

Thank You 49ers!

By John Farrell

I recently read the “Season of the Witch” by David Talbot, which I recommend. It is a book that chronicles the stories and events over the past century that have shaped the way San Francisco is today. You cannot really appreciate how amazing this City is unless you know what this City has been through. Being a fifth generation San Franciscan, it brought back a lot of memories. Some good and some not so good.

Our City was in a terrible state of depression after the assassinations of Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, the incomprehensible murders in Guyana by the People’s Temple leader, the tragedy of AIDS, and the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, to name a few. But San Franciscans always rise up. And one of the main forces that brought our City together was our San Francisco 49ers.

I have been a 49er fan since I can remember, going to Kezar and then Candlestick. But 1981 was a year that I will never forget. If you experienced it, it was Magic. No one will ever forget “The Catch” against the Cowboys in the NFC Championship. After losing in the playoffs to the Cowboys in 70, 71 and 72 it seemed like it would never happen. It was third down and three at the six yard line with 58 seconds left in the game. Just six yards away from getting the “Cowboy monkey off our back.” I watched intensely as Joe rolled to the right and was about to be engulfed by the Cowboy rush. It seemed like he was just throwing the ball away but it was snatched high in the air by Dwight for the touchdown. Later to find out that it was a designed play by mastermind Bill Walsh that the 49ers ran over and over at practice. To me, this was the Super Bowl. The 49ers subsequently won the actual Super Bowl against the Bengals, and this set the standard for 49er teams in the years to follow.

When Gavin Newsom became Mayor in 2004 I went up to him in the rotunda at City Hall and congratulated him on becoming Mayor. I also told him to take care of the 49ers, since I had been doing their assessments at Candlestick for years for the Assessor’s Office, and that 49er management would always stress to me how poor the condition of the stadium was and how they needed a new one.

Just two years later, the 49ers announced in November 2006 their interest in building a new stadium in Santa Clara. The 49ers had been trying for nine years to build a stadium at Candlestick Point to no avail. Per CSN Bay Area 49ers Insider Matt Maiocco, in explaining why Santa Clara became the focus of the new stadium plans, the 49ers said San Francisco officials were repeatedly warned about problems with the Candlestick plan, and those in power, including then-Mayor Newsom, did not act. And by the way, former Mayor Newsom is an alumnus of Santa Clara University.

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Community Benefits District Wins in West Portal

By Keith Burbank

A new effort is underway to establish a community benefit district (CBD) in West Portal. The idea seems to have enough merchant and landlord support this time, said a leading supporter. And supporters are getting a fiscal boost. This year, through District 7’s participatory budget process, residents voted to allocate \$15,000 to the cause.

“I just received the results from the District 7 participatory budget vote,” wrote Matt Rogers, owner, Papenhau-sen Hardware, and the leading supporter of the proposal. “The proposal to fund the effort to establish a CBD did receive enough votes to be funded. In fact, it received the second highest number of votes, only nine votes shy of the project with the most votes.”

The money will go toward educating residents, mer-chants and landlords about the benefits and costs of a CBD. The money will also be used for drawing up the rules for assessing the commercial district’s landlords.

Rogers said the assessment will be based on a store’s street frontage or square feet of floor space. For build-ings of average size, which Rogers described as 25 feet of frontage or 2,500 square feet of floor space, the assessment would be less than \$1,000 per year.

All the costs of the CBD would be born by building owners, and merchants, if landlords choose to pass on the costs. For residents, all they have to do is enjoy the improvements.

“It is a cost I am willing to pay” because of the



Are there flowers in West Portal’s future?

benefits, said Pedro Gal-letti, owner, Mozzarella di Bufala Piz-zeria, 69 West Portal Avenue. For merchants, Galletti said the idea is a “no-brainer.”

He figures an extra \$75 per month will bring him more than \$75 in monthly profit. “I understand it costs money,” he said. But breaking it down by month, “it’s a small increase for a large benefit.” Galletti hopes mer-chants and landlords see that.

A big role for the CBD would be cleaning, especially the sidewalks. Money might be made available to mer-chants for new awnings and new signs and paint. Galletti suggested adding benches along the avenue, replacing the avenue’s trees and hanging more flower baskets.

“Yes, I’m fairly supportive of those type of enti-ties,” said District 7’s Supervisor Norman Yee. The more

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PUBLIC SAFETY vs. “Public Safety”

By Former Supervisor Tony Hall

Many of you have may have wit-nessed the latest controversial Citywide legislation as put forth by Supervisor Scott Wiener who repre-sents District 8, regarding narrower streets and smaller fire engines and trucks in San Francisco.

As a former Supervisor, I thought I would opine on just how such legislation would affect the true public safety of all the residents of our City.

While the concept of “public safety” is no doubt an easy and popular issue for any aspiring politician to hitch



“...smaller fire trucks are not able to carry all of the equip-ment necessary to respond to a serious fire...”

his or her campaign to, there are important underlying aspects of how such changes will work in reality.

The current debate stems from the issue that Super-visor Wiener wants narrower, 20-foot streets in the Hunt-ers Point and Candlestick Park development sites, while the San Francisco Fire Department wants the streets to measure 26 feet across. However, you can bet that any legislation relating to such will eventually have citywide repercussions, since Mr. Wiener’s legislation also calls for the Board of Supervisors approval of any street width, or size of fire apparatus.

Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White, city engineers and experts in the Department of Public Works all are of the opinion that wider streets will provide better overall pub-lic safety, and specifically pedestrian safety. The wider width is also the standard recommended under both national and international fire codes. It’s all about getting the fire trucks down the streets in an emergency situa-tion. To put a ladder up safely it is necessary to extend jacks on either side of the apparatus, adding about 17 feet. Streets that are 20 feet wide simply do not allow room for other emergency vehicles or ambulances to respond. In the recent five-alarm fire in Mission Bay, the dam-age would have been much worse if the fire engines and trucks were not able access the fire by passing alongside other rigs, and the streets in that area are a minimum of 40 feet wide.

Wiener contends that “the fire trucks are really large, and one could argue more appropriate for a suburban setting.” He is really pushing for smaller trucks citywide. The reality is that smaller fire trucks are not able to carry all of the equipment necessary to respond to a serious fire in a city where the threat of fire hazards is of such promi-nence as in San Francisco. Our City is constructed differ-ently than most. One of the biggest contributors to the magnitude of destruction in 1906 was the lack of access. Even in the Oakland Hills, where the streets are wider,

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It All Begins with Bread at La Boulange

By Keith Burbank

La Boulange is an exciting addition to the West Portal neighborhood. A few stops at the cafe and bakery revealed welcome food, making it a draw for resi-dents and travelers and warming up guests as San Francisco fog rolls up the avenue.

West Portal’s La Boulange serves brunch all day, sandwiches, salads, pastries and coffee. The chocolate croissants were as good as any I ate in France.

Currently the neighborhood’s only bakery, La Bou-lange is known for supplying Starbucks with baked goods since buying the company two years ago. But guests seem to appreciate more than the croissants; topping the list of orders appeared to be salads.

“Excellent,” said a woman next to me of her salad, adding that everything at the cafe is good. La Boulange offers eight salads, from warm goat cheese with tomato, greens, croutons, candied pecans and balsamic vinaigrette, to a Cobb salad and Ceasar salad. The menu is available online¹.

The West Portal location doesn’t have the aura of the company’s original location at 2325 Pine Street, San Francisco. The West Portal store strikes me as a more American version of the San Francisco original, perhaps because the West Portal store is much larger.

At an employee’s suggestion, I opted not for a salad, but a hamburger, which is listed as a specialty on the menu. As a side order, I chose French fries topped with parmesan and truffle oil, and I made a good choice on both counts.

The order came out quickly, the food was hot, and my experience was pleasant. The staff made a strong showing each time I was there, considering there were guests in nearly every chair. I suspect the cafe will be busy most times of the day.

The store has both indoor and outdoor seating, for a casual neighborhood feel. Guests leave newspapers for their neighbors, and customers appeared to be comfort-able outside. La Boulange didn’t forget about outdoor

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La Boulange (Cont. from p. 1)

heaters, which are installed above the outdoor seating area.

The interior reflects a French bakery, with white tile walls behind the service counters. Guests are greeted by smiling staffers and the line of customers moves quickly.

I made an effort to taste some of the standard offerings, so on one visit I tried a latte with my croissant. The latte hit the spot on the cool, fogging morning. If I had a chance, I would have tasted an almond croissant, a seemingly more popular choice among patrons.

On separate visits, I tried chocolate croissants, and both tasted as if they were baked that morning. I'll look forward to grabbing another when I am in West Portal.

The only criticism I have is the temperature of the hamburger. I ordered the sandwich medium well, but it was cooked to nearly well-done. But I didn't have a chance to try the hamburger a second time.

Prices are fair for the quality of food. A hamburger and fries cost me less than \$12.00. Chocolate croissants are \$2.50 plus tax. Latte's start at \$2.95. The bakery is open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. La Boulange offers a kids menu.

Sharing a meal and conversation appears to be a joy for friends and neighbors. I'll enjoy dropping by again.

Keith Burbank is a local reporter.

1. www.laboulangebakery.com.



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Ruminations From A Former Supervisor By Quentin Kopp



In early 1998, the late Babette Drefke, a Potrero Hill leader for decades, Peter Byrne, an investigative journalist, and I sponsored an initiative measure known as the City Hall Cost Saving and Good Government Act of 1998. In November 1996, San Francisco voters had approved a ballot measure which the Board of Supervisors represented as a "cost-saving and good government measure." That measure's proponents justified such assurance by declaring the city would "save money by moving rent-paying departments into space formerly used by the Courts on the 3rd and 4th floors of (City Hall)." The San Francisco Ballot Simplification Committee, which exists because of my 1972 ordinance inspired by a suggestion from my late father, disseminated a similar assurance by stating in the Voter Information Pamphlet: "The City plans to use this money to convert space formerly used for courtrooms to office space." The ballot measure presented a General Obligation Bond for approval by 1996 voters, who did so.

On May 26, I requested an investigation by City Attorney Dennis Herrera as to the number of years that such illegal expenditures of taxpayer funds have occurred since 1999 and the total amount of such expenditure, noting that his office should recover all such expenditures of taxpayer money and direct the Mayor and San Francisco Airports Commission to cease such expenditures immediately. I await his response."

By early 1998, however, it was apparent from published rehabilitation plans for City Hall that San Francisco voters had been misled. The Mayor and Board of Supervisors intended to convert much of City Hall into yet another venue for politicians and wealthy supporters to stage parties for San Francisco's elite. City Hall would no longer be the principal place of business of city government. Hence, our initiative was prepared so as to require all city departments which occupied City Hall before the Loma Prieta earthquake of October 17, 1989 to return unless a department could demonstrate to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor a financially compelling reason not to occupy City Hall. In that event, a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Supervisors would be required to exempt any such department from returning to City Hall. Additionally, a new \$1,500,000 appropriation of taxpayer money for nine new civil service employees for the Mayor's Protocol Office would be repealed and abolished because at the time of the Loma Prieta earthquake, and until July 1, 1997, the Mayor's Office of Protocol operated effectively with voluntary contributions and financial assistance. Section 4 (c) of the City Hall Cost Saving and Good Government Act of 1998 provided expressly that the positions and appropriations of the Office of Protocol were abolished, and that all operations of such office would be conducted in accordance with the practices and laws existing as of October 17, 1989, the date of the Loma Prieta earthquake.

With thousands of San Francisco voters signing the Initiative measure petition, the initiative easily qualified for the June 1998 Municipal Ballot and was convincingly approved by San Francisco voters. The purpose was plain, namely, to stop the use of taxpayer funds for private parties. I almost completely forgot about that law, adopted 16 years ago by San Francisco voters, until last month, having been informed by an online report that the Mayor, the City Administrator, the General Services Department and the Airports Commission have colluded to evade the law through concealed use of two supposed non-profit entities named the "San Francisco Host Committee" and "San Francisco Special Events Committee." City Controller records show that at least \$760,000 in taxpayer dollars have been handed during the last three years alone to such entities. One Matthew Goudeau, who possesses a job classification as Director of Protocol (in the Mayor's office) and whose salary of approximately \$113,900 per year is paid from funds of the San Francisco Airport Commission, evidently presides in a City Hall office as Director of Protocol, in violation of the City Hall Cost Saving and Good Government Act of 1998. Moreover, the San Francisco General Services Department, under a "grant agreement", has conferred the past three years upon the San Francisco Host Committee \$250,000 per year. For the fiscal year 2013-2014, which

ends June 30, such amount was increased to \$260,000. The General Services Department presumably oversees such grants. In March 2014, a San Francisco citizen filed a complaint with the Sunshine Ordinance Taskforce over non-adherence to another law which requires non-profit entities receiving \$250,000 per year or more from City Hall to conduct two open and public meetings each year. The same person leads the San Francisco Host Committee and the San Francisco Special Events Committee, and the person identified as the contact for purposes of each entity's Internal Revenue Service required annual form, one Pam Miller of Menlo Park, manifestly isn't even a San Franciscan. The complaint with the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force arises from an alleged refusal of the two peculiar entities to respond to public records law requests from a San Francisco citizen. On May 26, I requested an investigation by City Attorney Dennis Herrera as to the number of years that such illegal expenditures of taxpayer funds have occurred since 1999 and the total amount of such expenditure, noting that his office should recover all such expenditures of taxpayer money and direct the Mayor and San Francisco Airports Commission to cease such expenditures immediately. I await his response.

