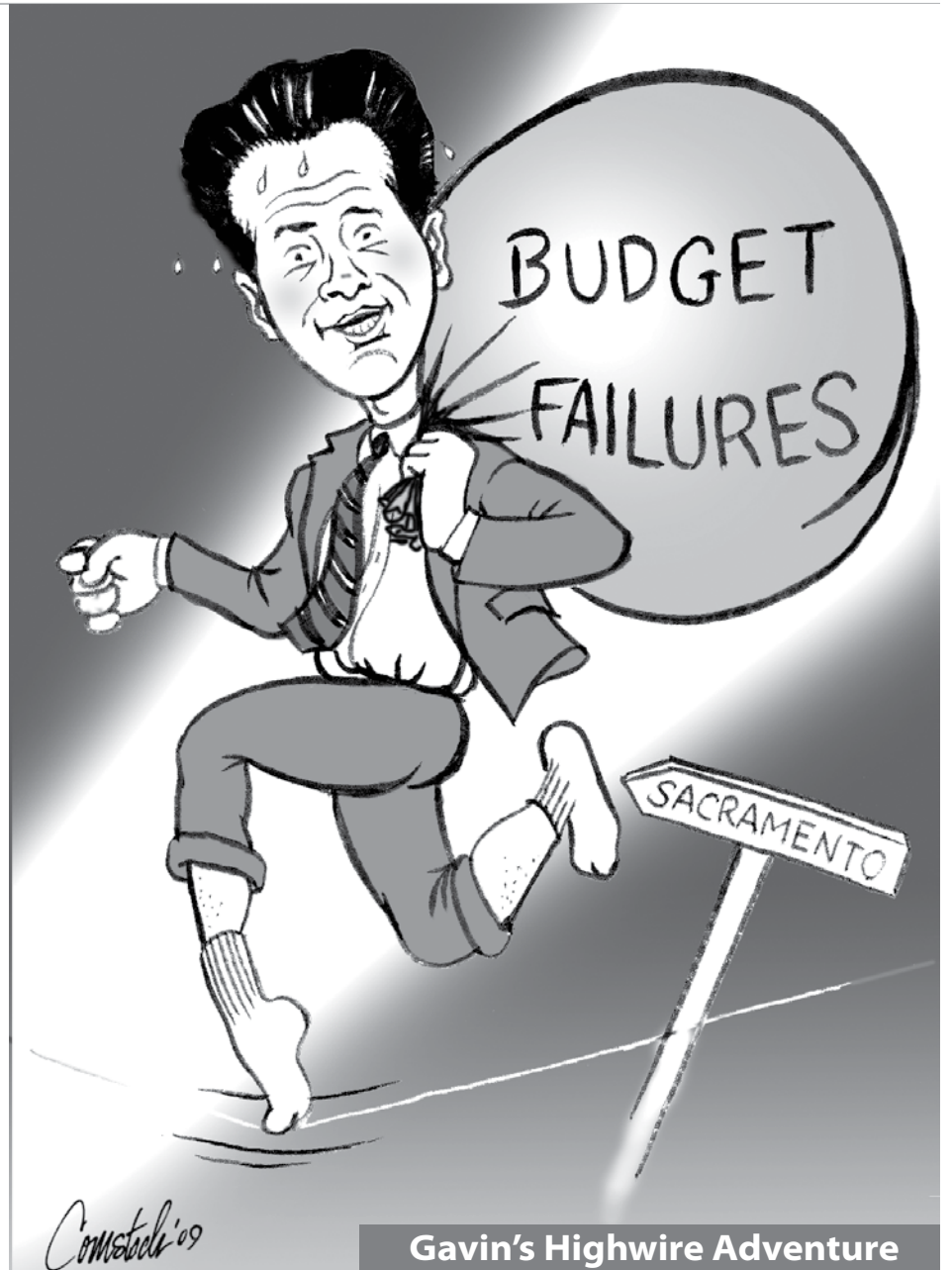
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Gavin's Highwire Adventure

Guess Who's Not Running for Mayor?

By Jonathan Farrell

City Attorney Dennis Herrera invited all the local neighborhood papers in the San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association to City Hall for a roundtable discussion on May 6.

Herrera told the dozen editors, publishers and reporters present that he confessed to being "a newspaper junkie." He also thought it was sad that San Francisco's major newspaper, the *SF Chronicle*, is struggling to survive, especially now in an economic downturn.

His responsibilities include representing the city and county in legal proceedings and providing advice or written opinions to any officer, department head, board, commission or other unit of local government.

Herrera said his department has been cut back over the past several years, from 225 attorneys when he took office seven years ago to 185 today.

For the past seven years Herrera and his staff are often at the "front line" in civil and fairness issues involving the City of San Francisco and/or the state of California. So, it is little wonder that the City Attorney has been described by "American Lawyer" magazine as "one of the most aggressive and talented city law departments in the nation."

Herrera's office handles some 8,000 claims a year. He meets weekly with the top leaders of his office to hammer out strategy and work on continuing legislation, such as the city's effort to legalize same-sex marriages at the state Supreme Court.

Paul Kozakiewicz, editor of the Sun-set Beacon and Richmond Review newspapers, asked Herrera to comment on a recent proposal by SF Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi to ban the delivery of free newspapers to those who do not want



them.

Herrera mentioned that to hinder the distribution of free newspapers is to hinder free speech. Herrera sees the delivery and or distribution of newspapers whether they are to a newsstand box on the street or to someone's doorstep as a vital way to help keep the public informed.

"Many people, especially older generations that are not as tech savvy or simply those who do not have access to a computer, rely on printed material," said Herrera.

Herrera said his fondest triumph so far was getting a \$1 million settlement, which was used for seed money to establish the Willie Mays Boys and Girls Club in the Bayview. Other groups and individuals, including the mayor's office, got additional funding to make the project a reality.

Luke Thomas, editor of the Fog City Journal, expressed a bit of skepticism after the meeting. He thought Herrera's motives were politically motivated as Herrera will be up for re-election soon and is rumored to be a candidate for mayor.

The SF Neighborhood Newspaper Association was founded in 1988 to share advertising revenues and to meet with elected officials to get information about specific neighborhoods.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Enough Already with Looking Back

Over the years I've read Tony Hall's writing in the *Observer*, I've usually had a good laugh.

Supervisor Hall's issue in "Enough Already with the Parking" (May 2009) is

that he can't drive his SUV or his Harley wherever he wants and expect cheap or free parking. Obviously Ex-Supervisor Hall is not in the room with decision makers these days. If he was he'd be aware

Cont. p. 5

West of Twin Peaks Central Council News & Views



SFFF PPres. John Hanley Talks About Fire Safety

The WOTPCC meeting on Tuesday, May 26th had the feeling of a slight Memorial Day hangover, as the audience was late arriving and fairly quiet, but three very good speakers and nominations for officers for 2010 made for a very informative session.

Vice President George Wooding, filling in for the traveling President Dutil, opened the meeting at 7:40 with only about 23 people attending. A quorum was reached via the roll call, with Roger Ritter introducing himself and his wife. Roger is the new representative for Balboa Terrace.

Following the report from Treasurer Squeri, Wooding gave the communications report, containing permit information for 9 West Portal and 1150 Ocean. Upon completion, Officer Wong addressed the group with the Taraval Station Police report.

The officer stated that things have been quiet in the area lately after the arrest of several burglars some weeks ago. An incident in Balboa Terrace was discussed in which an escaped parolee was involved in a car chase from Colma to SF. The end result was 8 police cars converging on the parolee's vehicle. The parolee jumped out and ran through back yards to make his escape. The driver of the car, a woman, was apprehended.

Avrum Shepard made a motion to have the WOTPCC board draft a letter to thank the SF Police Officer's Union and rank and file for "giving back" benefits worth \$18 M over a three-year period to help the city with their budget woes. The motion was seconded and a letter will be prepared and sent to the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, the Chief of Police, the Police Commission and the Police Officers Association.

The next section of meeting focused on three items of new business. The proposed resolution from the Miraloma Park discussed last month by Dan Liberthson and Karen Wood pertaining to the transfer of SFPD Captains without cause was tabled until the June meeting as Karen was unavailable for the May meeting.

A lengthy discussion on "Secondary Units" was conducted as the Board of Supes is trying to enact legislation that would amend the planning code to legalize some units. Although the intent is in the Market/Octavia corridor, the blanket legislation would be felt over the entire city. Dave Bisho feels this is a "crack in the dam" and is bad legislation that the WOTPCC has opposed over the years. It is estimated that up to 30,000 illegal secondary units exist currently in the city.

New Business concluded with the Paul Conroy speaking on behalf of the nominating committee to announce a proposed slate of officers for the upcoming year. The Nominating Committee, comprised of Conroy, Denise LaPointe, Bisho and Matt Chamberlain, have proposed the following slate of officers for next year: President-George Wooding, VP - Dan Dutil, Treasurer - Carolyn Squeri, and Secretary - Rae Doyle. Nominations from the floor can be made at the June meeting prior to the final voting. A quorum is necessary for the June election; so all representatives are encouraged to attend.

Three speakers rounded out the presentations for the evening: Sandra Holliday discussed the wealth of San Francisco State University Creative Arts programs that are available to the public at little or no cost. Theatre, Music, Film, Lecture, and other programs are presented throughout the year. The Westside Observer will work with SF State to highlight these events in the future.

Ruth Gay, the Director of Public Policy for the Northern California and Northern Nevada Alzheimer Association, led a detailed discussion on the state of Alzheimer's care in SF and California and how the picture may look in the future. As more and more people are being diagnosed with the disease earlier in life (through better screening) new treatments may be available, but at the same time the number of skilled nursing beds needed by an aging population are dwindling as cities and counties are paring their budgets. In addition the California Legislature is to consider a motion by the Governor to eliminate funding for 10 Alzheimer research programs in California, including the one at UCSF. Contact Mark Leno in the Assembly to make your feelings known. With too much detail to go into here, there is good news on the Alzheimer's front on treatments, but the snapshot of numbers of people that will be affected in the future and the care available is quite disturbing.

The final speaker of the evening was John Hanley, President of (SF) Firefighters Union 798. Hanley discussed the duty of the firefighters, the differences that the units have in SF compared to suburban areas, and the fact that the firefighters' budget is just 6% of the City budget, yet they have voluntarily given back salary and benefits as their colleagues in the SFPD have done. Despite this, the Supervisors have voted 7-3 in a non-binding resolution to have roving "brownouts" of fire stations, including local Station No. 20. This resolution was sent to the Mayor for response and action. The supervisors also want to increase the length of the workweek for firefighters from 48.7 hours to 52 with no increases.

Hanley opened the floor for questions and many good questions were presented. It was stated by Hanley that 80% of the calls are 911 Medical calls where the SFFD (trained as EMT's and paramedics) are the first responders to anyone who has chest pains, etc. Other questions related to earthquake preparedness, budget comparisons to other densely populated cities, and the facts that our modern homes contain many items (PC's, TV's, furniture) made of plastic, which, as a petroleum derivative, is a good accelerant when a fire starts. How many of us had considered that fact?

The meeting was then adjourned. The next meeting, and election of officers, will be on Monday, June 22nd at 7:30 in the Forest Hills Clubhouse.

Why Plan?

What is the Housing Element & Where is it taking us?