Assembly Bill 2372 is noteworthy. It cures a weakness in Proposition 13, which has been exploited by countless corporations and some limited liability partnerships since 1978. Proposition 13 was added to the California Constitution by voters in 1978 to save homeowners from the tax appetites of elected City, School District and Special District officials. Before Proposition 13, homeowners, many of whom subsisted on fixed incomes or were retired or earning modest wages, were taxed increasingly every year on their homes, which produced no income unless and until the home was sold. A residential property is a non-cash asset. The assessed value of homes produces nothing by way of income to the property tax-paying owner. Yet assessments and property tax rates were constantly raised. That was why people passed Proposition 13 enthusiastically. Proposition 13 logically provides that if a home is sold or otherwise transferred to a non-spouse or child, the Assessor can legally reassess its value as the sale price. A corporate property owner, however, differs, from individuals. As a State Senator, I tried twice unsuccessfully to effectuate a Proposition 13 amendment which would declare the transfer of real estate owned by a corporation or limited partnership occurs if stock ownership of the corporation or partnership changes by 50% or more. Then, the property could be legally reappraised by the county assessor. Assembly Bill 2372 uses a different formula than my legislation, but the principle is the same. That's the reason the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association doesn't oppose AB 2372; it's the reason other homeowners

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Take A Taste of West Portal June 14-15th

West Portal's Merchants Association is bringing what organizers say is the first street fair in decades to the neighborhood. The fair, called the Taste of West Portal, will take place Saturday, June 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., along West Portal Avenue from Ulloa to 15th Avenue. Activities will take place at the West Portal Playground on Lenox Way too.

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"It's "probably the biggest thing the Avenue has had in decades," said Tammy Scott-Wigens, owner of S. Marco Fine Leather, 201 West Portal Avenue. Scott-Wigens has been taking the lead organizing the event. The goal of the event is to triple foot traffic along the avenue.

Participating restaurants will be offering visitors free samples throughout the day, a fixed-price menu and their regular menu. This year visitors will dine inside, but in following years organizers hope to get restaurants to set up booths outside.

Participating merchants will be selling items at a special sale price, and merchants selling services will be offering coupons to visitors. Some may offer free services.

Activities include music along each

block, circus performers, dog contests, lectures, caricatures, photographs and free treats and giveaways. West Portal Avenue, from 14th to 15th Avenue, will be dedicated as a family and kids block.

Residents interested in entering their canine in a dog contest can sign up on the Taste of West Portal's website, www.tasteofwestportal.com. District 7's Supervisor Norman Yee will be one of the judges.

Kids can participate in arts and crafts, see demonstrations, check out San Francisco Fire Department trucks, have their face painted and see magicians perform, among other activities. Organizers are hoping offer rides on vintage MUNI trains or cable cars.

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Another Do-Good Debacle

By Steve Lawrence

The City Commission responsible for water, sewer and power (SFPUC) has increased rates effective July 1st. Over the next four years combined water and sewer rates will rise 41% for a typical single-family home.

SFPUC also supplies City departments with electricity. Beginning July 1 General Fund departments of the City will pay more. Still, they will pay much less than they would if powered by PG&E. SFPUC's Hetch Hetchy power system subsidizes the General Fund departments by millions of dollars, and has for decades.

General Fund departments (example: Recreation & Park) got the rate increase in order to solve what was called a "fiscal cliff." The budget for Hetch Hetchy Water

is going into debt. (The Mountain Tunnel trouble, perhaps half a billion dollars to fix, put a decisive end to sunny finances.)

Is GoSolar worthwhile? Well, Commissioners did vote to fully fund it, but there were questions—mostly unanswered. As one Commissioner pointed out, the program pays non-customers. SFPUC money, which comes from rates, goes out through GoSolar to customers of PG&E. Does that make sense? You pay more so PG&E sells less?



“With creative accounting, for decades Hetchy has paid for itself and given the City's General Fund departments electricity at rates far below market. But all good things come to an end ... Only so long can maintenance and renewal be deferred.”

& Power was out of balance, and earlier was rejected by Commissioners. Like squeezing into tight jeans, postponing and eliminating expenditures, and increasing revenue by hiking the rate charged to General Fund departments, made for a tight fit.

But as one Commissioner pointed out at the meeting where the revised budget was approved, all the extra revenue from the rate increase would not pay for one program, the funding for which was increased: GoSolar.

GoSolar is a city program designed to encourage solar panel installation. The program has spent about 20 million dollars (24m appropriated; 4m unspent). In recent years it's been downsized, causing loud protests from Greens. This upcoming fiscal year, and next, it has been fully funded with \$5 million per year.

Essentially there was a trade-off. The budget of Hetch Hetchy Water & Power was out of balance, and presented a future "fiscal cliff." To solve that the mayor grabbed \$19.5 million from CleanPowerSF, while fully funding GoSolar. A tasty bone was tossed.

Unfortunately, the power side's fiscal cliff has not disappeared forever. It has been moved back.

Moreover, Supervisors are still furious at the mayor for killing CleanPowerSF and grabbing its funds. CleanPowerSF was to have launched a retail municipal power enterprise, poking PG&E in the eye, and making available 100% renewable power—at greater cost to retail consumers.

With creative accounting, for decades Hetchy has paid for itself and given the City's General Fund departments electricity at rates far below market. But all good things come to an end. Having opened in the Thirties, the infrastructure is old. Only so long can maintenance and renewal be deferred. This next fiscal year, for the first time, revenue bonds will be sold. Hetchy

Beyond the theoretical difficulty, what has GoSolar accomplished? It was reported that there are 8.2 megawatts of installed capacity. San Francisco consumes somewhere in the vicinity of 18,000 megawatts hours of electricity per day average. Solar (in-city) provides a small share, about half a percent.

GoSolar generates jobs, jobs for the disadvantaged. Has it? It was reported to the Commission that 21 jobs were created. Twenty million bucks spent, so far, 21 jobs...you do the math. But, say proponents, that 21 is only workforce development jobs; there are more that should be recognized. Staff was unwilling to estimate how many more. Solar also reduces emission of greenhouse gases.

This year GoSolar is the beneficiary of politics: it's a convenient way to throw Greens a bone, to compensate for the demise of CleanPowerSF.

GoSolar is but one of what has grown to be quite a number of do-good programs SFPUC sponsors. These programs steer money to causes (and special interests) that are not central to delivering water and sewer service, or municipal power.

At a recent Commission meeting the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods (CSFN) objected to such expenditures by SFPUC. These expenditures are rising rapidly. They inflate rates, threaten long-term financial well-being, and are arguably contrary to law: Prop 218, which requires property-related charges to be proportional to the cost of providing the service.

No comment by Commissioners was made when CSFN presented its objections to including unnecessary expenditures in SFPUC finances. Still, finally the matter has been raised. What happens next?

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

Parkmerced: Check Your Lease

By Pastor Lynn Gavin

When I moved into Parkmerced it was not disclosed to me nor anyone in my family that Parkmerced Investors Properties, "the owners" were going to demolish the garden apartment that was our home. As you can imagine we were shocked to hear about this.

We did hear about a possible Parkmerced default on a mortgage payment and filing bankruptcy. As a new resident, I did not know what to think or believe. Can an apartment complex the size of Parkmerced fail to disclose that they planned to demolish our home prior to renting us the apartment?

The California Landlord Tenant Handbook cites Cal. Civ. Code 1940.6 (a):(a) The owner of a residential dwelling unit or the owner's agent who applies to any public agency for a permit to demolish that residential dwelling unit shall give written notice of that fact—the section goes on to describe circumstances where the property owner must inform a tenant and prospective tenant.

Being wrongfully evicted is a shock I hope you never experience.

Pastor Lynn Gavin lived in Parkmerced.



Not-So-Free Speech



My 2¢ • Will Durst

Welcome to the Real World.

And now an open letter to all you new grads. Congratulations. Good job. Way to go. Bet you thought this day would never come. And if memory serves, it probably almost didn't. Anyhow, welcome to the real world. And please be aware that we use that term very loosely.

You're going to love it out here. Might find it surprisingly similar to what you just left behind. Only different. For one thing: Sleeping through first hour is generally frowned upon. And alas, not as many keggers. Less pot as well. Unless you're headed into investment banking.

Obviously, most of the advice you've gotten so far has been as predictable as Nat King Cole in an elevator while Christmas shopping at Macy's. Surely you've been treated to all the clichés. "Winners never quit and quitters never win." "Get up one more time than they knock you down." "Nose and toes the same way goes." Blah. Blah. Hoo-dee-doo. Unrealistic optimistic idealistic balderdash. As helpful as a smiley face lapel pin on a Mylar balloon.

What you really need are tips that will shoot straight through all the bourgeois and cut to the chase. To tell it like it is. Guidance to help navigate the fjords of chaos that inevitably await where grown-ups interact. And you've come to the right place, because here they are. A goodly number of life-proven pieces of real world advice for today's grads. Might not be what you want to hear but guaranteed to help. Well. Not going to hurt. Well...

WILL DURST'S TOP TIPS FOR TODAY'S GRADS.

- When someone says "This is not about money," it's about money.
- The 5 second rule does not apply to ballparks, bus stations or hospital waiting rooms.
- Getting a tattoo is like feeding gremlins: don't do it after midnight.
- No matter what you see in movies, overturned wooden tables are not adequate protection from assault weapons.
- When people say, "I'm not a racist, but..." they're racists.
- You can't fix stupid.
- Sure, sure, he's your best friend, but get it in writing.
- Nothing in the world is as underrated as a good nap.
- Maintain and move on.
- Two words: duct tape.
- That high pitched noise that only you can hear: it's the "Screw You" buzzer. Don't worry. Only goes off occasionally.
- Always marry someone smarter than you. Of course, then they're marrying someone dumber than they are. But that's their problem.
- Gambling is a tax on people bad at math.
- Hazing happens in the real world as well. It's called a mortgage.
- Life is too short for Kirkland champagne.
- Everyone is ditchable. Including you.
- Never ever trust anybody who says "At the end of the day." At the end of the day it gets dark.
- When they ask your name at Starbucks, once in a while, tell them "Rumplestiltskin."
- Backing into parking spots allows for quicker getaways.
- Not only is laughter the best medicine, it's really hard to O.D. on the stuff.
- If you fall, and you will: fall forward.
- Stay cool and dry and vertical. Or hot and wet and horizontal. Whichever works.
- And finally, when someone says, "you'll like these people, they're a fun group," you can rest assured they have the collective sense of humor of an end table.

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The Sunshine Vendetta

By Richard Knee

Efforts by certain city legislators to keep the city's Sunshine Ordinance Task Force as ineffective an open-government watchdog as possible continue.

The Board of Supervisors is stalling on eight appointments to the 11-member panel, and of the three they have picked, all incumbents, two have often angered sunshine advocates by siding with city agencies or officials accused by members of the public of open-meeting or public-records violations.

What's in play is retaliation for a finding by the task force in September 2011 that board President David Chiu and Supervisors Scott Wiener, Malia Cohen and Eric Mar had violated local and state open-meeting laws by ramming through a Parkmerced redevelopment contract with 14 pages of amendments that Chiu had slipped in at the last minute.

Launching a smear campaign aimed ultimately at purging the eight task force members who had unanimously voted to find the violation, Wiener surreptitiously asked the Budget and Legislative Analyst to survey all city departments on how much it cost to comply with sunshine laws, and how many hours their personnel spent at task force hearings on sunshine-related complaints.

Wiener and his allies hoped the B&L analyst's survey would cast the task force in a bad light. It didn't.

When the board was considering task force appointments in May 2012, Wiener mislabeled the survey as an "audit," said it had shown the task force's operation as inefficient, and accused the task force of saying, "How dare you? How dare you expose us to sunshine?"

First, an audit is an outsider's thorough look at an entity's operations and its net cost or benefit during a given time span, including funding sources and amounts, and expenditure amounts and uses. No such scrutiny of the task force has taken place.

Second, neither the task force nor any of its members said, "How dare you?" The task force did, however, send a letter objecting to Wiener's attempt to keep the survey

secret while it was in progress, and as to the survey's content, which included questions that task force members thought were vague or vacuous.

Third and perhaps most important, the survey revealed that the task force's operation and the 1993 ordinance that created it (Administrative Code Sections 67.1 et sequitur) result in very small out-of-pocket costs and,

“the mayor and the Board of Supervisors ... made sure that the panel gets minimal funding, staffing and resources, and the board has refused to fill two long-standing vacancies, making it difficult at times to muster a quorum...”

in fact, produce certain significant, if difficult-to-quantify, benefits. Some key findings:

- Compliance with state and local sunshine laws carried “identified” costs of about \$4.27 million to the city in calendar 2011, of which nearly \$3.28 million stemmed from adhering to state laws. So the Sunshine Ordinance added \$997,676 to the cost.

Since San Francisco's population was then a bit over 805,000, the latter cost amount worked out to about \$1.24 per resident per year.

What's more, \$4.27 million was just above 0.6 percent of the city's \$6.83 billion budget for fiscal 2011-12.

- “[I]t is likely that without the (task force), some portion of complaints would be directed to other public bodies, such as the courts, which would in turn incur costs.”

In other words, the task force has saved the city hundreds of thousands of dollars in court expenses. And there's no telling how many millions of dollars the local and state sunshine laws have saved the city by enabling the exposure or prevention of backroom deals.

Whatever inefficiencies exist with the task force can be laid at the feet of the mayor and the Board of Supervisors. They've made sure that the panel gets minimal funding, staffing and resources, and the board has refused to fill two long-standing vacancies, making it difficult at times to muster a quorum since task force members are volunteers with outside responsibilities such as family and work.

Two years ago, the board's failure to appoint a physically-disabled member forced the task force to take a five-month hiatus, exacerbating a backlog of complaints filed by members of the public.

Because of the difficulty in mustering a quorum, the task force has been unable to hold as many special meetings as its members would like in order to reduce the complaints backlog.