By Jed Lane

In 1969 the State Legislature passed a bill mandating that local governments "adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community". In recent times San Francisco did a Housing Element (HE) in 1990 and then didn't update it till 2004. The 2004 HE was controversial and although it was accepted by the State's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) it was never enforced because of a lawsuit brought by neighborhood groups over the lack of an environmental impact report (EIR). When the City filed the document in 2004 they stated that all impacts could be "mitigated" and therefore no EIR was required. The courts said that an EIR was needed so the EIR is actually in process at this time. Also at this time the City is writing the 2009 HE.



To some it's confusing that both the 2004 and the 2009 HEs are being worked on at the same time. A common question is "why not abandon the 2004 HE and just work on the 2009 HE"? The answer is that each new HE builds on the previous one, therefore only the changes need to be studied, discussed or have their impacts investigated. Those of us in the community that work on these issues, like the MPIC Zoning and Planning Committee are watching both because the 2004 HE was revised in 2008 before the EIR was commissioned.

So why plan? The 1969 state law mandates that local governments come up with how they will address the housing needs of every economic stratum of the residents. Interestingly, the requirement is that the City shows that the ability to create housing exists yet it relies on the private sector to build the housing. While the City must show the State that it's possible to meet the needs there isn't any way to force the private sector to create the housing. Zoning and land use policy are the methods used to show that local governments have addressed the needs.

Who decides how much housing is needed and where it's needed? The State HCD department analyzes and projects the growth of the State in each region. The regional entities are then informed of what they need to do. In the Bay Area the regional entity is the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). ABAG breaks down the projected growth to each City and County and that establishes the numbers San Francisco is to plan for. Negotiations do occur at this level and ABAG will play a larger role in the future as regional transportation issues are tied to land use policy.

Since the HE is a part of the General Plan which ties into regional, state and federal planning goals there are overarching aspects that filter down to details in the HE. Clearly one of the largest issues of our time and a driving force behind the direction the planners are moving is to address green house gas (GHG) emissions and global warming. There are many parts to the HE, historical preservation, affordable housing, secondary units, etc. A relatively new aspect of the HE links transportations to housing creation. The most controversial to each person, group or neighborhood will depend on how it impacts them. Understanding the reason it's done and the overarching direction the law mandates will help us all have more relevant conversations.

San Francisco led the way with a green house gas reduction law by passing the Climate Action Plan in 2004. Then the California Assembly passed AB32 in 2006 which mandated reductions in GHG emissions. The California State Senate followed that with SB375 in 2008 which put teeth into the Assembly law. SB375 mandates that if regions don't act to reduce GHG then access to State and Federal transportation dollars will be cut off. We have experienced some of the changes from these laws already and now

it is going to speed up. One of the main ways, but not the only one in the works, is to reduce the number of carbon fueled vehicle miles traveled (VMT). There are two main thrusts to this. One direction is alternative fuel vehicles which leave the responsibility of transportation up to the individual. The other is to improve mass transit. The State likes the former because it removes the responsibility from them to build adequate infrastructure and provide mass transit systems that work. The latter will have a bigger impact on the reduction of GHG but is known to be most effective if ridership reaches high numbers, hence density increases.

Urban centers in America all grew as economic centers. From the earliest times they originated for trade or transit of trade. San Francisco is no different. Boston and New York first grew as cities where everything could be done by a walking person. Originally San Francisco was the same. The development of the areas south of Golden Gate Park and west of Twin Peaks were designed around the auto. Our neighborhoods were planned and built with easy parking in front of our houses and easy parking at our daily destinations. Hence our neighborhoods stand to be impacted by efforts to reduce VMT. In our single family neighborhoods we will need much better service from MUNI if we are to reduce our VMT. I confess that I drive everywhere, but I know from my work as a Realtor, that many people don't want to own cars or drive everywhere. Providing housing for them on transit corridors without parking allows for more units in a structure with less height and bulk. As proposals are put before us I feel it's important to understand the motivation and the ramifications.

Historically planning has been done from the "Top Down," widely recognized as a failed policy. Locally the redevelopment of Japantown and the Fillmore district were the worst examples. Now planning is much more "Bottom Up" and that's why the Planning Department is organizing events around the City to discuss and get public input on the HE.

I believe that cities should be dynamic and evolving. As citizens of San Francisco, we need to be informed on issues and delve into the ones that are important to each of us. The planners that are listening to you are people that do what they do because they typically have a desire to know how people live, to design better living habitats and help build better communities. We all know that respectful people get listened to and disrespectful people get tuned out. Planners are the moderators between economic forces that make money on development, government dictates and the people that live in the environments that are built. They are also public servants who work for us. Be sure that they know us and understand what's important to our lives here in the suburbs in the City.

Jed Lane - Westside native and Miraloma Park resident



WE'RE ALSO ON THE WEB
www.westsideobserver.com

Public Defender (Cont. from p. 1)

address – that he had received a call from the judicial ethics council in Washington, D.C., advising him not to speak. “They were concerned that this event would be seen as too political,” Judge Henderson said. “So instead, I want you to imagine what I would have said if I were allowed to speak.”

The 2009 Justice Summit featured a morning panel discussion on the history of indigent defense in America, the role of public defenders in exposing government misconduct, and ensuring equal access to a fair trial.

According to panelist Kimberly Thomas Rapp, Director of Law and Policy at the Equal Justice Society, minorities, immigrants, working poor people, and disadvantaged youth and families are most likely to rely on public defense services. She also said that in difficult economic times, more members of the public rely on public defense, because fewer people can afford to hire an attorney and crimes rooted in economic hardship tend to increase.

In San Francisco, approximately 10 to 15 percent of the people served by the Public Defender’s Office are immigrants. According to a recent report by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, African Americans are 4.7 times, and Latinos are 2.1 times as likely to have a public defender as their Caucasian counterparts.

In California, for every \$8 spent on prisons and corrections, only \$1 is spent on indigent defense. California Department of Justice statistics indicate that San Francisco has the lowest per capita spending on public defense when compared to other major California cities. In San Francisco, 59 percent of all public safety spending goes to fund the Police and Sheriff’s departments, while only 3

percent goes to fund the Public Defender’s Office. According to State Public Defender Michael Hersek, budget cuts that reduce the staffing of public defender offices cause delays in court cases, which drive up incarceration costs. Staffing shortages also result in high case-loads, inadequate investigation and preparation of cases, and an increased likelihood that innocent people are wrongfully convicted.

Cookie Ridolfi, director the Northern Californian Innocence Project, explained that 20 percent of wrongful convictions proven through DNA testing resulted from poor lawyering due to insufficient investigation and defense resources. “The state must expend great sums to reverse a wrongful conviction based on incompetent lawyering. It is much cheaper to provide an adequate defense in the first instance to avoid the cost of appeals and retrials” she said.

Los Angeles Public Defender Michael Judge recounted a recent case in Mendocino County, where a minor was wrongfully convicted of a serious sex offense when his defender, due to having too many clients and insufficient resources, failed to properly investigate the background of a key prosecution witness. The Court of Appeal ruled that the public defender was responsible for the faulty representation of the minor and that public defenders may face disbarment for failing to adequately represent clients.

“We fully recognized the financial difficulty faced by the city of San Francisco, but our analysis concludes...that these cuts will cost the city and society far more in the long run,” said Russ Roeca, President of the Bar Association of SF, which represents 9,000 Bay Area attorneys.

The 2009 Justice Summit’s afternoon panel addressed

public defense client services that extend beyond the courtroom to address non-criminal social issues, such as drug rehabilitation, mental health treatment and housing. One such example is the Public Defender’s Office Clean Slate Program, which has helped over 15,000 people clear their criminal records upon demonstrating rehabilitation, helping them overcome barriers to employment and housing.

A recent study of the Public Defender’s Office social service programs showed that providing alternatives to incarceration contributed to a \$1 million annual savings for San Francisco.

“Public defenders worry about the community. They worry about making it better for their client,” President of California Public Defenders Association Bart Sheela said. “Trying to help people when they get out of prison not go back, doesn’t just help [the client], it helps the entire system.”

The 2009 Justice Summit attracted the support of a broad-based coalition of over 50 community, faith-based, and legal organizations. The movement to support indigent defense has been motivated by a surge of national interest in how the criminal justice system is being affected by budget cuts to defender offices, and lawsuits that have been filed in several states, including Florida, New York, Georgia, and Minnesota, over whether public defenders can be forced to accept cases when they are unable to handle the workloads assigned by the courts.

The 2009 Justice Summit will be broadcast this month on Cable SF Channels 26 and 78. For air times, to view on-line streaming video of the 2009 Justice Summit or to find out how you can help, please visit www.sfpublicdefender.org.

Kopp (Cont. from p. 1)

developer to submit a so-called mitigated negative declaration, notwithstanding the project’s frontage at 3711 19th Avenue or the cumulative effects of traffic, noise and other environmental elements. The Planning Commission did so over the earnest opposition of the St. Thomas More Parish Council, Congregation Beth Israel-Judea, Calvary Armenian Congregational Church, St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church, KZV Armenian School, Lake Merced Church of Christ, Brotherhood Masonic Temple, the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity and the Lakeshore Acres Improvement Club, of which I have been a member since 1973. An appeal by this congeries of institutions known as the Brotherhood Way Coalition to the Board of Supervisors was rejected. The Coalition’s suit in San Francisco Superior Court and review by the Court of Appeal failed, the Planning Commission having approved with specific conditions the Conditional Use of the parcel by the developer on May 5th 2005 and the Board of Supervisors having rejected on August 16th, 2005 the Coalition’s request for relief.

The development itself and the Conditional Use Authorization violated the limitations of the Residential Mixed Low Density and Residential Mixed, High Density district controlling the parcel. A principle condition imposed on the project sponsor was that it “provide and maintain publicly accessible pedestrian paths from Brotherhood Way through the site to MUNI routes on Gonzales Drive and Font Blvd.” In the Planning Department’s own words, the reason for the imposition of such conditions was to improve transit access for such residential development and to “provide social connections between residents of the project and surrounding residential development.” In other words, project sponsor was required to obtain an easement through Parkmerced’s lands so as to furnish access to the Municipal Railway for the buyers of the 182 planned units. That has never happened.

Under the Planning Code, a Conditional Use Permit expires in three years. That is, the project must be commenced and completed in this instance by May 18, 2005,

three years after Planning Commission grant of this deviation from the San Francisco planning code. The Planning Code also provides that authorization of a change in any condition previously imposed in authorizing a Conditional Use shall be subject to the same procedures as a new Conditional Use, namely, approval by the Planning Commission.

After the approval, the developer/project sponsor failed to secure the necessary easement to provide for the pedestrian connection to the MUNI although its lawyer wrote the deed of sale for his client. To overcome such failure, the project sponsor then requested, without notice to the Brotherhood Way Coalition or its constituent institutions, a “Letter of Determination” regarding such condition of approval of the Conditional Use Authorization for the 800 Brotherhood Way development. In violation of §Sec 303 (e) of the San Francisco Planning Code, which confers on the Planning Commission the sole power to grant any such absolution, Zoning Administrator Lawrence B. Badiner issued a letter on November 7, 2008 deleting such condition and instead allowed fulfillment of such condition by construction of a pedestrian pathway to within 10 feet of the Parkmerced property line. Badiner sent no copy of his November 7, 2008 letter to any religious or educational entity on Brotherhood Way.