Even worse are the resulting delays to complainants trying to obtain disclosable public records.

The process of appointing task force members for the 2014-16 term looks farcical. And ominous.

At the May 15 meeting of the board's Rules Committee, which conducts initial vetting of applicants for city policy bodies, the two supervisors present, chair Norman Yee and Katy Tang, (David Campos was absent) complained that there wasn't enough racial/ethnic diversity among the 13 candidates.

That didn't deter them from recommending the reappointments of Todd David, Louise Fischer and David Pilpel, all Anglos.

Before the full board five days later Yee complained again, this time that lack of a regular schedule and frequent switching of meeting dates were making attendance difficult for task force members.

Either Yee had no clue of the facts or he was lying. The task force normally meets the first Wednesday of each month¹ and its subcommittees usually meet during the third week of the month. Meeting postponements and cancellations are the result, not the cause, of difficulties in mustering a quorum, due to the vacancies – which now number three.

In gushing over David, Fischer and Pilpel at the board's May 20 meeting, Wiener offered no evidence or detail of their alleged accomplishments and ignored the fact that David has missed six task force meetings since March 2013, including those of last January, February and April. Until the board fills the other seats, the five remaining incumbents – Chris Hyland, Bruce Oka, David Sims, Allyson Washburn and yours truly – stay on as “holdover” members.

How all this plays out and how long it will take are anybody's guess. A key determinant is whether certain supervisors will abandon their vendetta. The Rules Committee is tentatively scheduled on June 5 to resume considering task force applicants.

Now, about that audit: good idea. Wiener or any other official would serve the city well by initiating it.

¹ <http://www.sfbos.org/index.aspx?page=5534>

Richard Knee has served on the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force since July 2002 and is not seeking reappointment. He is a freelance journalist based in San Francisco.



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265 Kensington Way	Forest Hill Extensio	4	2	2	1,199,000	1,310,000	109.26
1420 Monterey Blvd	Monterey Heights	5	3	2	1,795,000	1,915,000	106.69
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“Integrating” Obamacare at the DPH

By Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derrek Kerr

The Department of Pubic Health (DPH), exhorted by favored contractor Health Management Associates (HMA), is using Obamacare to transform itself into a conglomerate via “integration.”

Records show that HMA promotes “integration” by breaking down “micro-cultures that have their own vision and goals.” These “need to be taken on by leadership and held accountable as a component of a unified approach to care...” HMA sees no room for organizational eco-systems and no pitfalls with mergers. “Integration” is HMA’s panacea.



Reimbursement means that SF General Hospital can charge the average patient \$6,716/day ...Laguna Honda Hospital charges an average of \$968/day, there’s economic pressure to unload non-paying SFGH patients into LHH regardless of whether they benefit from the transfer.”

This dream of “seamless integration” flopped in 1999 when the DPH set up its “Community Health Network” to entice privately-insured patients into its safety-net system. Similarly, the 2004 Flow Project imploded after San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) tossed younger, troubled and sometimes violent patients among the frail elderly at Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH). A 4-year take-over of LHH finances by the SFGH Finance Office fizzled in 2009. Another dud was Laguna Honda’s multi-million dollar Acute Rehabilitation Unit. Designed to attract 15 insured SFGH patients – each for \$4,527/day - it struggles to serve two per day because eligible patients choose to go elsewhere. Nevertheless, “integration” is prescribed for cost overruns throughout the DPH.

SFGH, LHH and 14 City Clinics all spend more than they earn. Therefore, they rely on City taxpayer subsidies. At the center of fiscal hemorrhaging is SFGH whose operating costs comprise “more than 50% of DPH’s expenses” per the Controller’s Office. Historically, SFGH has lost millions due to sloppy billing practices. HMA now finds that busy SFGH specialty clinics like Dermatology and Psychiatry collect no revenue as they “find it too complicated to complete professional billing.” The Emergency Department is grid-locked by 10 “classic examples of dysfunction,” including a dozen Nurse Practitioners “with very poor per hour productivity.” FGH now wants an extra 288 full-time positions costing \$77 million, but “without new patient volumes to support these requests” says HMA. Such practices threaten DPH’s “survivability” under Obamacare, as explained in May’s Westside Observer.

Tighter fiscal accountability is not enough. The way out according to HMA, is to get bigger – and to “integrate.” The DPH patient census must increase from 57,000 to 85,000 in the next 5 years. Clinic doctors must increase their patient loads from 826 to 1350, even though patient satisfaction scores sink to 35%, and half the Clinics are already packed. To grow the Network, DPH must “pursue and secure managed

care contracts” with Kaiser, HealthNet and Blue Shield, though none had materialized as of late 2013. For Laguna Honda, the plan is to increase “specialty services,” perhaps kidney dialysis. To manage all this, the DPH will “expedite leadership hiring” into a new layer of bureaucracy. A slew of consulting contracts will be issued, more staff will be hired and more technology purchased. According to the Mayor’s Budget Proposal for 2013-14, allocations for SFGH will rise by \$225 million plus \$17 million for LHH.

HMA admits that all this growth and integration “will be reducing the number of face-to-face encounters with patients,” adding that staff “must convince (patients) that changes are for them.” HMA’s “Communication Plan” also aims to “generate a groundswell of DPH staff support.” Its effectiveness will be gauged by staff Satisfaction Surveys, designed to measure “employee engagement” with the integration agenda. Unions will be persuaded that job changes are “better than layoffs.”

“Integration” struck Laguna Honda a decade ago when top LHH executives were replaced by managers bred at SFGH, after a staff revolt against the 2004 Flow Project. The next step, per HMA, is to merge Laguna Honda’s license with SFGH. Then, SFGH can pour chaos and costs into Laguna Honda without resistance. In fact, a “Joint Hospital Executive Council” is set to “facilitate integration” and “client flow.” HMA emphasizes that Laguna Honda’s “pressing needs are the integration of Rehabilitation and Psychiatry services with SFGH.” Amazingly, HMA admits that a “unique population feature” of SFGH is a “high incidence of behavioral issues.” No problem; “Moving the patients from your Behavioral Health Skilled Nursing Facility to Laguna Honda is a significant improvement from a reimbursement perspective.”

Reimbursement means that SFGH can charge the average patient \$6,716/day until their illness is cured. Then payment stops. When patients cannot be quickly discharged home or to a nursing facility, they occupy “unpaid beds.” There’s a shortage of nursing home beds in the City. Since LHH charges an average of \$968/

day, there’s economic pressure to unload non-paying SFGH patients into LHH regardless of whether they benefit from the transfer.

One HMA report declares that: “Admission and continued stay at LHH is predicated on ongoing rehabilitation and restorative care; LHH not intended as an option for permanent housing.” In other words, long-term care is out. Paradoxically, an HMA marketing analysis envisions: “Laguna Honda will become another tool in market penetration...if seniors believe that access to Laguna Honda and other long-term care programs are assured...” There’s a problem. To increase flow from SFGH, Laguna Honda is cutting patient lengths of stay by 12% to accommodate an extra 140 referrals this year. So, the DPH

is looking to “subcontract to private long-term care partners.”

Although LHH was rebuilt as a sanctuary for “Old Friends,” it’s becoming a colony for younger “hard to place” and non-paying SFGH patients. Elders in need of long-term care are burdens in the corporatized DPH marketplace. Ironically, Obamacare promotes patient choice, but Laguna Honda will only be a choice for patients referred by SFGH for short-term care.

Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr were senior physicians at Laguna Honda Hospital where they repeatedly exposed wrongdoing by the Department of Public Health. Contact: DerekOnVanNess@aol.com

Community Benefits District (Cont. from p. 1)

support among merchants and landlords, the more supportive Yee will be. He’s more than willing to provide resources to educate others about the idea, he said. “It does take some resources.”

Resources are what a CBD is all about, according to supporters. Unlike a merchant’s association, the CBD is legally binding. “Everyone has some skin in the game,” Rogers said. In addition, because a CBD is 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, a CBD has more access to donations and grants than a merchants association.

Supporters are proposing a budget of \$200,000 for the new organization. With that money, work might include sweeping the avenue five days per week, and power

washing the sidewalks one time per month.

That would eat up more than half the budget. But it’s those kinds of things that are impossible to do with volunteers, Rogers said.

By the beginning of 2015, the neighborhood should have the bones of the idea drawn up, and the CBD could launch January 1, 2016. The proposal is not without opposition. But calls to landlords allegedly opposed to the idea were not returned.

With the amount of competition in the City to attract shoppers, “it’s easy to get left behind in a crowded marketplace,” Rogers said.

Keith Burbank is a local journalist.

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Hidden Gems of San Francisco

Golden Gate Park: Prayerbook Cross and Peaks & Ponds

By Deanna Micros

Until the 1870's there was little more than sand dunes, known as the "Outside Lands," where Golden Gate Park now stands. Since its inception, visitors have enjoyed many beautiful and prominent attractions that adorn the park, such as the Conservatory of Flowers, Japanese Tea Garden and the newly designed deYoung Museum, with its 144-foot tall observation tower. There are also many hidden gems located throughout the 1,017-acre Golden Gate Park ("GGP").

The best way to discover the seldom-seen peaks, ponds, and monuments —Prayerbook Cross, Stow Lake, Strawberry Hill, Hippie Hill, Heros's Grove, the Lilly Pond and Elk Glen Lake (although the elk are no longer present), to name just a few — one needs to get off the beaten path and explore the amazing interior trail system throughout GGP.

Prayerbook Cross is the tallest monument in GGP and at close to 60 feet high it goes nearly undetected sitting on a perch above Rainbow Falls. Upon its dedication in January 1894 the cross was visible to ships entering the Golden Gate. The sandstone cross commemorates the first English-speaking Christian service, held at Drakes Bay on June 24, 1579, and the first use of the Book of Common Prayer in California, conducted by Sir Francis Drake's Chaplain, Francis Fletcher. The Church of England gifted the sandstone Celtic cross designed by English architect Ernest Coxhead. Mr. Coxhead also designed a bridge across Stow Lake giving way to Strawberry Hill Island.

Stow Lake, created in 1893, is the largest of ten lakes in GGP. Visitors can rent paddle-boats from the boathouse and circumnavigate the tranquil lake while passing a traditional Chinese Pagoda and

taking in the rushing Huntington Falls, a 110-foot, artificial, waterfall. In the center of the lake is the island of Strawberry Hill. At 430 feet Strawberry Hill is the highest peak in GGP. As its namesake suggests, wild strawberries once flourished on the island. Strawberry Hill is now home to many nesting birds including the great horned owl.

For an up-close look at Prayerbook Cross and the many other wonderful sights tucked into the wooded trails of Golden Gate Park, join San Francisco Scenic Running Tours on their newest tour. "Peaks & Ponds" is a 6-mile guided running tour along the beautiful trails in Golden Gate Park. Visitors and locals alike will be amazed by all of hidden gems, just off the beaten path! Our scenic running tours are a great way to see the sights while on a run. The Peaks & Ponds scenic running tour is scheduled on Thursdays at 2 pm and Saturdays at 9 am.

Explore San Francisco and San Francisco Scenic Running Tours are a locally owned co-op of guides with a passion for discovering the City's "hidden gems." For more information on running tours in SF, check out the website at ExploreSanFrancisco.biz/scenicrunning.php or call 415-504-3636, ext. 3.

The Ratemaking Season - SFPUC rates

By Brian Browne

The season of utility ratemaking is upon us. New water and sewerage rates will be set by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), with oversight and guidance from the Rate Fairness Board (RFB). This season is extremely important to our pocket books in that the denominator of the rate quotient, volumes, is drying up in what some are forecasting as the worst drought in California history, and the numerator, production costs, is increasing both as a function of normal operation & maintenance costs pushed by the largest infrastructure expenditures in San Francisco's history. This infrastructure program is being funded by revenue bond debt. Rate shock may be expected for many years.



San Francisco does need an individual ratepayer advocate who cannot and will not succumb to the siren call of the politicians, special interests, etc.

Ratemaking, in the absence of a market solution, is price setting. Price setters are more notable for their failures than successes. The Interstate Commission Act of 1887 introduced a vague, non-operational concept of "just and reasonable" ratemaking to avoid "ruinous competition," concepts never fully defined. It is estimated that the regulatory morass of the ICC costs the U.S. economy many GDP points. The regulatory epidemic catalyzed by the ICC quickly spreads throughout the U.S. with like economic disruption.

Municipal utilities (SFPUC) in California are self-regulating. Investor owned utilities in California are regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). The CPUC supposedly has a formalized process. The enigma of the SFPUC process is of great concern. The Revenue Bond Oversight Committee (RBOC) is concerned with supply-side costs as to reasonableness, and the RFB is supposedly the ratepayer advocate as to fairness. Not exactly the good hands people.

Regulated utilities have a two-step (somewhat an artificial

dichotomy) approach to rate-making. First the regulated entity must establish its reasonable and allowable costs. This step quantifies the revenues required to run the entity. Second the utility must design a rate structure (fixed, variable, customer class, etc.) to collect these revenues.

1996 Proposition 218 (no taxation without a vote) must be factored into the City's ratemaking process. New utility fees must not be implemented without a 2/3rd majority vote of the electorate. Rates must not exceed the reasonable and allowable cost of production. It has many other clearly defined limits on local government pick pocketing of citizens through user-fees.

Any fiat price can cut off demand, but is this price the most effective way to allocate resources? The current SFPUC ascending step rate structure comes to mind. It may be effective in achieving a cutback, but what cutback? How do they know if it optimizes available resources even under drought conditions? The planning math beguiles by its

Cont. p. 14

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Money Matters • By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan

Landing Your Dream Job ... In Retirement

Many retirees choose to work in retirement. Americans in general have a strong work ethic, so a life of extended leisure doesn't appeal to everyone. And with the average U.S. life expectancy estimated at 80.1 years, there's no reason why you can't pursue meaningful work in retirement, especially if your health is good and your mind is sharp. The desire for activity and income are other important reasons you may decide to return to the workforce and stay there well beyond age 65. If you work in retirement, there are many options.