Subsequently, a coalition member discovered Badiner’s illegal action. At a February 26, 2009 meeting of the Planning Commission, I brought it to the attention of the Commission, asking whether the Commission knew its powers had been usurped? Commission members did not know usurpation had occurred. On motion of Commissioner Gwyneth Borden the Commission ordered a public hearing on the action. Unfortunately, more time elapsed before such hearing occurred on May 28, 2009. In the interim, acting on reports of similar previous actions by Badiner, I asked City Attorney Dennis Herrera if he knew of an apparent practice by Badiner to authorize Conditional Use deviations without Commission action. He did not.

On May 28, 2009, Badiner fell on his sword, admitting

that he violated §Sec. 303(e) and apologized three times for doing so.

I recommended and requested Commission action to vacate and set aside the November 7, 2008 change in the project sponsor’s pedestrian walkway easement requirement through Parkmerced. Other persons testified, including the project sponsor’s attorney, who uttered the false assertion to the Commission that the condition only consisted of building a pedestrian walkway to the Parkmerced boundary, not through an easement across Parkmerced to MUNI bustops. (A state bar referral might be in order for that lawyer’s misleading statement to a public forum.) The Planning Director stated that since Parkmerced needed a Planning Commission permit to rearrange numerous residential units therein, that would provide opportunity to persuade Parkmerced to grant the failed easement. (The Planning Director repeated that threat of intimidation in a conversation with others and me after the hearing, thus showing a willingness to extort a condition from Parkmerced in its permit application process.)

The lessons are clear: present day bureaucrats care little for San Francisco’s brotherly history West of Twin Peaks and care equally less about fine points of the code under which they operate. Compliance with the Planning Code rests mostly on citizen vigilance at City Hall — and that is difficult in the lives of everyday people, working and otherwise. While even as a retired judge in the Assigned Judges Program, the Code of Judicial Ethics precludes comment directly about non-judicial matters, exceptions exist in instances of neighborhood issues, I can participate and have done so, because it affects my Lakeshore Acres neighborhood and my synagogue, Congregation Beth Israel-Judea. And I have been pleased to do so with all the religious and educational representatives of the Brotherhood Way Coalition, which will continue to insist upon probity of the Planning Department and the Zoning Administrator, hoping that the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and City Attorney will do likewise. *Quentin Kopp is a former San Francisco Supervisor, and State Senator*



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SECOND THOUGHTS

Is the Market Really Free?

by Jack Kaye



Much has been said about the wisdom of the free market system. It is said to be based on supply and demand with prices increasing as demand outpaces supply or decreasing when the opposite occurs. Salaries are also said to be based on this system with higher salaries reflecting a greater value of the respective services rendered. But is this what really happens?

What we have seen in the past 25 years appears to be a perversion of our free market system. When demand exceeds the supply of labor, companies now look to other countries to fulfill their labor needs either outsourcing the work to less-expensive foreign workers or by importing the workers through work visas and by hiring obviously undocumented workers. Our most progressive senators, like the senior Senator from California, have tried to convince us that our countrymen refuse to do certain jobs that therefore must be done by foreign workers. One, the senior Senator from Massachusetts, even scoffed at the idea that anyone would pay a chicken picker \$18 an hour.

Why not? That equals \$36,000 a year (there are 2080 hours to a regular work year of 52 40-hour weeks). Would that really be too much to pay if that's what it took to get the job done? The same is true of farm workers. If Americans are not willing to do the job for \$6 an hour, maybe it should pay more even if that means lower profits or higher prices. We pay our police officers almost \$100,000 a year because we believe that what it takes to get someone to do the job. What if we paid doctors, architects, engineers, lawyers and U.S. Senators \$10 an hour? Would they work for that amount and if not would we say that they are unwilling to do their jobs so we must import under-educated foreigners to do them?

On the other side, we are told that some people must be paid bonuses, whether their company succeeds or fails in order to retain good workers. Why do some careers deserve bonuses that other professions don't?

Bankers, stock brokers, star athletes, entertainers and senior business executives need bonuses but others like nurses, social workers, teachers, clergy, government workers, police officers, firemen, soldiers, and garbage collectors can be relied upon to do their best for predetermined salaries. How did the free market system decide?

While some workers make \$20,000 a year, others make twice that much a week! How is one person worth 100, 1000 or 10,000 times as much as another? Last year a hedge fund manager made almost two billion dollars equaling the combined total of what 100,000 people earned at \$20,000 a year. One person's efforts equaled that of 100,000 people?

Doctors are our most educated professionals. After four years of college, they attend four more of medical school followed by years of internship and residency. It is one of the most difficult and important careers. Doctors make on average less than \$300,000 a year.

The President of the United States makes \$400,000 a year but also gets free room and board, free transportation and a great pension. All told the package is worth about a million dollars a year for what is considered the hardest job in the world and one that takes many times more than 2,000 hours per year.

In contrast, a high school graduate who is a great athlete can be drafted by a professional basketball, football or baseball team, and make as much as \$28 million a year to work in as many as 150 games (or as few as 14) for less than half the year. Note how many of the highest paid athletes have been found guilty of using illegal steroids to justify their high earnings—like Mark, Barry, Jason, Alex, Manny, Sammy, Jose, Roger, etc.

Meanwhile a movie star can earn \$30 million for a role in one movie that takes less than six months to film.

A senior business executive with an agreeable board can get \$100 million to leave after failing the company (remember Bank of America?) or \$20 million to stay on to continue with the now failing company as happened recently at banks, insurance companies and brokerage houses. Note how many real estate, and stock scandals were caused by people trying to receive undeserved higher bonuses for their work product.

But a person whose fate it is to pluck chickens, pick cotton, or harvest fruits and vegetables should not deserve \$36,000 to work hard eight hours a day for 250 days a year?

Who says that the free market is really free or fair?

POLICE BLOTTER

For a complete daily Police Report from the Taraval Police Station, go to our website:

www.westsideobserver.com



Letters (Cont. from p. 2)

of the mandates that are coming from the State legislature requiring carbon emission reductions.

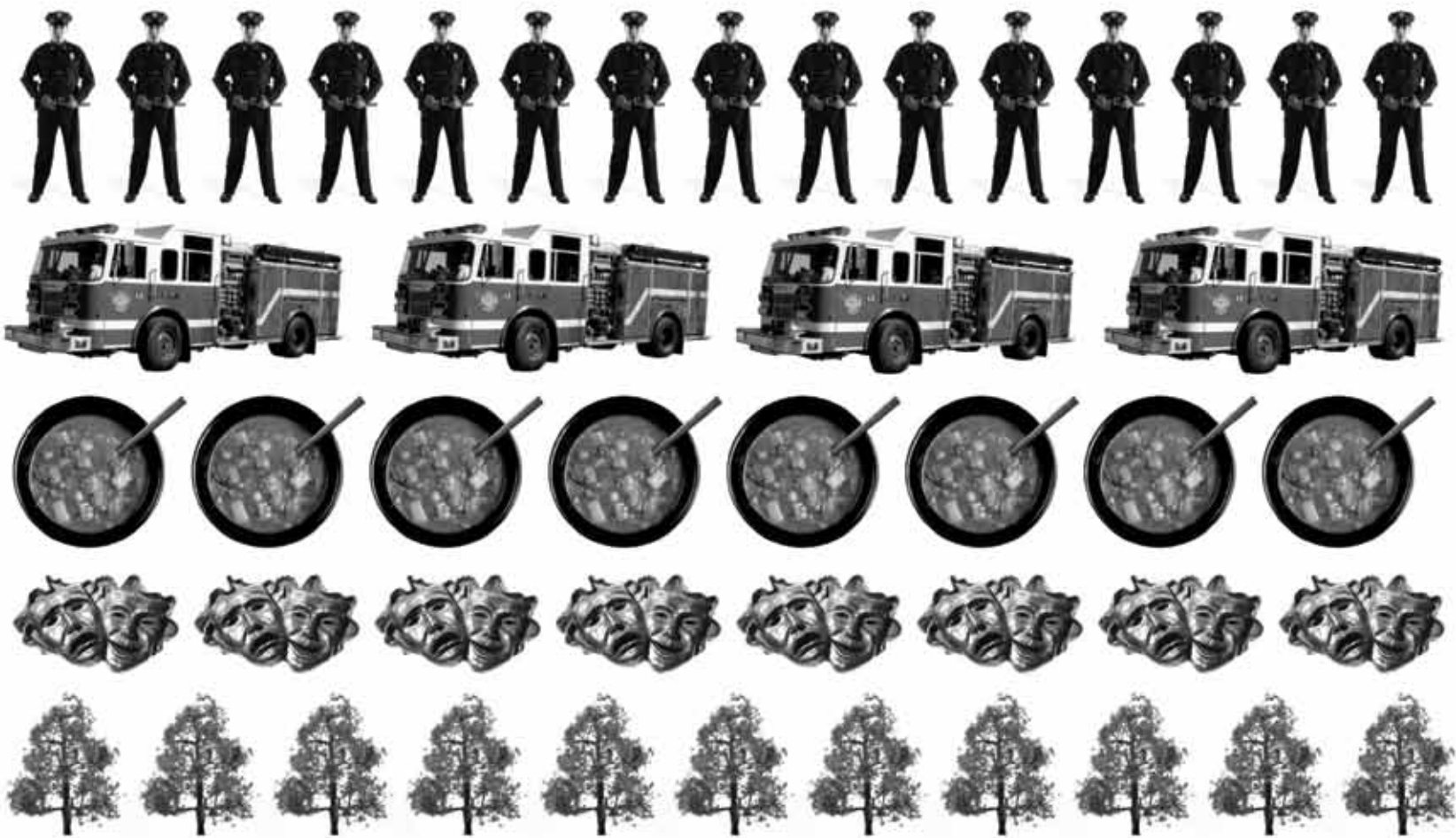
If Ex-Supervisor Hall didn't have his attention stuck on looking back, or at least did some research on the subject for his article, he would know about AB32 and SB375. He would know that the Transit First Policy of San Francisco hasn't been "in effect for the past 30 years" (it was added to the City Charter in 1996). He might also be aware of new legislation introduced very recently, (AB1171) that intends to declare "that free parking has significant social, economic and environmental costs." (Sounds like a warning on a cigarette package.)

While I have fond memories of growing up and can be just as nostalgic for the old days of my youth and previous careers as Mr. Hall, I am actively working on policy NOW with various City bodies. The policy makers do NOT have their heads screwed on backwards. They are young, intelligent, earnest well intentioned and very hard working. They're looking forward, not waxing nostalgic or reliving the accomplishments of yesteryear.

The raising of fees for destination parking are efforts to reduce driving. This is only the beginning. The future that is being planned recognizes the cost of "Americans' unique and undeniable fascination with the auto." We used to have the same love for the horse. If this were 1909 Mr. Hall would be bemoaning the loss of hitching posts and that awful pavement for all the new-fangled horseless buggies.

Forest Knolls is losing its poor connection to Forest Hill. If we don't pay attention to what's coming but focus too long on the rear view mirror we will all be walking up the likes of Warren Drive in the future. Areas of the City that were built before the age of the auto have much better public transportation than we do, the Richmond District for example. The west side residents will bear a large portion of the burden placed by law on the use of the autos if we don't advocate for better access to public transportation starting now.