What kind of "second career" is plausible for a senior citizen? Retirees today can consider a number of opportunities, such as turning special expertise into a consulting gig, taking a part-time job, starting a small business or volunteering for non-profit work. Let's take a closer look at the possibilities for working in retirement.

Become a consultant. When you retire after many years in a specialized field, you take a wealth of experience and knowledge with you that cannot be easily replaced. Many retired professionals turn their past into thriving consulting businesses, often providing services to their former employers. Others gain clients by blogging about their fields of expertise. Speaking engagements, seminars and webinars are additional ways you can share your knowledge, which can bring in income and provide you with the professional and intellectual stimulation your former work life provided.

Get a part-time job. If your former field offers part-time opportunities, you may be one of the lucky ones to land a less-than-full time job with better-than-average compensation. Some seniors go back to school to get another degree, training or certification that will qualify them for a challenging part-time job in a field of interest. Or, you may decide to take a low stress, entry-level job simply to remain active—bagging groceries, working a cash register, or becoming a barista to stay busy for a portion of the week while lining your pockets with a little extra cash.

Start your own small business. Many sellers on sites such as eBay and Etsy are people who have turned their hobbies of collecting or crafting into thriving businesses. In your former work life, you may not have had as much time to

Volunteer. Many retirees take advantage of their open calendars to ramp up volunteering for organizations they wish to support. And while giving your services freely to your favorite nonprofit won't pad your pocketbook, it can be extremely rewarding and meaningful. Whether you choose to help your favorite church, hospital, professional organization or animal shelter, volunteering your time can enrich your life and benefit your community in important ways.

It's up to you to create a rewarding retirement. If you choose to continue working for a paycheck, your financial advisor can help you examine how additional income will impact your overall retirement finances. If you do decide to return to the workforce, remember this: the point of a work commitment in retirement is *not* to replicate your former 40-plus hour work week—you've been there and done that. Ideally, your retirement career is about staying active and engaged in ways that keep you young. Whether or not you pursue a new line of work in retirement, be sure to leave room for activities and interactions that will make your golden years as rewarding as they can be.

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



Public Safety (Cont. from p. 1)

the damage would have been much less in the fire of 1991 had there been easier access. I would also point out that the price tag to replace our fire trucks with new smaller ones isn't an option at this time, even if appropriate ones did exist, because the cost would be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. With the above-mentioned new developments, we have a chance to improve public and pedestrian safety with wider streets. In my mind, this takes precedence over wider sidewalks if we can't have both.

In addition to narrower streets, Wiener is also calling for wider sidewalks with corner bulb-outs. No one is against pedestrian-friendly sidewalks of any proper design, except where such may impede the ability of emergency response vehicles to protect the safety of all residents. Bulb-outs can be attractive and useful if designed correctly, but in the narrow streets of San Francisco where many have already been constructed, some have restricted the flow of traffic and have resulted in pedestrian accidents and fatalities because the bulb-outs place pedestrians too close to the flow of traffic. San Francisco already requires that all drivers of police, fire and emergency medical apparatus, when driving in a code 3 alarm (full lights and siren), slow down or even completely stop when necessary at stop signs and red lights, only proceeding once they have taken full control of the intersection. Therefore, bulb-outs would not only be redundant given the precautions currently in place, they would significantly increase the response time in minutes by police, fire and emergency medical services by severely limiting the clearance space and maneuverability in intersections. This increase in response time could easily be the difference between life and death for residents.

San Franciscans are very tolerant of new ideas and are always eager to improve upon the landscape of our City. We also know that we live in a city where the streets are narrow and filled with wood frame buildings that provide us with a unique character. We have been very fortunate throughout our history to have one of the finest fire departments of any city in the world protecting our interests. I would advise Mr. Wiener to listen more carefully to those public servants who have demonstrated, by their life-long careers, that they too know something about PUBLIC SAFETY.

Tony Hall served twice as Supervisor for District 7

Quentin Kopp (Cont. from p. 3)

and I support AB 2372 while also, understandably, continuing to support the logic of Proposition 13, despite the caterwauling about it from local politicians and media who couldn't even vote in 1978 as homeowners faced huge assessments and property tax increases every year. Proposition 13 has preserved the financial survivability of millions of California homeowners and will continue to do so.

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



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Senior Smarts

Stroke Survival: Understanding Stroke

By Anise J. Matteson

A stroke, also referred to as apoplexy, cerebrovascular accident, cerebral hemorrhage, or transient ischemic attack is caused by the effects of any interference with circulation within the brain.

The blood supply to the brain is blocked by a thrombus or clot which blocks the entrance to a narrowed and roughened section of an artery (thrombus); and embolus (clot) that is carried from another part of the body, usually the heart, blocks normal blood passage; a brain artery burst (hemorrhage) and is unable to furnish blood cells with essential, nourishing blood; and in rare instances brain tumors or abscesses press on an artery and close it off (compression).

It is the fourth leading cause of death.

Warning Signs

The National Stroke Association: What is Stroke (www.stroke.org/Site/PageServer?PageName= SYMP) lists the following symptoms as warning signs of a stroke:

Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg—especially on one side of the body.

Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.

Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination.

Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Types of Stroke

The New Illustrated Medical and Health Encyclopedia indicates: In a full scale stroke, there is paralysis of one side of the body, the face, or limbs, speech is affected, or there is a period of unconsciousness. In a mini stroke, there are dizzy spells, confusion, memory loss, handwriting change, a numb arm or leg.

Risk Factors

Risk factors for a stroke include: heart failure, hyperlipidemia, hypertension, history of myocardial infarction, male gender, atherosclerosis of the aortic arch, atrial fibrillation, advanced age (especially older than 65 years), carotid artery disease, nonwhite race, peripheral vascular disease, physical inactivity, or a recent transient ischemic attack.

Statistics

Seven million people in the United States have survived a stroke.

Rehabilitation Options

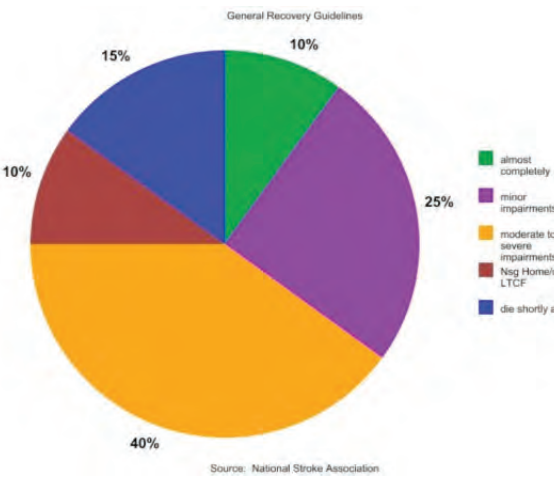
According to the National Stroke Association, depending on the severity of a stroke, rehabilitation options include: a rehabilitation unit in the hospital; a subacute care unit; a rehabilitation hospital; home therapy; home with outpatient therapy; or a long-term care facility that provides therapy and skilled nursing care.

Resources

Stroke Survivor Support Group: www.cpmc.org/ClassesSearch/view?sid=2&q_op=detail &recid = %20MLSCAL_615_5574_2011-08-04T00:00:00

National Stroke Association: www.stroke.org

Stroke Smart Magazine: www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=mag



This is part one of a four-part series articles will focus on stroke: Part Understanding Stroke, Part II: roke Aftercare, Part III: Adap-e Clothing, and Part IV: Assistive chnology Products.

Next Month: Part II: Stroke Aftercare

Anise Matteson is an elder care consultant, retired Registered Health formation Technician, writer of ference books for seniors and Car-g Boomers Newsletter ©2011. irt I is revised from the Newslet-r for this article. Email: cfaalo@yahoo.com.

Thank You 49ers (Cont. from p. 1)

Subsequently, Santa Clara voters approved a ballot measure in June 2010 to build the Stadium. Our hearts sank. In January 2011, the City won the bid to host the 2013 America’s Cup. I believe the Mayor’s Office thought this would detract us from losing the 49ers or somehow make us feel better. Think again.

In October of last year Joe Montana stated “I don’t think there was enough of an effort by people in power at the time to try to keep them there. To me, they made a terrible effort to try to keep them in San Francisco.”

The 49ers were taken for granted and we lost them. Luckily we kept our Giants. The 49ers will move into Levi’s Stadium for the 2014 season and it looks spectacular. We wish the 49ers all the best and we will continue to be their loyal supporters to the end. You will always be our 49ers. Thanks for the memories and let’s get that sixth Lombardi!

John Farrell Broker/Realtor® – Farrell Real Estate, MBA, Former City Asst. Assessor-Budget/Special Projects, 5th Generation San Franciscan, Westside resident - farrell-reinvestments@yahoo.com



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*Some restrictions apply. Promotions are not valid on holidays.

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Be sure to visit the Lookout Cafe at the Lands End visitor center. Operated by the Cliff House team, the cafe serves delicious, locally sourced grab-and-go items. The center, operated by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, offers educational exhibits, stunning views, and the amazing Lands End Trails.

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Local High School Seeks Connection with the Community

Program Facilitates Large-scale Restoration Project and a Series of Public Events

By Amy Belkora, San Francisco Waldorf School

The intersection of West Portal and Sloat Avenues is the site of a unique environmental educational program called The Outdoor Classroom Initiative, organized by faculty, staff, and parent leaders from the Waldorf School, brings students into the community to learn about natural history, ecology, and sustainability.

One of the key projects is student restoration and beautification of an open space adjacent to our campus at Arden Wood. Students cleared approximately 200 yards of overgrown trails, removed invasive ivy and old pipes, hauled sand and silt from a spring-fed pond, and uncovered long-lost stonework — learning about natural history and ecology along the way.

The Outdoor Classroom Initiative also sponsored a series of outings last week for students in the school's architecture class. Seniors set out by bus, bike, and foot to explore the City's rooftop gardens, living alleys, and sustainable buildings, hearing from architects, city planners, and environmental experts along the way. The class is one of several required courses designed to help students understand their emerging place in the world.

In addition to bringing students into the community, The Outdoor Classroom Initiative welcomes the community to the school for a series of public events focused on sustainability issues. The events included a public lecture by David Sobel, renowned author of *Place-Based*



Students bike to Heron's Head Park to tour the Eco-Center.
Photo: Miranda Hollingswood



Students restore neighborhood open space Photo: Amy Belkora

Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities, and a San Francisco screening of *Symphony of the Soil*, a documentary that explores soil as the foundation of life on earth. Upcoming events will be announced over the summer as The Outdoor Classroom Initiative launches its second year.

Once the home of the AT&T call center, Waldorf High School is a notable local example of sustainability in action. The school transformed the idle building in 2008 under the direction of David Bushnell, a Waldorf School parent and principal at 450 Architects, and became the first school in San Francisco to be awarded the coveted LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The school visually integrated the surrounding eucalyptus grove, used recycled and repurposed building materials, replaced windows to provide for air flow and sunlight, and installed water saving features such as low-flow toilets. The design of the school building itself is used in architecture, green building, and environmental studies classes.

The Outdoor Classroom Initiative is also active at Waldorf Grade School, located at Washington and Divisadero Streets. It facilitates outdoor education in such places as the Presidio and Point Reyes National Seashore. Info: sfwsoutdoorclassroom.blogspot.com



It is only a rumor that Paul Revere rode his horse through the neighborhood yelling, "The Taste of West Portal is Coming, The Taste of West Portal is Coming," ...

Mark your calendars for June 14 as the Avenue throws a party with food, merriment, clowns and a whole lot more. The West Portal Merchants Association has organized the first street fair to hit West Portal in years. From 10 AM to 4 PM the three blocks from Ulloa to 15th Avenue and West Portal Playground will be transformed into a potpourri of happenings and events. The list of events and things to participate in is amazing. There will be events for dogs and their humans; Interactive areas where you can participate in DIY arts and crafts and other demonstrations. Acoustic musicians and bands will be performing throughout the day, joined by circus performers such as clowns, jugglers, and others.

The SF Fire Department will have their trucks on site and attendees will be able to ride vintage MUNI Trains along West Portal Avenue.

The area merchants have also pulled all of the stops out with special pricing at many of the restaurants, and special discounts at many of the other retail stores.

So, don't delay and mark your calendars for the Taste of West Portal. For more details and information on the event visit the website: www.tasteofwestportal.com



Hats off to Beach Blanket Babylon... it's hard to believe that this year marks the 40th anniversary of the opening of Beach Blanket Babylon. With hundreds of character portrayals over the years and the most outrageous costumes and hats (or headdresses) the production is really a must see (at the Club Fugazi) for locals and tourists alike.

Got Compost? want to learn how... our friends over at the Garden for the Environment are hosting several on-site workshops at their facility at 7th Avenue and Lawton Street. On June 7th from 10 AM- 12PM they will be hosting a workshop on Urban Composting. There is no charge for this workshop. On June 14th they will be conducting another workshop focusing on Organic Vegetable Gardening locally. The demonstration also runs from 10Am -12PM at their facility and the cost is \$25 for non-members or \$15 for GFE members. For more information please visit www.gardenfortheenvironment.org

Local Memoir – Published – Out of Dublin...

Several years ago we featured an interview with a local writer, Ethel Rohan, and highlighted her novel, *Cut Through The Bone*. Now she has published a short memoir, *Out of Dublin*. Here is a description in her words. "I love to read and write fiction. Make believe is marvelous. In recent years, though, I've felt drawn to reading a great deal of memoir and non-fiction, and in turn found myself compelled to be more actual and confessional in my own writing.

The greatest dilemma I find with writing non-fiction—and there are several dilemmas—centers on exposing others and my anxiety around whose story is it to tell? I thought long and hard about whether or not to publish *Out of Dublin*, weighing the potential harm and gains, and I've decided, even as it makes my heart contract with fear, to put the work in the world.

After much agonizing, I've come to believe these stories in *Out of Dublin* are mine to tell, my version of relationships and happenings that are huge to me, that will stay with me always. I lived these stories, survived them, and have the right to tell them. I *need* to tell them. It is my hope that *Out of Dublin* can be a tiny platform to inspire others, especially victims of abuse, especially those grieving and hurting."

Out of Dublin can be downloaded at www.shebooks.net for \$2.99 to Kindle, Nook, tablet, smartphone, or computer.

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



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SF OPERA'S SHOWBOAT • JUN 1 - JUL 2, 2014



Photo: Scott Suchman, Washington National Opera

Music by Jerome Kern • Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II • Based on Show Boat by Edna Ferber

A true classic of American musical theater, this tale of life on the Mississippi from the 1880s to the 1920s is both a poignant love story and a powerful reminder of the bitter legacy of racism. Director Francesca Zambello's grand-scale production is "a triumph—a stylish, fast-paced and colorful show that had the capacity audience on its feet, cheering loud and long" (*Chicago Classical Review*). The magnificent Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein II score, which includes such classic songs as "Ol' Man River," "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man," "Make Believe" and "You Are Love," will sound glorious "under the authoritative baton of music-theater maestro John DeMain" (*Chicago Tribune*). "No one should miss it" (*Chicago Sun-Times*).

"One memorable song follows another, each an enduring thread in the fabric of American popular culture."
—*Chicago Tribune*

June

CALENDAR

EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

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

EVERY MON & TUE • JOB SEEKERS LAB

Mon 11 am–2pm & Tue 10 am–1 pm Internet-ready computers are available for independent work such as resume, preparing job applications and/or searching for jobs. Some staff assistance. Bring a flash drive. Main Library, 100 Larkin, 6th Fl.

EVERY TUES • QUE SYRAH HAPPY HOUR

Every Tue Happy Hour | 4–8 pm | Que Syrah Wine Bar. Take \$1 off each glass, 10% off each bottle (consumed on site). 230 West Portal Ave 731-7000

JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

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

FRIDAYS @ OFF THE GRID/FT. MASON

Every Fri | DJs 5-7:30 - Live Bands 7:30-10:30 pm
| Off the Grid/Over 32 food trucks and street food carts in a huge circle with a full bar and bands in the middle? Now that's a party. Ft. Mason Ctr. Marina Blvd.

EVERY WED • FREE E-BOOKS

Wed Jun 4, 11, 18, 25 | 1:30-2:30 pm | Do you have an eReader? You can check out more than 40,000 electronic books for free. Bring your Kindle, Nook, iPad or other eReader — we will show you how to use it to download books and other materials from the Library website. West Portal Branch Library, 190 Lenox Wy.

THU • TRANSPORTATION TOWN HALL

Thu Jun 5 | 6-7:30 pm | Learn more about Transportation 2030, infrastructure investment program proposed for November's general election ballot. SFMTA & DPW, St. Stephen Church 475 Eucalyptus Dr.

THU • PEOPLE OF PARKSIDE/SUNSET

Thu Jun 5 | 7 pm | Formerly Taraval Parkside Merchants Assn. Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave. 1st Thu each month, 269-7080 - www.sf-pops.com/

THU • AUTHOR KATHRYN MA

Thu Jun 5 | 7 pm | Kathryn Ma will read from her first novel *The Year She Left Us* that explores the promise and pain of adoption, assimilation, the debt we owe to others, and what we owe to ourselves. "A sweeping success, a standout from the many novels about Chinese assimilation..." (*Publisher's Weekly*) Bookshop West Portal, 80 W Portal Ave. 564-8080

TUE • COMPUTER SKILLS

Tue Jun 3, 10, 17, 24 | 1:15-2 pm | Come get help with setting up email accounts, word processing and other basic computer related tasks. Most Tuesdays at this time. Ask questions and learn the basics of using a computer! Main Library, 100 Larkin St.

WED • GWPNA

Wed Jun 4 | 7-9 pm | Greater West Portal Neighborhood Assn, West Portal Playground Clubhouse, 131 Lenox Way, 1st Wed each month.

SAT • 4TH ANNUAL SOY & TOFU FESTIVAL



Sat Jun 7 | 11am-5 pm | The only Tofu festival in the west coast (and perhaps the country). Free samples, a variety Soy and Tofu booths, street food vendors and others), education demos, Taiko ensembles - musical performances. Japantown/Post/Buchanan

SUN • GREAT HIWAY-SUNDAY STREETS

Sun Jun 8 | 11 am - 4 pm | Walk, jog, run, skate, bike, play, and dance—explore Great Hiway. Many stops along each route will feature dancing lessons, yoga, aerobics/Zumba, fun activities for kids, skating, several live music bands, etc. Lasts 5 hours exactly, and will end promptly at 4pm. Have fun! Great Hiway from Wawona to Lincoln.

TUE • AUTHOR GARY KUMIYA

Tue Jun 10 | 7:30 pm | Gary Kumiya's new book, *Cool Gray City of Love*, a collection of 49 "verses" about 49 sites in SF—from the Tenderloin to the soaring sea cliffs at Lands End. He'll tell some of the fascinating stories. The Old Mint, 88 Fifth St. (Mission), SF Historical Society.

WED • STARRING SAN FRANCISCO

Wed Jun 11 | 7 -8:30 pm | Star of hundreds of movies and tv series, some famous, others obscure, from Eric von Stroheim's 1924 Greed to Dirty Harry to Zodiac. Jim Van Buskirk, co-author of Celluloid San Francisco (and former SFPL librarian), uses film stills and clips to demonstrate the Bay Area's rich cinematic history. Merced Branch Library/ 155 Winston Dr.

THU • DRIVING ELECTRIC IN SF

Thu Jun 12 | 12:30 pm | How is SF leading the charge to install infrastructure and preparing for its future? Join experts for a discussion of the state of EV. SPUR, 645 Mission St. \$10.

THU • DIST COALITION MEETING

Thu Jun 12 | 7-9 pm | Sunset Dist Coalition meets 2nd Thu each month. Info: 586.8103 or ssual@sbc-global.net Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave.

SAT • GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

Sat June 14 | 10 am -12 pm | Its summer! Which means one thing- fog! This month will focus on

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SAT • SF HOUSING EXPO

Sat June 14 | 11 am -5 pm | Free information and resources for homebuyers, homeowners and tenants. Local services, programs and financial tools to help achieve and maintain affordable housing in one of the most expensive real estate markets in the nation. Info: Catalina Valencia at 202-5464 or Catalina@home-ownerships.org. St. Marys Cathedral, 1111 Gough St.

TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

Tue Jun 17 | 7 pm | Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 3rd Tue of the month. Taraval Community Room, located at 2345 - 24th Ave. 759-3100.

THU • WESTSIDE WATERSHEDS MEETING

Thu Jun 19 | 5:30-7:30 pm | Sewer system challenges in three Westside Watersheds: Richmond, Sunset and Lake Merced: localized flooding, aging infrastructure, seismic safety and reliability, and water quality in the Bay and Ocean. SF County Fair Bldg., GGPark, 9th Ave at Lincoln.

THU • FACEBOOK FOR JOB-SEEKERS

Thu Jun 19 | 1:30-4 pm | Learn to create a Facebook page, or update the one you've got! Join us for a hands-on class where you can learn the basics for a standout page. 1:30-2: Create an account; 2-4 Upgrade your page. Main Library, 100 Larkin St.

THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

Thu Jun 26 | 7 pm | Meets last Thu each month. SF State Warriors and Recology are invited. This meeting is at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street.

SAT • SHARP

Mon Jun 30 | 7pm | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People. Last Mon of each month - sharpsf.com for details. 1736 9th Ave @ Moraga.

MON • CENTRAL COUNCIL

Mon Jun 30 | 7:30 pm | West of Twin Peaks Central Council meets to discuss topics of interest to Westside residents. Meets the last Monday each month. Forest Hills Clubhouse, 381 Magellan Ave.

Local event? editor@westsideobserver.com

Priority: Westside Events

At the Movies / By Don Lee Miller

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 2 — IMAX

Spider-Man/Peter Parker: Andrew Garfield tries to comfort his old friend, Harry Osborn/Green Goblin: Dane DeHaan when he loses his dad. Peter and Gwen: Emma Stone renew their friendship as she helps him infiltrate Oscorp, where he assumes all the villainy against New York City is centered. The large supporting cast includes: Max Dillon / Electro: Jamie Foxx, Donald Menken: Colm Feore, Aleksei: Paul Giamatti, and Felicia: Felicity Jones. Aunt May: Sally Field gets furious when Peter launders his suit and the rest of the wash has red and blue stains; he blames it on washing his American flag. If big pictures are your bag, see it on the big screen. Directed by Marc Webb, with a lots of action screenplay by Alex Kurtzman, Roberto Orci, and Jeff Pinkner Sequences of sci-fi action/ violence.

FADING GIGOLO

Fiorovante: John Turturro (who also wrote and directed FG) finds his friend Murray: Woody Allen is right: there is money in sex. Dermatologist Dr. Parker: Sharon Stone isn't satisfied with her husband and seeks outside gratification. She has a penthouse and money to burn. Fiorovante can now pay his bills and then some. Her girl friend, sexy Selima: Sofia Vergara, likes threesomes. Amish Dovi: Liev Schreiber feels he's responsible for the neighborhood morals and follows Fiorovante, creating problems. This very funny film could easily have been a Woody Allen product. Profanity. Some sexual content. Brief nudity.

GODZILLA

In 1999 in the Philippines, scientists Dr. Serizawa: Ken Watanabe and his assistant Vivienne Graham: Sally Hawkins get the distress call for a nuclear plant meltdown, incorrectly diagnosed, really a Godzilla-beast robbing a rural power plant of all its power. The focus is on a married pair of nuclear power facility workers, David: Bryan Cranston and his wife, Sandra: Juliette Binoche (could she have been that desperate for one-day's work?), with a pre-pubescent son. Years later, the grown son, U.S. Navy explosives expert, Ford Brody: Aaron Taylor-Johnson is married to Elle: Elizabeth Olsen with their own son, Sam. Ford gets the call for help when an electrical failure occurs. Elle is a San Francisco nurse who watches the skyline being rearranged. Admiral William Stenz: David Straithairn takes charge of the mess. By the time Godzilla reaches Las Vegas, he's recharged to 300 feet high! Gareth Edwards directs his \$160-million budget with more flair for the destruction than for the quiet family-in-peril dramatics written by Max Borenstein. Had A T-J been handsome or more interesting, it would have helped greatly; he's really dull. The monsters do make up for the basically silly tale about rampaging critters. Intense scenes of

massive destruction, mayhem and creature violence.

THE IMMIGRANT

A Polish immigrant in Jan. 1921 at Ellis Island, Ewa: Marion Cotillard has her sister Magda kept in confinement for six months to see if her cold turns to TB. Bruno Weiss: Joaquin Phoenix presents a female pageant of several costumed women who are actually being pimped to the highest male bidder for their services. Bruno has rescued Ewa and is now her "employer" and demands she follow his bidding to the tee as he forces her into prostitution. She is found by his cousin, Orlando, the Magician: Jeremy Renner, this time. He and Bruno are enemies who want to kill each other. James Gray directs and shares writing credit with Ric Menello. Marion turns in another Oscar-worthy performance as a character of many emotions. Sexual content. Nudity, Profanity.

LOCKE

It's a tense 85 minutes accompanying Ivan Locke: Tom Hardy as he drives to London while on his phone trying to solve his personal problems as well as all those re the cement-pouring on the construction job. There's the scared lover Bethan: voice of Olivia Colman, who's in hospital about to have his child; his wife, Katrina: v.o. Ruth Wilson with whom he decides it's time to tell about his indiscretion; and his two sons. Then there's the business: the furious boss and the overwhelmed assistant, Donald, he deserted to take care of the family crisis. Steven Knight's direction and Hardy's intensity make for a riveting film experience. Profanity throughout.

MILLION-DOLLAR ARM

Sports agent J.B.: Jon Hamm has lost a major client as the stack of bills-due mounts. He rents his cottage to Brenda: Lake Bell. He stages an unusual campaign for pro-baseball recruits ... in India. Baseball pro, Ray: Alan Arkin, hired to assist J.B. would rather sleep than work. After a lengthy selection process touring India, the two finalists are Rinku: Saraj Sharma and Dinesh: Madhur Mittal. The second half, back in the States, is the training, then the show-off for a selection of pro-teams. Tom House: Bill Paxton, with the Pittsburgh Pirates makes the final choice. Along the way, J.B. and Brenda get cozy. Director Craig Gillespie presents this true story from Thomas McCarthy's enjoyable screenplay. Mild language. Some sexual content.

NEIGHBORS

New parents, Mac: Seth Rogen and Kelly: Rose Byrne, find the house next door has been purchased by a beer-guzzling, party-throwing fraternity. The senior president, Teddy: Zac Efron and his right hand Pete: Dave Franco believe in a never-ending bacchanal. Scoonie: Christopher Mintz-Plase even has sex in the bushes. Some of

the one-too-many jokes are funny; some just dirty. It gets rough when Teddy loses his sense-of-humor: used condoms on the front lawn. Dean Gladstone: Lisa Kudrow puts the frat on thin ice warning. Take your ear-plugs for this one; the noise here will annoy the audience as much as it does the Radner family. How much can one expect of a movie with a character named Assjuice? Directed by Nicholas Stoller and written by Andrew J. Cohen and Brendhan O'Brien. Pervasive profanity. Strong crude and sexual content. Graphic nudity. Drug use throughout.