Jed Lane, Miraloma Park



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Revenue generated by San Francisco's hospitality industry helps provide essential services to all San Francisco residents. From law enforcement to fire fighting and from parks and recreation to care for the less fortunate, the hospitality industry plays a critical roll in keeping San Francisco moving. So whether you call San Francisco home, or you're just visiting, our hotel industry is on the front lines, making sure **San Francisco** will always be... **Everybody's Favorite City.**

June Calendar

QUE SYRAH – EVERY TUESDAY

Happy Hour 4-8 pm. Take \$1 off of each glass / \$10 off of each bottle of wine consumed at the store. 230 West Portal Avenue 731-7000.

CLIFF HOUSE –FRIDAY NIGHT JAZZ

7:00 –11:00 pm 1 Seal Rock – in the Balcony Lounge.

THE CHEAP BASTARD SHOW- EVERY SAT

2-4 pm | @The Music Store. 66 West Portal Ave, 664-2044. The show is free, however tips are encouraged. But not only is the show free, they also give you 25% off all used CDs, LPs, DVDs!

June 6 - Savannah Blu (bluegrass)
June 13 - The Shake it Sugarees (bluegrass & Americana)
June 20 - Jesse Harper & Friends (indie-folk)
June 27 - Sean Garvey Band, Kevin Gordon (Americana)
July 4th - Red, White & Bluegrass (bluegrass & BBQ).

YMCA HEALTH SCREENINGS

June 3-Every 1st Wed. |9:30-11:30 am Free at the Stonestown YMCA. A different screening every month: cholesterol, glucose, body mass index, blood pressure and bone density. 923-3155.

STROKE SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP

Jun 4- Every 1st Thu | 1-2:30 pm Share survivor experiences. 2100 Webster Street, Suite 119, Conference Room. RSVP 923-3155.

NOW AT THE MOVIES

by Don Lee Miller

ANGELS & DEMONS

Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) is called to aid the Vatican, whose very existence is being threatened, along with Dr. Vittoria Vetra (Ayelet Zurer), an Israeli actress (Munich, Vantage Point), here an Italian bioentanglement physics scientist. Camerlengo Patrick McKenna (Ewan McGregor), Swiss Guard Commander Richter (Stellan Skarsgård), and Cardinal Strauss (Armin Mueller-Stahl) are the key Vatican figures, yet the conflict posed by the Vatican's rules/protocol/procedures often thwart Langdon's efforts to unravel the mystery. Four cardinals have been kidnapped and are to be killed an hour apart if Langdon, Vetra and Richter can not solve the puzzle presented by the kidnappers. All this happens after the death of the pope and during the meetings to elect his successor. Ron Howard's direction keeps a fast pace in this sequel to The da Vinci Code, also based on a Dan Brown novel with screenplay by David Koepp and Akiva Goldsman. They keep the viewer guessing until the last minute who is on the divine side. Violence, disturbing images of gruesome deaths.

EARTH

AT THE THEATER

Dr. Jean Lust and Flora Lynn Isaacson

YOU, NERO

In Amy Freed's You, Nero, after meeting Scribonius (Jeff McCarthy), the playwright who will pen Nero's life to present on stage, the audience immediately begins to rollick with laughter due to the provocative dialogue and content about the lascivious, power-obsessed Roman Emperor who calmly and shamelessly exterminated many of his citizens as well as his own mother. After the playwright meets with Nero (Danny Scheie) the latter requests that he write the story of his life in order to regain favor with the Roman citizens. We meet Nero's despotic and ambitious mother (Lori Larsen) who plotted to make him Emperor, his over sexed mistress Poppaea (Susannah Schulman), his gay lover (Kasey Mahaffy), philosophers (Mike McShane and Richard Doyle as Seneca), silly eunuchs, and sensual slaves. These court scenes offer comically lewd action that excites and retains audience interest.

Directed by former artistic director of Berkeley Rep, Sharon Ott, caricatural comic effects are obtained through a relaxed modern day mockery of Nero's reign that contrasts with the extravagantly decorated sets (Erik Flatmo) and elegant costumes (Paloma H. Young) that portray the ancient formality of his court.

BAY AREA VISION WALK

Sat, June 6 | Registration 9 am Hundreds of residents from across the San Francisco Bay area will support the fight against blindness by participating in the third annual Bay Area VisionWalk Golden Gater Park, Music Concourse Bandshell. www.blindness.org .

PINEHURST LODGE SPRING FESTIVAL

Sat June 6 |1–4 pm Free, Browse in our many special shopping areas-Gifts, Collectibles, Books, Silent Auction items, Movies, Jewelry, Accessories, Garden Shop. 2685- 30th Avenue @ Vicente Street.

CANCER SURVIVAL COOKING CLASSES

Mondays, beginning June 9–29 | 6–8 pm Learn How Proper Diet Can Help Prevent and Survive Cancer. The Cancer Project offers a free, four-session cooking course designed to help San Francisco residents prevent and survive cancer through proper diet and nutrition. There is a suggested donation of \$15 to \$20 per class. To register 885-3693.

DAVID WATTS

Tues. Jun 9 | 7 pm David Watts will read and discuss The Orange Wire Problem and Other Tales from the Doctor's Office at BookShop West Portal 80 West Portal Ave. 564-8080.

CAREGIVERS' CAFÉ

Tues, June 9 -Every 2nd and 4th Tues | 2:30–3:30 pm Meet with other caregivers in a group led by a social worker. 2100 Webster Street, Suite 119, Board

Alastair Fothergill and Mark Linfield, co-directors/co-writers, follow the migratory paths of four animal families. Spectacular photography over one year abounds in this world-encompassing documentary with voice-over narration by Patrick Stewart, the perfect choice for the job. Viewers will be empathetic for the endangered polar bears. After sharing a watering hole, multiple lions attack a slow elephant and his fate is doomed. Cranes fly over the Himalayas, barely attaining the necessary heights. A great deal is learned about the tropic rainforests. Winner: Bogey Award: 2008, Germany.

THE SOLOIST

Director Joe Wright brings life to Susannah Grant's screenplay, which is based on Steve Lopez' book. Los Angeles Times columnist Lopez (Robert Downey Jr.) recognizes a good story when he sees one, and that of Julliard-trained violinist, Nathaniel Ayers (Jamie Foxx), almost unrecognizable with his strange hair and bizarre appearance playing in unorthodox street venues, certainly qualifies. Schizophrenic Ayers is homeless and friendless, living on L.A.'s Skid Row. Lopez's ex-wife and boss Mary Weston (Catherine Keener) questions his motivation for his deep involvement with Ayers' plight, even bringing it

The Roman atmosphere is also satirized through the use of contemporary expressions thrown in to provoke laughter, such as Poppaea's remark to Scribonius when she seduces him:" I work on this body, Buster!" or Nero's compliment to Scribonius's talent as a writer: "You could sell sauerkraut to the gods!"

You, Nero plays until June 28 at Berkeley Rep. For information call 510-647-2949 or visit berkeleyrep.org. Dr.Annette Lust

THREE ON A PARTY AT THEATRE RHINOCEROS

In a collaboration between Word for Word Company with Theatre Rhinoceros, an evening of three works representing major 20th century queer writers began with Gertrude Stein's Miss Furr and Miss Skeene, performed by Joanne Winter and Sheila Balter, about two women taking music lessons who meet circa 1911. They are described by Stein as being "regularly gay" most of the time in order for the author to portray lesbians as being a natural sexual preference and occurrence. Tightly directed by Delia MacDougall, the constant repetition of the words "gay" and "regular," along with the highly stylized movement and elegant period clothing, render this piece particularly enticing, despite an overuse of the words "gay" and "regular" a la Gertrude Stein that still at times provides comedic effects.

Tennessee Williams' Two on a Party represents the sexual freedom of the '50s

Room 923-3155.

PROSTATE CANCER

Tues, June 9 | 6-8 pm An expert medical oncologist will provide essential information about signs and symptoms, risk factors, prevention, and the most up-to-date treatment options. Free. 2333 Buchanan St., Enright Room. 923-3155.

23RD SF SUCCULENT AND CACTUS SHOW

Sat–Sun, Jun 13–14 | 9 am to 5 pm Show and sale of hundreds of exotic and water thrifty succulents and cacti for display and purchase. County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park (Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way) Free.

BLOOD PRESSURE: THE SILENT DISEASE

Monday, Jun 15 | 5:30-7 pm Covers the causes and risk factors of hypertension as well as beneficial nutrition and food. 2100 Webster St.,Ste 106. 923-3155.

JOAN GELFAND

Wed, Jun 17 | 7-9 pm Leading a workshop on Building Your Writer's Resume at BookShop West Portal 80 West Portal Ave. 564-8080 .

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

June 19-Every 3rd Fri. | 1-2pm Keep track of your blood pressure at these screenings. 2100 Webster Street, Ste. 100. 923-3155.

HOW TO STAY ON YOUR FEET IN 2009

Mon, June 22 | 7-9pm Learn 2 key factors which can cause your success or failure in your career, job and

to the attention of the LA Mayor. The concert master at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles, Graham Claydon (Tom Hollander) tries to open doors for the paranoid Ayers. Both leads are opposite sides of the same coin, each achieving extraordinary depths in their characterizations. Violence, profanity.

STAR TREK

The Narada, captained by Nero(Eric Bana) attacks the USS Kelvin in 2233; the commanding officer George Kirk sends his crew and passengers, including his pregnant wife, to safety in space pods. As he flies the Kelvin into the Narada, he hears the birth cries of his newborn son whom they have named James T. Jim grows up in Iowa on his grandparents' farm while on Vulcan, young Spock learns temper control from his father, Sarek (Ben Cross). Years later, Spock (Zachary Quinto) consults his human mother, Amanda (Winona Ryder), before taking the Vulcan ritual which will purge all his emotions. Capt. Pike (Bruce Greenwood) rescues Jim (Chris Pine) from a bar fight and challenges him to join Starfleet and beat his father's legacy. McCoy (Karl Urban), Uhura (Zoë Saldana), Sulu (John Cho), and Chekov (Anton Yelchin) enter the story and the early lives of the next Starfleet

in which a lonely lush named Cora and a gay Billy party their way through the days and nights and grow fond of one another. This well crafted story, imaginatively directed by artistic director John Fisher, is powerfully enacted by Joanne Winter as Cora and Ryan Tasker as Billy.

Suddenly Home by Armistead Maupin, also inventively directed by John Fisher, offers a late 20th century view of homosexuals who, through their experience of living together, are capable of imparting wisdom about marriage and commitment. Here Will (Brendan Godfrey) and partner Jamie (Ryan Tasker) prevent Tess (Sheila Balter) from marrying for the sake of marrying.

Word for Word, just back from performing at the American Library in Paris, continues to stun us with its faithfulness to the literary text.

Three on a Party plays until June7. For info, call-861-5079 or visit www.theRhino.org. Dr. Annette Lust

DEAD MAN'S CELL PHONE

In the Bay Area Premiere of Sarah Ruhl's Dead Man's Cell Phone, Jean (Amy Resnick), picks up a cell phone belonging to a dead man called Gordon (Bill English) that changes her life. Jean has an instant epiphany that makes her feel connected to Gordon (she learns his name from one of the callers). That connection takes the form of a promise to stay with him as long

relationships. Church of Scientology, 2501 Judah St 661-9494.

INVESTIGATING JOINT PAIN

Thu, June 25 | 12-1:15 pm Common causes and treatments, rheumatoid arthritis, gout, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis and fibromyalgia. Free. 2333 Buchanan St., Level A Conference Room. 923-3155.