UNDER THE SKIN

Set in Scotland, this is a weird tale of a young seductress, Scarlett Johanssen, who has one-night (or shorter) stands with men she preys upon. She takes them into a sort-of warehouse where they walk behind her, both disrobing along the path, with occasional arousing kisses until finally the men are walking into water that gets increasingly deeper. About this time, the audience realizes it is a sci fi adventure, but there is much to learn about her character. Her handler, Paul Brannigan, rides a black motorcycle and wears black leather, finishes anything she reluctantly doesn't conclude. Expect a haunting cinema experience. For moviegoers who complain there's never anything different on screen! *Under the Skin* is directed by Jonathan Glazer who co-wrote the screenplay with Walter Campbell, based on Michel Faber's novel. Full frontal male and female nudity. Men with erections. Sexual content. Some violence. Profanity.

X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST -- 3D

In a dystopian future with only a few remaining mutants, Kitty Pryde: Ellen Page leads those trying to hold off the Sentinels, giant, mutant-hunting robots created by the evil Dr. Bolivar Trask: Peter Dinklage. Thanks to the DNA derived from shapeshifter Mystique: Jennifer Lawrence, the Sentinels can adapt to the individual powers of the surviving mutants. Magneto: Ian McKellan, Professor Xavier: Patrick Stewart, Wolverine: Hugh Jackman, and Storm: Halle Berry decide their best odds for surviving are for Kitty to send Wolverine back to 1973 before Mystique killed Trask at the Paris Peace Accords. This had rallied the public to rise against mutants and to capture Mystique and experiment on her. Wolverine's challenge is to convince the younger Xavier: James McAvoy and Magneto: Michael Fassbinder to work together when they hate each other. First, Magneto must be rescued from a prison 100 stories beneath the Pentagon. To tell more would spoil surprise after surprise in this clever screenplay by Simon Kinberg directed brilliantly by Bryan Singer. Obviously, with such a huge cast some have less screen-time than others. Sequences of intense sci-fi violence/action. Some suggestive material. Nudity. Profanity.



At the Theater / Flora Lynn Isaacson and Linda Ayres-Frederick

Seminar

Seminar by Theresa Rebeck, directed by Amy Glazer, is a comedy about four aspiring novelists who are paying \$500 a week to take a writing seminar with a famous international author. According to Artistic Director Bill English, "the word 'seminar' suggests a classroom—supposedly an environment that is structured to be a safe place to learn—but in Theresa Rebeck's world, *Seminar* is far from safe."

Set in present day New York City, *Seminar* follows Kate (Lauren English), an aspiring novelist who overcompensates trying to prove her writing abilities, and Martin (James Wagner) who is struggling financially and afraid to show anyone his work. Douglas (Patrick Russell) is the nephew of a famous playwright from Harvard. He is a good writer but a bit of a "name dropper." Izzy (Natalie Mitchell) writes well from the start. She figures at the center of the romantic conflict within the group. Their professor, Leonard (Charlie Shaw Robinson)'s career as a writer has been legendary. *Seminar* takes place in Kate's Upper West Side apartment, handsomely designed by Bill English. The play captures aspects of their lives including their writing, romance, conflict, and the future.

This play is more driven by characters than by plot, but full of satire and quite entertaining. Leonard the Professor, an amazing role for Charles Shaw Robinson, who brings out his character's humanity in every moment.

Amy Glazer keeps the action moving at a crisp pace, accentuating Rebeck's comedy. The costumes by Abra Ber-man are imaginative and appropriate for the characters.

Seminar is a fascinating presentation of the truth about human dynamics and writers' fragile egos. The play runs April 20-June 14, 2014 at the SF Playhouse, 2nd Fl., Kensington Park Hotel at 450 Post Street (Mason/Powell).

Tues-Thur: 7 pm; Fri-Sat: 8 pm; Sat: 3 pm; and select Sundays (May 18, June 1 and June 8) 2 pm Info/tickets 415-677-9596 or go to www.sfplayhouse.org.

Coming up next at SF Playhouse will be *Into the*

Woods by James Lapine (book) and Stephen Sondheim (music and lyrics), directed by Susi Damilano, June 24-September 6, 2014. **Flora Lynn Isaacson**

Other Desert Cities

In Ross Valley Players' 2012 Pulitzer Prize Nominee for Best Drama, *Other Desert Cities* by Jon Robin Baitz and directed by Phoebe Moyer, the play's name refers to a guide sign on eastbound Interstate 10 in California, which indicates that the freeway is headed towards Indio, and "other desert cities" (the rest of the Coachella Valley).

It's Christmas 2004 holiday, when the family of Polly (Ellen Brooks) and Lyman Wyatt (Dick Martin) gather in Palm Springs. Their daughter Brooke Wyeth (Jennifer Gregory) returns home after six years. Brooke's brother, Trip Wyeth (Peter Warden) is also present. Polly's sister Silda Grauman (Kristine Ann Lowry), a recovering alcoholic, is also visiting on a break from rehab. Polly and Lyman are Republicans while Silda is liberal. The sisters wrote a series of MGM comedies in the 1960's. The wonderful set design by Ronald Krempetz is of an upscale, easy living, desert style living room.

When daughter Brooke announces she is about to publish a memoir dredging up a pivotal and tragic event in the family's history—a wound they don't want to have reopened—the suicide of her late brother Henry, who had been involved in a radical underground subculture. The holiday reunion is thrown into turmoil as family members struggle to come to terms with their past and realizes some secrets cannot stay buried forever.

The cast could not be better under Phoebe Moyer's firm hand. The actors never strike a false note. In their speech rhythms and body language with one another, their relaxed intimacy or wary distress, their camaraderie or distance, their easy banter or silent hostile regard, they are unmistakably a family.

Other Desert Cities runs at Ross Valley Players May 15-June 15. Thur: 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat: 8 pm, and Sun: 2 pm At the Barn Theatre, 30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., Ross. Info/tickets: 415-456-9553, x 1 or www.rossvalleyplayers.com.

Coming up next at Ross Valley Players will be *Old Money* by Wendy Wasserstein, directed by Kim Bromley, July 18-August 17, 2014. **Flora Lynn Isaacson**

Much Ado About Nothing

Much Ado About Nothing at African-American Shakespeare Company is definitely noteworthy. Under the expertly imaginative hand of Artistic Director L. Peter Callender, this rich plot of twists and turns that explores courting and romance gains momentum from beginning to end. Set in post WWII, the music of Ella Fitzgerald enriches the sharp Shakespearean



Linda Ayres-Frederick



Flora Lynn Isaacson

Cont. p. 14

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absence. Slamming on the brake may stop you, but where? Especially if you are driving at night without lights.

The ascending step rate structure has other problems in the context of offending Proposition 218. It appears that higher tier customers are subsidizing lower tier customers. Without a vote this appears to be a new and un-voted approved user fee. To balance required revenues the second tier would possibly be above the cost of production. This is not allowed under Proposition 218.

Rate relief for less fortunate citizens is a worthy cause. It should come from non-SFPUC rate sources. If the SFPUC wants to embed rate relief in its rate structure this program must be put to a vote.

During the 1987 – 1992 drought, California utilities significantly raised rates and customers responded by large decreases in demand. These changed demand patterns remained after the drought ended. This does not surprise: The first law of demand is that higher prices will reduce demand, and the second law is that the longer a higher price remains in effect, the more elastic the demand (substitutes) will become. An inelastic demand is where a one percent (part thereof) increase in price will induce a less than one percent cut back in use, meaning total revenues after the price increase will be greater than before. If the demand becomes elastic, then a one percent increase in price will lead to a greater than one percent decrease in volumes demanded. This will mean that after the price increase, total revenues will have decreased.

A sustained rate spike for water, sewer, and power services that could shift aggregate consumer preferences

from inelastic to elastic would mean the revenues of the SFPUC would fall below the cost of providing services. The SFPUC would be forced to cut production costs, and if these costs efforts were not sufficient then it would have to look at reneging/deferring on part of its immense debt service.

The most effective and fair way to transmit rate changes is by individual metering. The consumer uses, the consumer pays. In addition to individual meters, San Francisco has many master-meter connections. A master-meter connection is where there is one meter with multiple users attached. These type arrangements are beggar-thy-neighbor systems, contrary to conservation goals.

SF has a large number of people under rent control, many with utilities embedded in their original leases. The rents and SFPUC utility-costs have had differential escalation rates. This problem can only be handled fairly with individual meters with an escalated credit for the original utility component of the rent. Master meter owners who re-price SFPUC charges (using averaging based on other criteria) to their tenants may offend Proposition 218, and be setting themselves up as an investor owned utility that should be regulated by the CPUC.

The SFPUC should encourage conservation, both through pricing and moral suasion. Subsidies for user-relief or other programs should not be funded out of rate revenues. San Francisco does need an individual rate-payer advocate who cannot and will not succumb to the siren call of the politicians, special interests, etc., and just get on about the job.

Brian Browne was coauthor of 2002 Prop P and former member of the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee.

Theater (Cont. from p. 13)

comedy. Callender's cast is fearless dealing with the serious tones of honor and shame that are interspersed between the more exuberant aspects of love. Nowhere will you find a more delightfully sassy Beatrice (Leontyne Mbele-Mbong) who meets her match in Benedick (Ryan Vincent Anderson). Their sparring wit contrasts the innocent puppy dog love of Claudio (Twon Marcel) and his lovely young Hero (Danielle Doyle). The story of the two pairs of lovers is enhanced by an ensemble that features solid performances from Don Pedro (Kelvyn Mitchell), Don John (Jim Gessner) and Leonato (Dwight Dean Mahabir) to name a few. Tom Segal's Choreography and Maureen "Mo" Stones's Costumes add their talents to give this Much Ado even more pizzazz.

AASC is this year's worthy recipient of the Paine-Knickerbocker Award by the SF Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle. Named for the former theatre critic of The SF Chronicle, this Award is presented to an organization that has made a continuing contribution to Bay Area Theatre.

Much Ado About Nothing completes AASC's 2013/14 Season. With such an array of talent, their next season promises to be equally exciting. Located at Burial Clay Theatre in the African American Art & Culture Complex, 762 Fulton St., SF (near Webster) free parking. Tickets: Box Office or Brown Paper Tickets 1-800-838-3006. www.african-americanshakes.org. *Linda Ayres-Frederick*

The Crucible

Set in 17th century Salem, this classic story of individuals standing up against the corruption of their society was Miller's allegory for the witch-hunts of the 1950's House Un-American Activities Committee led by Senator Joe McCarthy. The Crucible shows the persecution and state-sponsored murder of twenty persons by their friends and neighbors for alleged affiliations with the supernatural world. It also shows how power in the wrong hands can be wielded and opposed in any community—an

issue that remains to this day.

As a work of theatre, *The Crucible* is one of Miller's best examples of his mastery of subtext. And while this production as a whole is not done in a style that demonstrates Miller's genius, there are many elements that remain praiseworthy.

It is always difficult to know whether artistic choices are directorial. One in particular is the surprising lack of subtlety in the portrayal of Deputy Governor Danforth (Paul Jennings). A man in a position of power has no need to prove it by shouting angrily. There is nothing more frightening than such a man who benevolently imparts a despicable point of view.

Equally confusing is why if both Proctor (Peter Townley) and Goody Proctor (Megan Briggs) repeatedly mention the emotional chill in their home, she would greet her husband open-heartedly with a welcoming smile. In a society where dancing is considered a sin, casual touching and shouting strike false notes, and feel completely antithetical to the culture.

The Crucible directed by Stuart Bousel also presents challenges in the trial scenes when the young girls demonstrate hysteria. This alternates with dialogue among the judges which dialogue unnecessarily gets completely lost. Picking up cues without talking over others can build in volume to a more dramatic effect.

In the majority of scenes, the ensemble works well together keeping the action apace with notable performances by Reverend John Hale (Nicholas Trengove), Goody Putnam (Melissa Clason), Ezekiel Cheever (Vince Faso), Rebecca Nurse (Carole Swann), Francis Nurse (Richard Wenzel) Mary Warren (Alisha Ehrlich) and Giles Corey (Ron Talbot). As always at CMT the sound design (Liz Ryder) is stellar.

Even with these reservations, *The Crucible* is an American classic worth seeing. Thurs-Sat 8pm Sun 7pm thru June 15. Gough Street Playhouse 1620 Gough St, SF www.custom-made.org *Linda Ayres-Frederick*

New Agreement Options



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Do you have a pinched nerve? We can help.

Dear friend,

It's hard to believe, I know, but it's true. Last year more Americans were killed by prescription drugs than by guns, AIDS, suicides and terrorists combined...But we'll get to that in a minute.

Let me start by explaining the photo in this letter. You know when I meet people in town they usually say, "Oh yeah, I know you, you are Doctor Meakim. You have been on the corner of Beach and Jones for years....." Well, that's me. I'm also the woman hugging her niece at the jersey shore in the picture.