SOCIAL BALLROOM DANCE FOR COUPLES

Thu,Evenings beginning Jun 25 | Learn the Samba, Rhumba, Cha Cha Cha, Mambo, Tango, Waltz, Foxtrot, Swing and more!at Forest Hill Christian Church, Fellowship Hall, 250 Laguna Honda Blvd. Six lessons for only \$70.00 per couple. For reservations or more information please call (415) 661-2746.

ZOO'S 80TH BIRTHDAY

Sat, Sun, June 27-28 | 10 am to 4 pm SF Zoo turns 80. The Birthday Celebration and Fisher-Price Little People Musical Show are free with paid Zoo admission. 1 Zoo Rd. 753-7080.

MIND-BODY HEALTH WRITING

Five Sundays, 7:00-8:30 pm: June 7, 14t, 21, July 12, 19. Dr. Caplin helps people living with chronic illness or medical conditions lead empowered and vibrant lives, finding wholeness despite illness, using the power of the pen. Abby Caplin, MD, MA practices mind-body medicine and counseling. \$145 for 5 sessions. 255-9981 or abby@abbycaplinmd.com. Book-Shop West Portal, 80 West Portal, 564-8080.

commences. Their future will encounter Nero and even the Golden Gate Bridge. The character development and interplays are well done with a time-warp relationship between young Spock and the elder Spock (Leonard Nimoy) a highlight. J.J. Abrams directs with an all encompassing knowledge of what the audience already knows and the entertainment of the new. Sci-fi action and violence, brief sexual content. 126m. Paramount, Spyglass.

X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE

The backstory starts in 1845 and follows the brothers, Logan and Victor, as they grow to men/soldiers fighting together in the Civil War, World War I, World War II and the Vietnam War. In the present, Logan/Wolverine: Hugh Jackman lives in the Canadian wilderness with his girlfriend. When Victor Creed (Liev Schreiber) kills her, Logan vows vengeance and accepts the offer of Major William Stryker (Danny Huston) to have superhuman strengths. John Wraith (Will i Am), another member of the team of elite mutants, joins Wolverine to go to New Orleans to track Victor. Wolverine learns all the activity is centered on Three Mile Island and takes his fight for his life and others there. This sci-fi thriller is directed by Gavin Hood with screenplay by David Benioff and Skip Woods.

as he needs her and then wanting to comfort his loved ones and try to make the memory of him live on positively in their minds and hearts.

Jean's interactions with Gordon's haughty mother, Mrs. Gottlieb (Joan Mankin), his widow Hermia (Rachel Klyce), his younger brother Dwight (Jackson Davis) and Gordon's long-time mistress, Carlotta (Florentina Mocanu) helped Jean piece together the puzzle of what sort of man Gordon was. Her journey is the play's through-line, but each of the other characters gets a chance to shine.

Director Susi Damilano's clever direction includes an outstanding cast, starting with Resnick who makes Jean an endlessly eager to please, bottomlessly empathetic woman. Mankin's Mrs. Gottlieb is hilarious. When we hear from Gordon, speaking from the other side, Bill English makes him both cocky and undeniably charismatic. Rachel Klyce is riotously funny as the thoroughly soused Hermia. Chic and mysterious, Mocanu's mistress is the anti-Jean. Jackson Davis is the tender Dwight, Jean's endlessly caring male counterpart. .

Dead Man's Cell Phone takes us on a journey down a rabbit hole with Jean to explore the meaning of connection in the 21st century.

The play runs at the SF Playhouse through June 13. For tickets, contact 677-9596 or www.sfplayhouse.org Flora Lynn Isaacson

An Island View

By Tony Hall

I am writing this column from Bere Island, a small island of two hundred people situated off the coast of Ireland, which of course is an island itself, off the coast of another island nation, off the coast of Europe! There might be some who say I am detached from reality here, but I can assure you, the bird's eye view is indeed as astonishing as it is revealing!

I have spent several isolated long days and nights observing the local and national political scene over here and it is really something to witness. Their political dialog is a combination of sophisticated and aggressive mass confusion, the likes of which would never be fully understood or tolerated in the States, although they are becoming much more "Americanized" in their campaign tactics than they would like to admit. For the first time in more than forty years of visiting Ireland, I now see political posters being placed on public poles, glossy, truth-stretching pamphlets being distributed, and well-financed and organized campaigns being conducted by absolute novices with very little public service experience. Like home, they set out to have their particular "save the world views" imposed on a weary and somewhat distrustful public. The Irish are much more direct in expressing their displeasure, their doubts, and yes, their support along with prayers and even a few rosaries if there is just something about you that they like or can relate to. They are a wonderful trusting people and yet one gets the immediate sense that there is really nothing new in the way of political shenanigans that they haven't seen. Their penchant for wanting to talk, preferably all at the same time, rather than listen, makes them unique and I suspect rather difficult to engage in a campaign. They do however seem to relish the sport of the political game, just like any good football match, thoroughbred horse race or greyhound dog contest. The latest versions and concepts of state-run capitalism vs. free market enterprise, or big brother socialism vs. individualism, or conservative vs. liberal, are all taken for granted, never mentioned, but yet all creatively commented on to anybody that will lend an ear. Maybe one of the big differences between Europeans and Americans is that we tend to take ourselves seriously, and care about such concepts and how they directly affect our lives.

Bank bail-outs, corporate greed, rising taxes and a growing sense that the people running our governments really don't know what they are doing seem to be the common belief that binds most people today in countries all over the free world. If there is an international consensus, it is firstly, that nobody knows how to get us out of the dire predicament we find ourselves in, and secondly, that despite senior management fall out, the banks still seem to be driving the agenda. Indeed everything that has been done so far by the government leaders in both nations has been to prop up the banks to the virtual exclusion of everything else including the retention of jobs. At this point it doesn't seem like the billions, or should I say trillions of dollars that the banks have been guaranteed by today's and future generations of taxpayers are being translated into eased credit that is so vital to the business sector. The purpose of the toxic loan rescue plan by way of government

money was not to deposit money in the banks; it was to ensure that the banks were in a position to continue lending to keep the economy moving. The banks, among the biggest contributors worldwide to this recession, have simply taken the money and locked it up in their vaults. Under no circumstances should they now be allowed to dictate the pace in the ongoing rescue of our economies.

Like in the States, the economy here in Ireland is at a virtual stand still because of the banking situation. This is where good government is supposed to step in. The government leaders who were supposed to be monitoring and regulating that industry are ever so quick to pass blame to anyone but him or herself. Doesn't this sound familiar? It's the same the world over; government leaders have encouraged us to blame anything and everyone else lest we focus too

hard on their own contribution to the disaster. Some of the more misguided elected and pundits even go so far as to try to foolishly assert that greed is only synonymous with the free enterprise capitalist system and therefore the system must be changed. They apparently haven't been made aware of how past societies that operated under a state controlled or socialist system have fallen apart because of the inherent greed of its leaders. Greed exists in all forms of governance. How the people who run the government treat greed is the telling and deciding factor. No doubt in the boom years of the past, many people benefited as well as the banks. The developers, the brokers, the home sellers and buyers, the lobbyists etc., etc., but the Government also got a huge boost in the resultant property tax revenues. Indeed it was the government itself that was encouraging the issuance of sub-prime loans and irresponsible banking policies that caused the problem. The boom years suited those in power and with largesse in hand, the so-called regulators and party hacks weren't about to call a halt to their own acquisition of power and "political greed." It is now glaringly clear that these so called leaders have neither ability nor conscience and it is time for the average person to invest some real thought and scrutiny before they cast their vote. I am sure that there are critics of any writer that attempts to divulge certain realities, and therefore I will attempt to offer a simple solution that even they would find it hard to disagree with. In my opinion, we have had enough of the "celebrity politician" who has no bona fide background in public service or public policy administration other than what the glossy pamphlets tell you. This type of "politician" is usually backed by self-serving donors, and has no notion or concept of serving the common good, only his ego-driven career. They are guilty of the most heinous of crimes by repeatedly deceiving the very people they are suppose to represent. Since we are now being forced to foot the bill for their incompetence and falsities, I think it is high time we start seeking out and electing people who have demonstrated in their respective fields that they possess the honesty, integrity and courage to stand up against the forces of corruption, greed and self-promotion at others expense. Now, more than ever, we need people who at least will try to do the right thing for the people they represent. Only when we start to witness our leaders serve the common good will future leaders arise that might be able to affect positive change.

Tony Hall is the former Supervisor for District 7.



Baby Street...for Babies on the Go!

By Mitch Bull



Al Picache and Alexis with "Sidekick," one of the many baby bags available in their beautiful shop

Sunlight and bright colors greet you as you walk into the door at Baby Street. The store, located at 207 West Portal Avenue has windows on 2 sides, which helps to create a bright, cheerful environment. The colorful baby/child accessories welcome you in. Baby Street is not a typical kids accessory store. "We are primarily a store that carries specialty baby carrier bags," says Al Picache. The walls and tables are lined with bags that look like fashionable purses and shoulder bags, certainly not like the baby carrier or diaper bags that most of us grew up with.

A new product that is being featured is "The Sidekick," an attractive shoulder bag that is a combination Baby Carrier and Diaper Bag, made by the Kemby Company. At first glance it just looks like a purse, but the straps swing around so that the shoulder strap becomes a waist strap that allows you to fold open the bag and turn it into a most effective baby carrier. Picache expects that to be a big seller as it is one of their newest products. It retails for \$150, and is available in bright green, light blue or burgundy. Baby Street also guarantees to have the lowest prices for their customers.

"Our products are made for babies on the go, focusing on carriers and bags to move babies from home to work, to childcare, to the grocery store, etc.," said the owner, who added "In fact, we are expecting a new product that is a combination Baby Carrier and Car Booster Seat." He then took the bag off of the front table and showed how it transforms itself from a bag to a carrier.

Another interesting garment is the "DiaperVest" from a company called "DADGear." While it looks like a typical fleece vest, it has pockets/compartments large enough for a size 5 diapers; a place for diaper wipes; and even a cushioned changing pad built into the back. I almost forgot, it also has a pocket and grommet for your iPod and headset. It's a very ingenious piece that is popular with local Dad's. For the SF Giant's fans there is even one in Orange and Black.

Al and Julie didn't exactly get into the retail business in a traditional way by working in a store, etc. Al, a UC Davis grad, was formerly an instructor and educator, teaching at the College of Alameda and the University of the Pacific Dental School, focusing on ergonomics and patient management. Julie is also a UC Davis alum, with a background in Economics. Cutbacks in teaching programs caused him to look at a change in careers and the couple attended a Baby Products convention in Las Vegas, saw an opportunity and opened an online store last September.

The bricks and mortar retail location came a few months later. "We had started the online venture and it was going well, but in order to carry some of the product lines that we wanted, the manufacturers wanted to have a retail outlet where customers could see the products in person, so we started to look at sites on Union Street, and in the South Bay," said Picache. "Then this location became available and the street and neighborhood looked like a good fit for us." He went on to say, "The customers have been great since the store opened. Even people who have come in and didn't need bags or accessories are telling their friends and relatives who either come into the store or have ordered online from the website. The 'word-of-mouth' response has been great."

They are also "customers" with three children, 10-year-old Alexis, 3-year-old Jayden, and 5-month-old Kai. Alexis joined her Dad to show off the Sidekick bag in the photo.

With products from companies with names like "DADGear" and Diaper Dudes" Baby Street carries bags, shoes, and accessories for both Mom's and Dad's with "Babies On The Go." In fact, the store will be having a Fathers Day sale where everything is 10% off the listed price, including items currently on sale. They are also currently featuring a 10% off coupon for all customers who mention their ad in the Observer...

Baby Street is located at 207 West Portal Avenue, next to Zephyr Real Estate. They are open Monday - Saturday from 10 AM to 6 PM, and on Sunday from 11AM to 5 PM. You can also reach them at 415-564-4008, or on the web at www.BabyStreetOnline.com.

Arden Estates Announces Open House

Seven new single family homes from the historical Arden Wood, whose beautifully landscaped gardens, woodlands and chateau-like building lie to the rear, are now open for inspection. These seven detached homes' first open house is on Sun., May 31st from 1pm-5pm or for a twilight preview on Thursday, June 11th from 5pm-8pm.

These ground-breaking homes exceed the City's green rating standards and come with Energy-star appliances, clean burning gas fireplaces, and an electric car plug-in outlet in garage, among others. Arden Estates are located at 15th Avenue and West Portal Avenue.

All this equates to three levels of luxury with over 3,000 square feet of living space with four bedrooms, three and one-half baths and high-end finishes, fixtures, details and appliances. Two fireplaces and finely crafted wood floors in warm, natural tones lend a peaceful and soothing environment.

"We are very proud to deliver a high quality luxury project that will be a trendsetter for future "green" home development throughout San Francisco," says Paul Barbagelata, owner of Barbagelata Real Estate and the project listing agent. "The developer was very mindful of the "Think Green" way of life, including methods to improve water, energy-efficiency and heat conservation, in addition to using some recycled building materials and sustainable construction techniques." For more information: www.ardenestatesluxuryhomes.com.

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- 3 full baths plus powder room
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- Sophisticated bathrooms and kitchens with high-end fixtures, finished details and appliances (Wolf Range and Sub Zero Fridge)
- Finely crafted wood floors and inviting fireplaces
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55 Knollview Way	3	2	1	N/A	4/09/09	\$750,000
58 City View Way	3	1	2	1,150	12/19/08	\$795,000
269 Glenview Dr	3	2	1	1,348	4/09/09	\$820,000
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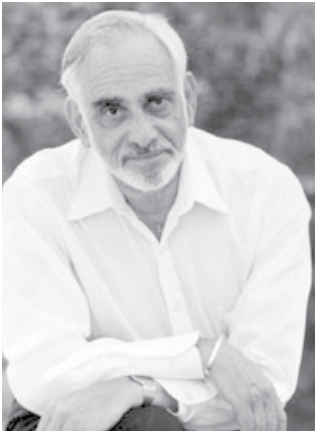
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Save It or Spend It?

Hank Basayne

Once read of a scheme concocted by someone who worried about what he perceived as a lack of time. “Think of the time I’ll save,” he thought, “if I don’t have to keep making decisions.” So he pre-made all the decisions he could anticipate. Whenever confronted by Left or Right, he’d turn Right. What to have for breakfast? Always oatmeal. Which tie to wear? Always the blue one. I’m not sure how much time he actually saved. Or what he did with all that extra time if he actually saved any. Like the time-study man in *Pajama Game*, he could have saved more by sleeping in his clothes, dressing for work before he went to sleep, so he wouldn’t have to waste time doing so in the morning.



When someone tells me that they haven’t time to do something, I usually—and unkindly—point out that they have the same twenty-four hours a day that everyone else has. We all have some choices about how we live our lives, how we spend our time.

Once in a while I think I’m bored—which is not

necessarily a bad thing. For one thing, a moment when I’m not doing or going, but just being, forces me to slow down. It interrupts my usual, sometimes too-active behavior. It creates time I didn’t think I had. That still point, that instant of nothing to do, is an imposed rest. Once I let go of my irritation at having to shift my mental gears, it provides a chance to re-group, to reflect and to plan.

Most of my adult life I’ve been in motion. I now see other elders sitting quietly in the sun. But unless I’m working on a tan, it’s not my thing. I’d rather be checking things off my list, if not physically, at least mentally. I have been, like most of us, inordinately preoccupied and stressed by time, or more accurately, the lack of it—trying to squeeze the ten pounds of everything I want or need to do into a five pound schedule.

Aging has forced me to accept some limitations on my habitual busyness, but hasn’t significantly diminished my continuing mental marathon. Unfortunately, growing older has also produced another unwelcome conflict—that old time-energy tug of war. When I have a light schedule, I now often would rather rest than stay busy. Conversely, when I’m feeling fine and energetic it’s usually because I have things to do. Then, there’s not enough time to get to the B and C priorities. I can only do the A’s.

I’m intrigued to notice that when I have appointments, an interview, a lunch date, a wedding or memorial

to perform, or a column deadline, I feel full of life, vigorous, and easily able to do whatever is required. It’s those days when there’s nothing on the schedule, when the shopping and laundry are done, when the email has been dealt with, that lethargy overtakes me and tiredness prevails. The most demanding things I feel like doing at such times is staring at the cat or thumbing through a magazine. It would be the perfect time to try to finish my book, clean out file drawers or weed the plants, but weariness, lassitude and self-indulgence usually win. It feels unfair. Had I access to their address, I’d write to the rulers of the Cosmos and complain.

“This was the day that God presented the bill for all the fun we had,” wrote John LeCarre. And with the accumulating years, it seems true. Oh, we did have fun. Falling in love, laughing so hard I got a stomach ache, reading books that opened new worlds, raising the kids, developing some competencies, hanging out with good friends. They just didn’t let me know that those—and all the other goodies I’ve so enjoyed—carried such a big price tag. I’m slowly paying off that giant invoice with occasional brain unfitness, some aches and pains, expanding girth and more time alone than I’d like. I can no longer flit from one thing to another without a rest in between. Even so, I do now enjoy the gift of time. I also get to make the decisions about how I will spend it. Saving it now doesn’t seem nearly as important as it once did.

Hank Basayne is a San Franciscan, a minister and an author. He’s awaiting that next moment of boredom, curious to see what he’ll do with it..

Water (Cont. from p. 1)

water bills based on their building’s total consumption of water and wastewater. Landlords are only allowed to pass through a small percentage of the tenant’s water bill and no wastewater can be passed through.

The new 61% higher SFPUC rate increases for single-family residences will be used to help pay the principal and debt service for the revenue bonds authorized by the \$3.6 billion Proposition A ballot measure in 2002. Due to a projected 28% cost overrun the project is now estimated to cost \$4.6 billion. These projected cost overruns do not include debt service.

San Francisco’s increased water rates are needed to pay for upgrades to the Hetch Hetchy water infrastructure. These upgrades are meant to protect the water system against threats of earthquake and drought. The system delivers most of its water to suburban “wholesale” customers, and they pay proportionally for the upgrades. The water upgrade project was originally scheduled to be completed in thirteen years. Six years into the upgrade, only 16% of the project work is completed. With the heavy spending on bigger water projects just about to begin, rate payers should cross their fingers that all goes well, and further delays and cost overruns are avoided.

A BLANK CHECK: San Francisco voters gave away their rights to approve the SFPUC’s sale of bonds. In 2002, San Francisco voters also passed Proposition E, a City Charter amendment that: 1) Created a new Rate Fairness Board (Assembly Bill 2058); 2) Required the SFPUC to create long-term plans to operate, maintain, finance, and improve the utilities subject to extensive public hearings (Senate Bill 1870); 3) Redefined rate-setting procedures; and 4) Allowed the SFPUC to issue revenue bonds to make improvements to power, water, and sewer utilities subject to a two-thirds vote of approval by San Francisco’s Board of Supervisors.

To actual San Francisco voters, the SFPUC is now a closed-door system; it only needs approval from the Board of Supervisors (not voters) to issue revenue bonds. So ... watch your utility rates continue to skyrocket as the SFPUC continues issuing Proposition A revenue bonds. Additionally, in 2016, the SFPUC will start it’s \$3.2 billion repair of San Francisco’s wastewater system. Homeowner’s and landlord’s water and wastewater rates will likely more than triple over the next decade.

San Franciscans are not only paying for an upgraded water system, they are also paying for San Francisco’s bad governance. Repair and replacement of our water system has always been factored into San Francisco water rates, but mis-spent. From 1979 to 2001 City politicians and officials raided the Hetch Hetchy water system

of at least \$670 million, leaving the Bay Area’s largest water supply vulnerable to earthquake, drought, and decay. San Francisco’s politicians deferred Hetch Hetchy maintenance by using a legal loophole (now closed) to place hydro-electric revenue directly into the City’s General Fund.

The Hetch Hetchy system was falling apart while San Francisco was using its revenue as a blank-check slush fund to finance higher employee salaries, social engineering programs, and unnecessary political patronage jobs. Reportedly, Willie Brown’s administration alone diverted more than \$233 million of the \$670 million raided from Hetch Hetchy’s revenue bonds. San Francisco’s wholesale customers became so concerned that they contacted the State and threatened lawsuits. In 2002, the City was finally forced to act responsibly and begin the long process of “fixing, repairing and seismically upgrading” the ailing Hetch Hetchy water system.

Homeowners, landlords, and eventually renters, will now find the long-term costs of San Francisco’s 30+ years of deferred water system maintenance and irresponsible governance appearing on their ever-increasing water bills.

SAN FRANCISCO RESIDENTS ALREADY CONSERVE WATER:

San Franciscans use a very low, 61 gallons of water per day, per person, on average. When asked to voluntarily ration water usage, San Franciscans cut their usage further, to just under 57 gallons per day. Even if normal conditions were to prevail, by 2018

San Franciscans will be required to further cut their average water usage to 54.2 gallons per day. These water usage figures are based only on San Francisco’s already-planned development and population growth. All future development plans must seriously consider how much water will be available to San Francisco (Senate Bill 610).

We have great water in San Francisco; soon, however, we might not be able to afford it. How much should a glass of water cost? While nothing is certain but death and taxes, water rates seem to be pricing us out of a glass of water and a leisurely morning shower.

George Wooding is Vice President, West of Twin Peaks Central Council.

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Cancer Prevention & Survival Cooking Course

WHEN: June 8 to June 29 (Mondays), 6 to 8 p.m (four classes).
WHERE: Ida's Café, UCSF Medical Center, 2356 Sutter St., SF
SPONSOR: The Cancer Project
COST: FREE (suggested \$20 donation per class)
REGISTRATION: Contact the Cancer Resource Center at 415-885-3693
Free Cancer Prevention and Survival Cooking Course Begins June 8. Participants Will Learn How Proper Diet Can Help Them Prevent and Survive Cancer.

The Cancer Project, a national nonprofit dedicated to advancing cancer prevention through education and research, is offering a FREE, four-session cooking course designed to help San Francisco residents prevent and survive cancer through proper diet and nutrition.

"The single easiest and best thing most of us can do to prevent cancer or its recurrence is to eat right," says Jennifer Reilly, R.D., a senior nutritionist for The Cancer Project. "More than a third of all cancer deaths in this country are due to poor diet."

The Rx for better health? It's a low-fat vegetarian diet. Load up on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, Reilly says; they're naturally low in fat, chock-full of fiber, and filled with cancer-fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals. Cut down on fatty foods and added fats and oils, particularly saturated fats, which have been linked to an increased risk of breast, colon, and prostate cancer. Likewise, look for healthy substitutes for dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt, which have been implicated in the occurrence of breast and colorectal cancers.