17 years ago something happened that changed my life forever. I was a young woman living in Philadelphia when it happened. I was driving with a friend when she missed a stop sign and rammed into the side of another car. We were all shaken up. The police were called and we all went to the hospital. No one was bleeding, so the doctors took some x-rays of our neck, gave us pain meds and sent us on our way. The next day I woke up with pain everywhere and it just kept getting worse. For years I tried everything that I could find. For an escape from the pain, I went to medical doctors, physical therapists, acupuncturists, I tried special pillows, and anything I thought might help. I spent a lot of time and money. Along the way I had two more car accidents and the pain kept getting worse and worse. I had developed fibromyalgia, neck pain, mid-back pain and low-back pain with tingling and numbness down my right arm and leg. I was scared that something was really wrong with me. This could not be normal. I was only 33 years old and felt like I was 100. That is when someone told me about a chiropractor that they thought could help. As a matter of fact, after the first person told me about him, two more people did that same week. So I made an appointment with the chiropractor. Thank goodness that they took the time to help me! I went to his office where he asked me about my problems, did an exam, and took some x-rays of my head and back. After that he pointed out where my nerves were pinched and adjusted them. The adjustment was so light I barely felt it. I began crying as I felt the pain leave my body for the first time in years. It may sound strange, but I was so happy and grateful for the relief that I still thank him every day! After that, I knew what I had to do. I had to become a chiropractor, and that's how it happened!

I have adjusted many children within the first 15 minutes after birth. They obviously didn't complain of neck pain or back pain; I adjust them to keep them healthy... as with all the hundreds of children I care for in my office.

You see, it's not normal for kids to get ear infections, asthma, allergies or a number of other illnesses we see clear up in our office everyday.

When the nervous system is working correctly your internal resistance and healing powers are enhanced.

A healthy family does NOT rely on medication to make them well. My family does not turn to medication to seek health and we don't have a "medicine chest" in our home. Due to years of advertising saturation from the pharmaceutical companies most Americans do seek health from outside- in and most families have a "medicine chest" filled with an average of 16 different medications.

In an average year, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports over 1.5 million hospitalizations due to medication. Last year the WHO reported 350,000 deaths due to medication people took... and 160,000 were when the drugs were prescribed correctly. More people died last year from medication than at Pearl Harbor and Vietnam. Amazing huh?

If drugs make people well, then those who take the most should be the healthiest, but this simply isn't the case.



Many people are beginning to understand that health comes from within. This is why chiropractic helps so many people. You see, your body can heal itself. Your body doesn't need any help; it just can't have any interference. With chiropractic, we don't add anything to the body or take anything from it. We find interference in the nervous system and remove it thus enhancing the healing capacities of the body.

We get tremendous results... it really is as simple as that.

For the past eight years, people from San Francisco and the surrounding area have come to see me with their pinched nerve problems.

• Headaches • Migraines • Chronic Pain • Neck pain • Shoulder/arm pain • Whiplash from car accidents • Backaches • Numbness in limbs • Athletic injuries just to name a few.

Here is what some of your neighbors have said:

"I had back pain for 15 plus years and two back operations. Now I play tennis, sit at my computer and enjoy an active pain free life! Thank you Dr. Meakim!" — A. McGrath

"All possible medicines and doctors, you made a miracle taking away my pain!! I am a happy wife and mother again!" — L. Igudesman

"I have had chronic neck, shoulder and arm pain for the last 4 years. After seeing Dr. Meakim I can now twist off caps, button/zip my own pants and there is no longer a need for me to ice my arm in the morning and night! I feel more energetic, and can move my arm and neck pain free!" — C. Brubaker

Now...Find out for yourself and benefit from an AMAZING OFFER- Look, It should not cost you an arm and a leg to correct your health. You are going to write a check to someone for your health expenses, you may as well write a lesser one for chiropractic. AniI know you're smart. You want to get to the cause of the problem, and not just cover it up with drugs. When you are one of the first 20 people to call and schedule a new patient exam (by October 24th) you will receive that entire exam for \$37. That's with a consultation with the doctor, examination and x-rays... the whole ball of wax, and there are no hidden fees. But call right away because we expect to be flooded with calls as this exam costs \$317. Again there are only 20 of these slots so don't miss out. I hope that there's no misunderstanding about the quality of care just because I have a lower exam fee. You'll get great care at a great fee. I just offer that low exam fee to help more people who need care.

My qualifications:

I am a graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic, I have published articles in leading chiropractic journals and taught chiropractic to chiropractors! I've been helping your neighbors in San Francisco since 2004. I've been entrusted to take care of tiny babies to athletes that you may know.

My assistant is Karen and she is friendly and ready to assist you to set up an evaluation. Our clinic is both friendly and warm and we try our best to make you feel at home. We have wonderful service at an exceptional fee. Our clinic is called San Francisco Family Spinal Care and it is at 505 Beach Street (we are at the corner of Beach and Jones on the edge of North Beach). Our phone number is 415-771-7071. Call today for an appointment. We can help you. Thank you. — Dr. Christina Meakim D.C.

P.S. When accompanied by the first, I am also offering the second family member this same examination for only \$17.

P.P.S. Can you imagine not having to wait at a doctor's office? Well, your time is as valuable as mine. That's why we have a no-wait policy. You will be seen within minutes of your appointment.

P.P.P.S. Of course, all people respond differently to care.

The Real Estate Answer Man / By Kevin Birmingham



Q: Who owns the rights to photos on the MLS? Can an agent reuse a photo from a home's previous sale?—Emily

A: Photos published to the MLS belong to whoever took them. If a photographer was used, the listing agent is given a license from the photographer at that time to publish those photos to the MLS. It would be a violation of the San Francisco Association of Realtors standards of practice to reuse photos from a previous sale for this reason, not to mention that these photos may misrepresent the current condition of the home.

Q: What is a TIC and how is it different from a condo?—Carla

A: A Tenancy in Common is a form of alternative ownership that is increasingly popular with San Francisco's high property values. In a TIC, multiple individuals pool their resources to buy a property in its entirety. All members of a TIC own a fractional amount of the entire building based on their investment, but their right to occupy the building is based on written agreement between the other owners, rather than an express deed. TICs tend to be cheaper than condos due to this complicated system of ownership, and because loans are traditionally harder to obtain. In a condo, owners are only limited by the regulations of the governing Home Owner Association.

Q: What is the best way to figure out the square footage of my home?—Yosh

A: The most accurate method of determining the square footage of a home is to hire a certified appraiser, who can perform an inspection and measure the exact size of the property. Most real estate agents and title companies, however, use what is recorded in the county's tax records. Although sometimes this figure will not account for extra rooms, especially if they were built without permits, the figure is often a reasonable enough estimate.

Ask local real estate expert Kevin Birmingham: kevin@kevinbirmingham.com

Second Thoughts / By Jack Kaye



Evolution and Free Will

Most people who read this column would admit to believing in the theory of evolution and in Man's free will. The theory of evolution posits that evolution occurs through natural selection with the survival of the fittest. Every religion, especially Western ones, insist that even though there is an all knowing, all powerful G-d in control of the universe, every person has free will. Free will is described as the ability of individuals to freely choose their path in every decision they make, while some consider free will Man's greatest vanity.

We believe in evolution and free will until they involve real people or the things we love.

Yes, there is the survival of the fittest, but every human and most animal species should survive, regardless. We believe that any human death before age 100 is a tragedy. The unborn child who has major health complications should not be allowed to pass away but should even get surgery while still in the mother to prevent a still birth. No cost should be spared. A human life is at stake.

If a person sustains a totally debilitating injury, or is so advanced in age that s/he will never function independently and can never contribute to society, we must spend whatever necessary to make the person as comfortable as possible for as long as possible. Every human life is precious.

If a teenager gets killed after trying to kill someone else, it is a tragedy and the killer is at fault even though it was self defense. The victim's parents are due damages from someone with deep pockets. No young person should die, no matter what.

If an animal species is facing extinction because it cannot adapt to changes in its environment, the environment should be changed to allow the species to survive. Every species is essential to the planet's survival.

If a business can no longer sustain itself with costs exceeding revenues and faces bankruptcy, we mourn the loss after all efforts to save it fail.

If some people lose their jobs for any reason, they should be entitled to every possible safety net to keep them going for as long as it takes. Everyone must survive economically.

If people's lives are threatened because of the loss of functioning in an essential organ or a painful joint or a missing a limb, every effort must be exerted to fix or replace the damaged part. Soon we will be able to replace deadened heart tissue with our own stem cells. We will be able to give hearing to those who have lost it, sight to those who cannot see, as well as replace any body part. We want everyone to survive regardless of their fitness.

And then there is free will. Free will means that we are each responsible for our actions because we choose them freely. But there are many allowed exceptions.

If a person is homeless because of mental illness and/or substance abuse, we realize that it is not that person's fault. We feel that we should do whatever we can to help

the homeless and we tolerate whatever they do, no matter how unpleasant, because they can't help themselves, they have no free will. (And yet we offer them homeless shelters only if they freely choose to stay in them.)

If people come to our land without documentation, invitation or permission because they are poor and see no future in their native country, we say that they are not to blame. They had no choice. We understand that they might drive without license or insurance, that they might purchase fake I.D. or use someone else's Social Security number to get work. What choice do they have? All they want is to work and earn a living. If they commit crimes or have vehicular accidents, we realize that their situation forced them to do what they did, they had no free will.

If people live a certain lifestyle, it is said that they had no choice, they were born that way. Some are said to have known since an early age that they were different. Some realize much later in life that they actually were born to be different. In any case, the argument is that since they have no free will as to what lifestyle to choose, all choices should be considered equal.

In a sense, all these rationales have some basis.

Humans might be the only species to know that its finite mortality will someday result in death. We know, if only instinctively, that the force of entropy will cause us suffering and eventually end our lives, which are in constant battle against this force. We want to win this battle and hate the fact that we must ultimately lose. No wonder we try to postpone our final defeat and that of people and things we love or need.

And on one level, everything is predetermined. If there is an all-knowing and powerful G-d, then there can be no free will; He knows what we will do in advance. If we are each part infinite or part of the infinite, there is no free choice; everything is just a piece of a much larger interdependent pattern. If we are mainly products of our genetic makeup and our early childhood experiences, over which we had no control, then how can we be said to act freely? If we are bound by the structure of our brains which predispose us to different thoughts, feelings and resultant actions, can we be held responsible for our actions?

So should we believe in free will and evolution?

What choice do we have?

Our survival is at stake.

Then & Now

CONTEST

Identify the location of one of our Remember When photos and win a prize!

Prizes to be announced

Send your observations about the date or perspective and a corresponding photo (a smart phone shot is perfect) of the present view of any of our published old photos (www.westsideobserver.com/remember.html).

We'll choose the most useful entry and share the info with the SF History Center —

AND YOU'LL WIN A PRIZE!

Send to:
editor@westsideobserver.com



Parkmerced February 28, 1945, By Permission San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

BRAIN FUD

The “Zero to Ten Pyramid”

Starting with a one-letter word, add a letter and rearrange the letters to produce the next word. A clue is given for each...good luck!

Maybe your car can do 0 to 60 in 10 seconds, but can you do 0 to 10 in 60 seconds? Get out the stopwatch! This one is a little easier than the previous ones ..

1. Roman one

2. Ratio of ‘ circumference : diameter’ for circles

3. Edible homonym of #2

4. Long poem or film about heroic deeds

5. ‘There’s a _____ on his head’ (a reward)

6. Give the main points of a story

7. Contents of Cordon Bleu book

8. Money taken in from sales

9. Likely to cause the most unpleasant sensations of fear

10. Particular, belonging separately to each

2. Pl

1. I

Answer

3. Pie

4. Epic

5. Price

6. Pies

7. Recipes

8. Receipts

9. Creepiest

10. Respective

WANTED!

Vintage photographs and stories of San Francisco’s moving houses!

Do you have archives of old photographs or vintage postcards? Are you knowledgeable about your local history? Would you like to help preserve your community’s history?

Local resident Diane Donovan is currently compiling a photographic history of San Francisco and is looking for your help! She is assembling historic images of San Francisco’s moving houses over the decades and the stories that go with them to include in an upcoming book to be published by Arcadia Publishing, the nation’s leading publisher of local and regional history. To share your photographs and stories, please contact Diane Donovan at 707-795-9523 or donovan@sonic.net.

OPEN LATE

By Julie Casson

Taste of West Portal (Cont. from p. 3)

“It’s meant to be a fun, interactive day,” Scott-Wigens said.

The City’s Invest in Neighborhoods program is providing money for the event through a grant to the merchant’s association. The grant is a one-time amount of \$10,000, which is meant to help the neighborhood establish funding for the event next year. Organizers hope to establish the Taste of West Portal as an annual event.

“Mayor Lee’s Invest in Neighborhoods initiative is thrilled to support projects like “Taste of West Portal” that promote, beautify, and activate neighborhoods across our city,” said Joaquín Torres, deputy director, Office of Economic and Workforce Development. “It’s just one great example of the

partnerships we are building to revitalize our commercial districts and ensure that neighborhoods, such as West Portal, continue to thrive for years to come.”

Organizers are encouraging visitors to take MUNI to the event. This year, West Portal Avenue will be open to cars and MUNI trains. In the future, the street may close.

“It’s designed to be a fun Saturday outing where people can engage with local merchants and neighbors,” Scott-Wigens said. “It is ... an opportunity for people attending to experience the flavor or essence of our special neighborhood.”

Keith Burbank is a local journalist.

Sudoku-fun!

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

Answer:
The answer appears below.

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

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The Secret to a Bountiful Garden and Beautiful Landscape

By Melinda Myers

Spring is here and the garden centers are filled with beautiful plants. Many of us are making our way to one or more of our favorite garden shops. We leave with a car full of beautiful flowers and healthy vegetables with hopes of a bountiful harvest.

But before that first plant goes into the ground, make sure your soil is properly prepared. Though not the most glamorous part of gardening, it is the first and most important step in creating a beautiful and productive garden.

Start by adding some compost, aged manure or a garden soil labeled for flowers and vegetables to this year's shopping list. You'll need about two 2-cubic-ft bags of soil additive to cover 25 square feet of garden two inches deep. Calculate your garden size by measuring the length times the width, so you are sure to purchase all you need.



Once the car is unloaded the fun begins. Work the soil when it is moist, but not wet. A simple test can help with this. Grab a handful of soil and gently squeeze. Then gently tap it with your finger. If it breaks into smaller pieces, it is ready to work. If it stays in a wet ball, wait for the soil to dry slightly before digging in. Otherwise you will compact the soil, reduce drainage and create clods and crusty soil that you'll be fighting all season long.

Start by digging several inches of compost, aged manure, or a product like Schultz garden soil for flowers and vegetables into the top 12 inches of soil. These materials improve drainage in heavy clay soils and increase water-holding ability in sandy soils.

Spread the organic matter over the soil surface of the garden bed. Use a shovel or rototiller to blend the organic matter into the soil. Rake the area smooth and level or make a slight crown in the middle of the bed. Crowning the bed slightly can increase visual impact of flowers and can help keep soil in the bed and out of the surrounding lawn or mulch.

Don't skip this step even if you applied these materials last year. Yearly applications of organic matter continue to build quality soil and improve your gardening results.

Apply the type and amount of fertilizer recommended by your soil test report. If this information is not available use about three pounds of a low nitrogen slow release fertilizer for every 100 square feet of garden. Check the back of your fertilizer bag for more details.

Once the soil is prepared it is time to plant. Carefully slide your transplants out of their container. Gently loosen any circling roots. Plant flowers and vegetables in the prepared planting bed then water thoroughly.

Mulch the soil surface with a one to two inch layer of pine straw, evergreen needles, shredded leaves or other organic material. These help suppress weeds, conserve moisture and improve the soil as they decompose.

Seem like too much work? Investing time preparing the soil at the start of the season will save you time throughout the season. You'll spend less time watering, managing pests and replacing struggling or dead plants. This gives you more time to harvest beautiful flowers for bouquets, vegetables for your favorite recipes, or just to sit, relax and enjoy your landscape.

Make this the year to start building a strong foundation for a healthy and productive garden.

Gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has more than 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including Can't Miss Small Space Gardening and the Midwest Gardener's Handbook. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment segments. Myers is also a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Myers' web site, www.melindamyers.com, offers gardening videos and tips.

Benefit Dance for El Tecolote

Sway to the hot East Bay Latin rhythms of Bahia Son and San Francisco's Cesar's Latin All-Stars in a benefit dance-concert for El Tecolote newspaper on Saturday, June 28, from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at the new Cesar's Latin Palace located at 826-26th Street near Third St., in San Francisco. The evening includes a food sale and raffle. Doors open at 8 p.m. Admission is \$10. Must be 21 years or older. There is plenty of security and free parking. For more information, call Mabel Jimenez at (415) 648-1045 ext. 101

DID YOU OR A LOVED ONE SERVE IN THE ARMED FORCES?

YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO BENEFITS

We assist veterans, their dependents and survivors in obtaining federal and state benefits, such as disability compensation and/or pension, Aid and Attendance, educational benefits, home loans, burial benefits, and more.

Our accredited claims representatives will provide respectful advocacy for you and your loved ones. No appointments are necessary at our office, and please remember to bring your DD-214.

San Francisco County Veterans Services Office
(415) 503-2000
27B Van Ness Ave, San Francisco 94102
Hours: Mon-Thurs 9AM-12PM and 1PM-4PM



Vote Yes on Measure A

By George Wooding, Midtown Terrace Homeowners Assn.



This is a \$400,000,000 bond ordinance. San Francisco is proposing a \$400 million Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response Bond (ESER 2014) for the June 2014 ballot. The purpose of ESER 2014 is to fund repairs and improvements that will allow San Francisco to more quickly and effectively respond to a major earthquake or disaster.

ESER 2014 builds on the Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response Bonds approved by 79% of San Francisco voters in 2010. ESER 2010 funded critical seismic upgrades to the City's deteriorating emergency and first response infrastructure.

ESER 2014 continues the \$412 million investment of ESER 2010, the first phase of essential improvements to the City's public safety facilities.

The 2014 ESER bond was put on the ballot by a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors and approved by the mayor. ESER needs a two-thirds majority (66.7%) vote to pass, and authorizes landlords a pass-through to renters for 50% of

For all of this bond's faults, ...(it) is vital to the future of San Francisco's well-being

the increase in the real property taxes attributable to the cost of repayment of the bonds.

The 2014 ESER bond money will be spent as follows: neighborhood fire stations, \$85 million (21.2%); emergency firefighting water system, \$55 million (13.7%); district police stations and infrastructure, \$30 million (7.5%); motorcycle police and crime lab, \$65 million (41.2%); and a medical examiner facility, \$65 million, (16.2%).

This bond is a classic example of politicians bundling projects that are vital with less popular projects that need to be funded. The motorcycle police, the crime lab, and the medical examiner facility are all located in the seismically-deficient Hall of Justice located at 850 Bryant St.

The 2014 ESER bonds purpose is being touted "to fund repairs that will more quickly allow responses to disasters and earthquakes." The motorcycle police could be located at police stations throughout the city. Both the crime lab and the medical examiner facility have nothing to do with allowing faster responses for earthquakes or other disasters and do not belong in the bond.

Further, the city is not telling the public where all of the \$400 million bond money will be spent.

All five parts of the bond deliberately do not require any type of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review. By not designating where the bond money will be spent on the neighborhood fire stations, emergency firefighting water system, CEQA is avoided and the public is being asked to spend money blindly.

As the 2014 ESER legislation states, the Board of Supervisors finds that the "bond proposal as it relates to funds for facilities and infrastructure is not subject to CEQA because as the establishment of a government financing mechanism that does not involve any commitment to specific projects to be constructed with the funds, it is not a project as defined by CEQA and the CEQA guidelines."

For all of this bond's faults, the 2014 ESER bond is vital to the future of San Francisco's well-being. This bond will not be the last seismic bond that San Franciscans see. Seismic preparedness is inevitable and protecting the public safety is paramount. We highly recommend that the neighborhoods endorse this bond.

Yes on B-Waterfront Height-Limit Initiative

Initiative: Shall the city be prevented from allowing any development on port property to exceed the height limits in effect as of January 1, 2014, unless the City's voters have approved a height limit increase?

A record-breaking petition drive by a coalition of environmental and community groups collected 21,000 signatures to place Proposition B on the June 3 ballot — more than twice the required 9,702 signatures — in just three weeks. The coalition for San Francisco neighborhoods (CSFN) is a major ballot proponent for measure B.

Measure B was deemed necessary by citizens throughout San Francisco after City politicians, the Port Authority and the Planning Commission continually chose development projects that were beneficial for the wealthy and detrimental to average San Franciscans. Wealthy developers have been allowed to skirt existing planning regulations by receiving special zoning assessments, paid exemptions, and spot zoning.

The Port of San Francisco is more than \$1.5 billion in debt and has desperately been trying to pay off this debt by building/planning large developments on Port lands; both the Port and the City will receive extra fees/taxes for every approved development.

City Controller Ben Rosenfield has issued the following statement on the fiscal impact of proposition B: "Should the proposed measure be approved by the voters, in my opinion, it would in and of itself, have no direct impact on the costs of government."

Proposition B ... gives voters the ability to hold developers accountable for the waterfront that we all deserve."

We are urging voters to stand behind the new Prop. B. Our waterfront is a place that needs careful and attentive stewardship, and if that means letting citizens be a more active part of the political process over its future, then that's a good result.

Proposition B's opponents claim that the passage of Proposition B will jeopardize San Francisco's vacant Port land and Eastern shore line. Opponents of Prop. B say development projects that the City has supported will now never be completed. Additionally, opponents allege that critical funding to rebuild crumbling waterfront piers and seawalls will eventually disappear. Opponents also believe that there will be less housing and fewer jobs.

Proposition B takes away the blank check given to developers to build luxury condos and high-rise hotels without regard for traffic, neighborhoods, or the long-term health of our waterfront environment. It gives voters the ability to hold developers accountable for the waterfront that we all deserve.

Please vote "Yes" on proposition B.

When will they ever learn????

By Carol Kocivar ©2014

The answer: Thirty million

Want to know the question?

That is how many more words a child from a higher income family will hear by the age of three than a child living in a poor family.



Translate that into education jargon and you can call it the achievement gap.

According to the US Department of Education National Center of Education statistics (I know, quite a mouthful), reading to a young child is an important indicator of how well that child is prepared for school.

So take a look at this finding on how often a child is read to 3 or more times a week:

About **95 percent** of children whose mothers had at least a **bachelor's degree**

86 percent of children whose mothers had **some**

college education.

74 percent of children whose mothers had a **high school diploma** or equivalent but no further education,

56 percent of children whose mothers had **less than a high school diploma.**"

That word gap...that gap in opportunity —starts way before the bell rings for the first day in kindergarten.

Calling an elementary school "bad" because some kids are two years behind is a little like blaming a doctor because everyone who visits is sick.

The learning years between birth and five are critical. Yet, ironically, investments to support early learning continue to take the back seat to funding for prisons and social services in the state budget.

Between 2008 and 2012, cuts to childcare and development programs in California totaled nearly \$1 billion.

According to Early Edge California, that meant denying access to nearly 110,000 children.

Straight up— kids who don't do well in school end up needing more social services.

Can't read by third grade? A huge predictor of who

will end up in jail.

There are now lots of initiatives that shine a light on this.

First Five California provides kits for new parents on the importance of early learning.

Too Small to Fail provides information of talking, reading and singing to young children.

Reading Rockets provides family learning tools.

But PR campaigns alone are not enough.

With a rebounding economy, investing in early learning makes a lot of sense. Research shows that every dollar invested in high-quality early learning programs can save \$7 later on.

Yet, despite lots of public support to help our youngest children, they are still wrangling in Sacramento over relatively minor early learning investments for our kids.

When will they ever learn?

You can find more information about the importance of early learning at ED100, a new free web resource to build informed leaders: ed100.org/time/earlychildhood



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Pacific Heights Chevron

Marina, Cow Hollow

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Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi



A Prince of a Man

The world media has become enchanted by the recently elected Pope Francis, and with his message of love, generosity, and compassion. Not unlike a Hollywood rock star, in just a few short months he's graced the covers of numerous magazines from *Vanity Fair* to *Rolling Stone* and continues to attract the headlines on a regular basis. He's truly a breath of fresh air for all of us looking for a way to help those less fortunate and to aid in making a better life for our fellow human beings. But what about those who have preached the same message and been so instrumental in helping those in dire need?

Yes, we do have a new and lovable Pope, but let us not forget this humble Irish priest who gave up a promising career at the Vatican as a young man to devote his life to the care of orphaned and forgotten children of yet another horrible war.

Many years ago we had the good fortune of visiting Boys and Girls Town of Italy which is located just a few kilometers from the center of Rome. "La Citta dei Ragazzi di Roma" was founded by an extremely generous and very talented Irish priest by the name of Msgr. John Patrick Carroll-Abbing. Shortly after World War II, Monsignor Carroll approached Pope Pius XI with the idea of helping the endless number of orphaned and abandoned children living on the streets of Rome. He referred to them as the "shoe shine kids," roaming the streets in search of food, money or whatever it took for them to survive.

Our first visit occurred while our three children were still young but old enough to understand what Monsignor Carroll had accomplished in a relatively short time in building a facility where the citizens of Boys Town provided for themselves by governing their own city, creating their own currency, and learning new trades and skills. We sat with the boys and enjoyed a lovely meal with them while learning more of their history and successes at the home. After dinner we toured the area, visiting the dairy farm, the ceramic shop, classrooms and chapel. Yes, as tourists we had visited all the major sites in Rome including the Vatican and the Sistine Chapel, the Coliseum, the Pantheon and two of our favorites, the Spanish Steps and the Trevi Fountain.

The Monsignor was always available to both the boys and the many visitors, and through the years he entertained the likes of Rocky Marciano, Perry Como, and Walt Disney. For many years Monsignor Carroll would make his yearly visit to San Francisco for an evening of fundraising and story telling, occasionally bringing one or two of the boys who would tell their story to the packed house at the Fairmont Hotel. We were fortunate to have spent many a



pleasant evening enjoying a private dinner with him, listening to his many escapades as he told stories of meeting with presidents, royalty, and a host of characters from all walks of life.

On a subsequent visit to Rome, we once again visited Boys Town, and by that time a Girls Town had been added through a generous gift from the American actress Linda Darnell. To this day the yearly Boys and Girls Town of Italy Ball is still held in San Francisco, where a local man or woman is recognized for his or her support and contributions to this great cause that continues to support those in need from all parts of the world. With not a dry eye in the house, Monsignor Carroll would always wrap up his comments with his favorite phrase, "For every tear you wipe from the eye of a child, a star is lit in the sky. Sadly, Monsignor Carroll-Abbing passed away in 2001, but his vision and compassion have inspired a community of givers who continue to carry forward this work; we have all been so fortunate to have been part of his legacy. Yes, we do have a new and lovable Pope, but let us not forget this humble Irish priest who gave up a promising career at the Vatican as a young man to devote his life to the care of orphaned and forgotten children of yet another horrible war. Considering what it's costing us to house the homeless in San Francisco, you can't help but think what he might have done to solve our problem at home. A great person and truly a real "Prince of a Man."



Boys Town

June 21st: Friends of the West Portal Playground are hosting a summer "Get ready to FREEZE Party". The celebration will welcome the start of summer. Friends and neighbors of all ages are invited to gather at the West Portal Playground Clubhouse and picnic tables on Saturday, June 21st (from 10am-2pm) to parade their warm winter-wear, play in "snow", and sing along to Frozen lyrics. There will also be storytime and live music. Baked goods and Goat Hill pizza will be available for purchase.



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