The challenge, Reilly acknowledges, is not only to teach people which foods are good for them, but also to show them how to make the foods taste good. Each class centers on important cancer-nutrition topics as local cooking instructor

Kristin Doyle, R.N., C.N.C., guides students through the preparation of tasty and easy-to-prepare recipes.

The class lineup is as follows:
June 8, 6 to 8 p.m., Introduction to How Foods Fight Cancer
6/08/09: Introduction to How Foods Fight Cancer
6/15/09: Fueling Up on Low-Fat, High-Fiber Foods
6/22/09: Discovering Dairy and Meat Alternatives

Each class includes a nutrition video followed by a cooking demonstration and sampling of the food prepared. Classes are open to cancer survivors, friends, family, and anyone interested in cancer prevention and healthy eating.

Attendees will receive a loaner copy of The Cancer Survivor's Guide, which has extensive nutrition information and 100 pages of recipes. These books will be available for use throughout the class series, but must be returned after the series has ended. Or purchase your own copy before the start of the series.

For specific questions on the material presented in the classes or recipes, contact info@cancerproject.org.

These classes take place Mondays from 6 to 8 p.m. There is a suggested donation of \$15 to \$20 per class.

To register, call the Cancer Resource Center at 415-885-3693.

SHARON THE HEALTH

Our Drinking Water —Healthy or not?

By Sharon Caren

"Chloramine is a disinfectant added to water for public health protection. It is a combination of chlorine and ammonia that is currently considered best technology for controlling the formation of certain regulated organic disinfection byproducts. Chloraminated water is safe for people and animals to drink, and for all other general uses. However, as with chlorine, chloramine will need to be removed for fish and amphibian use, and for people or businesses requiring highly treated water." Quoted from San Francisco Public Utilities Commission website, updated November, 2007.

My radar is up when I see a disclaimer. If Chloramine kills fish, amphibians and sick people how good can it be for me? At least the chlorine additive used previously would evaporate out of the water when left out overnight and wouldn't kill our fish. Chlorine was bad enough but I couldn't believe the water departments were putting Chloramine back into our water supply. On the East Coast, Chloramine usage was stopped because it was breaking down the old rusty pipes and the public utility commissions didn't want to put in new systems. What does that say for safe human drinking water? Coca Cola is being used to de-grease car engine parts with great results, too....not in my clean pipes, thank you. So many of us turn to buying "bottled water". Is this a better choice?

Terrible Truth About Plastic

As plastic ages or is exposed to heat or stress, it can release trace amounts of some of its ingredients. Plastic is not an inert substance as its manufacturers would like you to believe. It contains chemicals like BPA and phthalates, which mimic hormones in your body. Even tiny concentrations can cause problems, and you're likely being exposed from all angles: water bottles, food containers, plastic wraps, personal care products, you name it, it contains plastic. According to a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) study, BPA was detected in the urine of 95% of people tested!

BPA and phthalates are endocrine disrupters, which mimic hormones. Estrogen and other hormones in relatively tiny amounts can cause vast changes, so researchers worry that BPA and phthalates could do the same, especially in young children. They enter your body through the food, water and bits of dust you consume, or are simply absorbed through your skin.

This is alarming when you consider all of the problems its been linked to like:

- Structural damage to your brain
- Hyperactivity, increased aggressiveness, and impaired learning
- Increased fat formation and risk of obesity
- Altered immune function
- Early puberty, stimulation of mammary gland development, disrupted reproductive cycles, and ovarian dysfunction
- Changes in gender-specific behavior, and



abnormal sexual behavior
•Stimulation of prostate cancer cells
• Increased prostate size, and decreased sperm production

As usual those most at risk are children and fetuses, which is why it's appalling to think that these chemicals are commonly used in baby bottles and children's toys.

The impact plastics have on the environment is of huge concern. This one statistic sums it up pretty well: when researchers tested the water of the Pacific Ocean, they found it contained six times as much plastic as plankton, by weight... very scary.

It's now a year since my first articles in the Observer – June and August, 2008, "Do You Have a Personal Water Shortage? and Alkalize and Energize."

Go to: www.westsideobserver.com/columns/sharonthehealth.com

Scroll down to read these articles if you haven't already. This article builds on them.

First and foremost, drink at least ½ your body weight in ounces each day for health and longevity. If you weigh 150 lbs, drink 75 oz's of pure water each day to stay clean and hydrated on the inside. If you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated. Second, because of the additives in the tap water (I'm not a fan of drinking ammonia) and not wanting to buy or promote plastic bottled water, I've found an exciting solution; a tap water filtration system to take out the additives before drinking fresh water with a pH level of 10. We're looking to drink water with a pH of at least 7 to 10 = Alkaline.

Researchers know when we are born we are about 90% water, as an adult we are 70% water, and before we pass on we are less than 50% water. One reason we age is we lack sufficient amounts of healthy hydrating water.

With water being of prime importance to our body, the quality of the water we drink is supremely important.

New research on the need for maintaining the body's acid/alkaline balance is becoming very popular. In the U.S., independent researchers are demonstrating the value ionized alkaline water has in obtaining and sustaining proper health. Medical studies show that alkaline ionic water has the most powerful antioxidant properties, better than vitamins A,C,E, beta carotene and selenium, which improves the body's defense against disease.

Alkaline Water Benefits:

- Provides lots of energy & mental clarity
- Powerful antioxidant to scavenge free radicals
- Balances body pH to promote wellness and help prevent disease
- Micro-structured water facilitates weight loss
- Super hydration for healthier looking skin and detoxification
- Allows nutrients to be absorbed more efficiently

After years of research on this subject and personally looking for an affordable and efficient water filtration system, I've finally found one. However, this is the subject of a future article. If you'd like more information right now, contact me, Sharon Caren at 650.359.6579 and I'll be happy to share it with you. Happy Hydration!



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Invest in Children

By Carol Kocivar

Whoever first said, "Crisis creates opportunities" must feel like a pig in mud.

With a \$21 billion dollar shortfall --a shortfall bigger than the budgets for many countries--it seems we have an abundance of opportunities in California.

And I am not talking about the opportunities to cut funding for children's health insurance or to cut billions more from an education budget that makes our investment dead last in the nation.

I am talking about the opportunity for our elected officials to put aside partisanship and actually be leaders.

I am talking about the opportunity to create a common vision for the future of California.

I am talking about the opportunity to create a budget based our vision and dreams--not on failed partisan positions unrelated to the health, welfare, and economic needs of the 6th largest economy in the world.

This is a vision based on an old-fashioned

word: responsibility.

We have a responsibility to provide our children with the skills they need to become productive workers in a democratic society.

We have a responsibility to protect the health and welfare of our most vulnerable citizens-- our children and our seniors.

We have a responsibility to protect our environment.

So when we hear that the only option is "cut, cut, cut" we ask the most basic question:

Are you creating a budget based on a strategic plan for the future or are you only playing with numbers?

We must dispel the notion once and for all that cutting vital services is our only option.

Our future is not a zero sum game.

And that means we need to look at revising how we make budget decisions.

At the top of the list should be changing the vote requirement for passing a budget to 55 per cent or a simple majority. California is only one of three states that requires a two thirds vote.

Now and for the future-- we need to recognize that the best economic recovery plan is to invest in our children.

Growth and Learning Opportunities

Enabling children to become a vehicle for change.

This summer Growth and Learning Opportunities (GLO) runs its Summer Adventures program for the 26th consecutive year. GLO Summer Adventures will be returning to its roots at West Portal Elementary, where it opened its doors in 1982. This summer GLO Summer Adventures is taking a different approach to the older group of kids, leadership skills. The leadership program coined as "Young Leaders Circle" focuses on many current social issues, from climate change to health and well-being. The most successful part of



this program is that the kids will be learning about these topics while having fun. This is a polar opposite to learning these subjects in a traditional classroom.

The Young Leaders Circle (YLC) curriculum focuses on social issues as well as personal growth and community. Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth graders will learn a variety of team and individual sports which will assist with their interpersonal development. Simon Lee, Executive Director said, "YLC will give children a chance to lead and make sound decisions. For most of childhood, decisions are directed by adults. During YLC activities, adults will be the facilitators. YLC will give children a chance to think outside the box. We would like children to leave being able to make sound decisions on their own." While GLO is taking this different approach to summer compared to many other programs, they still offer the same activities which keep kids coming back year after year. Jen T. an upcoming 5th grader said she will be returning this summer to expand on the cooking skills she learned last summer at GLO Summer Adventures. Jen's favorite dish to cook with her parents is bow-tie (Farfalle) pasta, with tomato, pesto, and basil sauce.

Simon Lee believes that the ultimate accomplishment that Young Leaders Circle can have is that kids will gain more self esteem and be able to accomplish their goals later in life. While this may seem like a small accomplishment in the grand scheme of things, who are we to pass judgment on another individuals goals. While one child may strive to graduate from college one day, another's goal may be to graduate from high school. Our ultimate accomplishment is to provide children with the tools for future success.

What Tree Is That?

Arbor Day Foundation Booklet Makes It Easier to Identify Trees in California

The Arbor Day Foundation is offering a fun and easy-to-use tree identification booklet that will help people identify trees in a simple, step-by-step process.

What Tree Is That? features advanced, hand-drawn botanical illustrations highlighting the distinctive characteristics of many tree species. Recreational and professional arborists alike have called this pocket field guide one of the most user friendly resources to have at their fingertips. Its beautiful, full-color illustrations are in precise detail to depict natural colors, shapes, and textures, so users can make a positive species identification in just a few easy steps.

The Arbor Day Foundation now offers this booklet to help people identify trees in California and throughout the Western region of the United States. What Tree Is That? uses a unique step-by-step approach to identify the species of each tree. From explaining what to look for in the shape of the leaves and differences in the leaf stems and twig structures to specifics on the fruits and flowers, and the details of buds and bark.

"What Tree Is That? is a wonderful resource to help people identify trees so that they will be able to better appreciate them," said John Rosenow, chief executive and founder of the Arbor Day Foundation. "The educational mission of the Arbor Day Foundation is to help people enjoy and appreciate trees, and we feel our pocket field guide will do just that."

What Tree is That? is also available as an online interactive version at www.arborday.org. The Arbor Day Foundation offers this unique, one-of-a-kind online tool so people can identify trees using the internet.

To obtain a tree identification guide in full color, send your name and address and \$5 for each guide to What Tree Is That?, Arbor Day Foundation, Nebraska City, NE 68410. You can also order the book online at www.arborday.org.

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FROM THE BORDER

SPRING BLOOMING BULBS FOR BAY AREA CLIMATE ZONES

by Hilary Gordon | Photos by Blair Randall

Fairy wand, Harlequin flower, Bugle lily, who wouldn't want to see flowers with such magical names? They are all blooming right now at the Garden For the Environment, a public, educational garden located at 7th Avenue and Lawton. (photo right: Bugle Lily at GFE)

For many traditional gardeners, the springtime bloom of tulips and crocuses is an annual ritual of garden culture. These garden favorites do not bloom without a winter chill which the Bay Area climate cannot offer. So gardeners like myself, entranced with these nostalgia-laden flowers, buy new bulbs each year. We refrigerate them for four to six weeks and plant them out when our soils have cooled in late November and December. Next Spring, we are rewarded with fabulous bursts of color in dramatic flowerbeds. Then we dig the bulbs up, discard them in the green bin in April and May, and wait for August when the next year's bulb catalog arrives, tempting us to make lists and designs for our next outrageous bulb order.

It's too much to expect us to give up our tulips and crocuses "cold turkey." Yet, this annual planting spree followed by throwing out the bulbs can't last in a world where sustainability is the new byword. That's why we need a substitute: beautiful, graceful spring flowering bulbs which are suited to our climate so that they can naturalize, returning year after year. There are many choices. Some, like Cala Lilies and Agapanthus are relatively well known, even over-used or weedy. Some, like daffodils and bearded irises, are fairly



well-known to thrive in Bay Area gardens. But some of the climate-appropriate, drought-tolerant bulbs from around the world are relatively unknown.

A favorite performer here at the Garden for the Environment is Sparaxis, or Harlequin Flower, originally from South Africa out of a climate zone similar to the Bay Area. These brilliantly colored and beautifully streaked flowers open

in March, and are still making a splash in the drought tolerance demonstration bed at the South end of the garden. Enter the garden by the South gate and walk straight ahead. On your right Sparaxis is performing in a drift of orange, red, pink, and ivory, while on your left the orange daisies of Arctotis "Pumpkin Pie" and the lavender daisies of the California native Erigeron glaucus echo their tones. At crocus time, late winter/very early Spring, this same bed sports the pale blue flowers from bulbs of Ipheion uniflorum, or Spring Star Flower, which bloom over a long period to promise the coming end of winter. Ixia maculata (African Corn Lily), the star of the bulb show in late Spring, hasn't started blooming yet, but its generous buds promise May flowers. (Photo: Sparaxis at GFE)

Outside the South gate, on either side of the border, you can see the tall sentinels of Watsonia borbonica (Bugle Lily) standing at attention with graceful spikes of white flowers. Last summer we divided an old, overgrown clump of Watsonia and planted ten new clumps from one old one. Like many other bulbing plants which are evolved for a climate like ours, these lovely blossoms return in greater force every year, so before you know it, instead of buying bulbs, you are giving them away to your friends and neighbors.

One of my favorite spring bulbs at the GFE is Dierama pulcherrimum, blooming now in the Southern section of the 7th Avenue border. These delicate flowers look like grasses when the buds first emerge. Then each bud expands into a pendant white flower so graceful that it earns its common name, Fairy wands. (Dierama actually comes from what botanists call a corm, not a bulb, as do Watsonia and Sparaxis.) (photo: Dierama pulcherrimum at GFE)



All the bulbs (and corms) mentioned here will die back after blooming, and can be left undisturbed in unwatered areas of the garden to bloom even more gloriously the following year. When designing a border, it is a good idea to interplant clumps of these bulbs with other drought-tolerant perennials or shrubs which will be growing and



budding up just as the spring bloomers are finishing. Yarrow, Sages, Coreopsis and other Daisy family relatives, and Hollyhock relatives such as Anisodonta or Lavatera which bloom in summer, are some of the many good choices to fill in after the bulbs have finished their spring fling.

Please come see the beautiful, climate appropriate and drought tolerant spring bulbs

blooming at the GFE. We hope you fall in love with them too, and can find a spot in your garden beds to try these alternatives to yearly replanting of crocuses and tulips. (Photo: Arctotis at GFE).

Hilary Gordon is Perennial Plants Collection Manager at the GFE. A life-long gardener, trained at the City College Horticulture program, she has worked as a professional landscape gardener from 1984 until the present.

Have a question for Hilary? Meet her in the garden Wednesdays 10-2 and Saturdays 10-4.



Bugle Lily at the Garden for the Environment.

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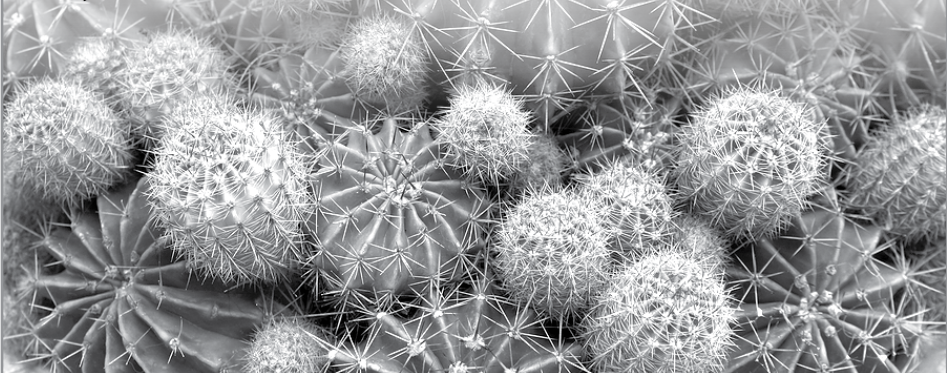
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Take Charge in Coping with Drought

San Francisco Succulent and Cactus Society
23rd Annual Show and Sale – June 13-14, 2009

The 23rd Annual Show and Sale of the San Francisco Succulent and Cactus Society will feature hundreds of exotic and water thrifty succulents and cacti for display and purchase at the County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park (Ninth Avenue at Lincoln). Show hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Admission is free.

Throughout the show and sale an "Ask the Expert" information table will assist attendees in answering questions about the plants they are interested in purchasing. The SFSCS will feature for sale ground cover succulents such as sedums that can serve as an attractive and water-saving alternative to water-thirsty lawns.



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dinner...

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			8	1				
		1				7	8	3
		9	5				1	
9				8				5
6			1		5			7
4				6				2
	5				8	2		
8	7	2				4		
				2	4			

Rules:

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 in such a way that each of the numbers 1 to 9 appears exactly once in each row, column and block.

Answer:

The answer appears aside..

8	5	3	4	2	7	9	6	1
9	6	4	1	5	3	2	7	8
1	2	7	8	6	9	4	5	3
2	3	8	7	9	6	5	1	4
7	4	6	5	3	1	8	2	9
5	9	1	2	8	4	7	3	6
4	1	9	3	7	5	6	8	2
3	8	7	6	4	2	1	9	5
6	2	5	9	1	8	3	4	7

BRAIN FOOD

The answers to the following definitions all start with the prefix “para”. It might take a bit of lateral thinking to figure them out. For example, the definition “Two places where a building is being constructed” would have the answer “Para sites.”

1. Two tender green plant growths.

2. Two 10-cent pieces.

3. Two male bovines.

4. Two shark appendages.

5. Two untruths.

6. Two furry family members.

BONUS: 7. Two dorky guys from “New Joisey”

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REMEMBER WHEN?



Construction of Stonestown apartment buildings Date 1949 July 2.

Photo courtesy of the San Francisco History Center, SF Public Library

“A small city is rapidly springing up west of 19th-av, on the shores of Lake Merced. It’s ‘Stonestown,’ 23-million-dollar project of Ellis and Henry Stoneson, and this photo shows the rapid progress being made on the four 10-story apartment houses (in the rear) and the smaller two- and three-story buildings in the foreground. Company spokesmen say the smaller buildings will be ready for occupancy about Aug. 1, while it will be another six months before the apartment houses are completed. Work on a complete shopping and recreational area will begin soon. The project will consist of 28 smaller apartment houses, the four large ones , each with 90 apartments, and an extensive shopping center. Between 3000 and 3500 persons will live in ‘Stonestown’ in the 783 rental units. The project covers 67 choice acres. The picture was taken from Vernon and Shields-sts, a hill just east of the project.”

PHYLLIS’ FINDINGS

By Phyllis Sherman

According to reports, most people’s greatest fear is speaking in public. Somewhere on the list, however, is fear of being audited by the IRS. Well, some years ago I received the ominous notice: “We selected your Federal Income Tax return for the year shown below to examine the items listed at the end of this letter. Please call us at the number above to arrange a convenient appointment.” Fear strikes the heart. My return was prepared by a CPA... so naturally a call to that office was appropriate.

My call for help was to no avail. I was told in no uncertain terms to please find another accountant. She was too busy with other tasks. I called another firm who at least helped fill me in (after reviewing my return) on what supporting data to bring to the audit. Most helpful of all, however, was Nolo Press’ book “How to Handle and IRS Audit. I was up until 2 AM the night before my appointment reading the specifics. It’s quite comprehensive and not at all unwieldy. Among the many items of advice was, “Never attempt to bribe your auditor.” Ha! What shall I bribe her with? An ad in our paper?

I arrived armed with all the data I’d been told to bring. Among the caveats from the book was, “even though they request you bring your return for the year before and the year after, don’t do it.” So, I didn’t, and fortunately they weren’t requested. My auditor, a nice young woman from Oakland, attempted to put me at ease and we talked about my return for over two hours. She was amazed at some of the errors considering the return was, ostensibly, professionally prepared. She ate a Tootsie Roll while we were talking, and offered me one, admitting she was addicted to them. Hmm..I thought...and even asked her “Could I bribe you with a box of Tootsie Rolls?” We both laughed.

To make a long story short, I must send in some cancelled checks, verification of certain expenses, etc...plus a healthy amount of money. Nevertheless, my initial trepidation and anxiety were unnecessary. The anticipation was worse than the reality. The experience was not as bad as a poke in the eye. It’s only money...which these days isn’t worth a helluva lot.

My advice is if it happens to you: Ask, and make sure your accountant will assist you BEFORE you have your return prepared. Get it in writing. Secondly, try to keep meticulous records and thirdly, get Nolo’s book on IRS Audits. It’s a pretty good read considering the subject matter.

An interesting article in a recent NY TIMES column by Nicholas D. Kristof, starts out with the headline, WOULD YOU SLAP YOUR FATHER? IF SO, YOU’RE A LIBERAL.

If you want to tell whether someone is liberal or conservative, what are a couple of completely nonpolitical questions that will give a good clue?

How’s this: Would you be willing to slap your father in the face, with his permission, as part of a comedy skit?

And, second: Does it disgust you to touch the faucet in a public restroom?

Studies suggest that conservatives are more often distressed by actions that seem disrespectful of authority, such as slapping Dad. Liberals don’t worry as long as Dad has given permission.

Likewise, conservatives are more likely than liberals to sense contamination or perceive disgust. People who would be disgusted to find that they had accidentally sipped from an acquaintance’s drink are more likely to identify as conservatives.

The upshot is that liberals and conservatives don’t just think differently, they also “feel” differently. This may even be a result, in part, of divergent neural responses.

Apparently for liberals, morality derives mostly from fairness and prevention of harm. For conservatives, morality also involves upholding authority and loyalty—and revulsion at disgust.

Psychologists have developed a “disgust scale” based on how queasy people would be in 27 situations, such as stepping barefoot on an earthworm or smelling urine in a tunnel. Conservatives systematically registered more disgust than liberals. (To see how you weigh factors in moral decisions, take the tests at www.your.morals.org.)

Hey, folks,,,you know those GREEN bags they’ve been touting that are supposed to keep your fruit, flowers,and ther produce for days longer? Well, they don’t! Green bananas turned black as soon as they were placed there. Didn’t work for even two days! Don’t waste your money

ENDJOKE...Three elderly ladies were having a conversation about how their bodies had begun to shrink. The first one said, “I used to be 5 foot 7 and now I’m 5’ 6”. The second woman said: “I used to be 5 foot 6 and 1/2 and now I’m 5-5. The third woman, turning to the second said “Gladys you should live to be 5 foot 4!”



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