




Howard Strassner
Parking meters in GGP could enhance revenues
—p. 2






Will Durst
Decodes the Budget
—p. 2


Quentin Kopp
Rare praise for Governor Brown
—p. 3






West of Twin Peaks Central Council
—p. 4


Brian Browne
Ratepayers will take it in the gut, watchdog Browne warns
—p. 4





Jeff Adachi
The "Wisconsin effect" and pension reform
—p. 5

Elias Moosa
Time to end the Aboretum Fee?
—p. 5



Vocal Opposition Surfaces as CVS Plans Liquor Sales

By George Wooding

How will the newly-planned CVS pharmacy proposed for 701 Portola Drive — located about one block south of Tower Market — impact the surrounding neighborhoods?

CVS is planning to build a brand new drugstore at the site of the old Shell Gas station, now called Miraloma Auto Care. The completed CVS store will sell prescription drugs and a wide assortment of general merchandise, including over-the counter drugs, beauty products, film and photo, greeting cards, convenience foods, and ... alcohol.

CVS Drugstore's plan to sell alcohol and have extended store hours until 11:00 p.m. has really irritated local neighborhoods, schools, and politicians.

Karen Wood, a member of the Miraloma Park Improvement Club (MPIC) stated, "The MPIC, with a constituency of 2,200 homes, opposes the sale of alcoholic beverages at the proposed CVS drugstore. There are already four outlets for alcoholic beverages on the Portola shopping strip: Two markets, a bar, and a liquor store. In our view, a fifth outlet for alcoholic beverages on this two-block shopping strip will result in increased illegal and nuisance activity in the area, and will present an opportunity not presented by the liquor store, markets, and bar for youth to shoplift or illegally purchase alcoholic beverages. Drugstore liquor sales will alter the character of this neighborhood shopping area, and not for the better."

Liquor is currently being sold at Tower Market, 635 Portola Drive, Miraloma Liquor, 691 Portola Drive, Miraloma Club bar, 749 Portola Drive and Miraloma Market, 755 Portola Drive. The Walgreens Drugstore located at 689 Portola Drive does not sell alcohol.

District 7 Supervisor Sean Elsbernd stated, "As a resident of Miraloma Park, I will continue to do all that I can to support the Miraloma Park Improvement



701 Portola, soon be the new CVS Pharmacy, but residents oppose more alcohol permits in the already saturated area.

Club in their efforts on this issue."

Carmelo Sgarlato, principal of the nearby San Francisco School of the Arts, stated, "As a principal of two high schools in the area, drinking alcohol is a big problem and another vendor of such is not what I would like to see in the neighborhood. Ninety-eight percent of our kids do the right thing, but there are those who don't, and shoplifting alcohol, cough syrup, and other items that can get students high are a problem that we must deal with."

William Sifferman, Chief of Juvenile Probation at the Youth Guidance Center, and Police Captain Louis Cassanego of the Ingleside Station are also opposed to the CVS Drugstore selling alcohol — especially after dark.

At this time, CVS has not applied for a liquor license at 701 Portola Drive.

In San Francisco, the concentration of businesses with liquor licenses does not always matter. San Francisco receives more than twice the average statewide number of liquor licenses. The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage

Control (ABC) states in Section 23817.4: The legislature finds and declares that the public welfare and morals require that there will be a limitation on the number of premises licensed for off sale wine and beer.

ABC section 23817.5 states that regulators will allow one license for every 2,500 inhabitants of a county. The Loophole: San Francisco is both a City and a County and this allows the ABC to issue at least one liquor license for every 1,250 inhabitants.

San Francisco is drenched in liquor licenses and alcohol. A June 30, 2010 report by the Lewin Group titled, "The Annual Cost of Alcohol to San Francisco" concluded that the cost of providing medical care for people with alcohol-related illness, treatment and prevention costs, costs to the law enforcement system, costs resulting from alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes and other injuries, and the indirect costs associated with disability cost San Francisco approximately \$17.7 million in un-reimbursed alcohol attributable costs.

Cont. p. 6

Recycled Water No Walk in the Park

By Steve Lawrence and Joan Girardot



What tops water officials' wish-list? Recycled water does. Since the deep drought of the late 1980s and early 1990s, recycled water is a must-have.

In PC San Francisco, then, one would imagine that recycled water long flowed. Yet all that flows today are words and fury.

The problem is that recycled water must be produced at a physical treatment plant. Self-styled Park advocates are fighting furiously to keep what they call the recycled "factory" out of Golden Gate Park. Meanwhile, octopus-like, the bureaucratic process of "outreach"

crawls.

The race to recycled water began twenty long years ago when ordinances were passed requiring that all but small developments prepare to accept recycled water for irrigation, and even for such wishful uses as flushing toilets. Reading those ordinances, one would think that recycled water was either available, or rapidly coming downstream. Ha!

Five years later, in 1996, a "master plan" floated in. In early 2002, a plan to produce 10 million gallons per day (mgd) was adopted. Recycled water was to serve about one-eighth of city water



Tony Hall rolls up his sleeves to begin the Mayoral campaign

Tony Hall: It's Official

Grey skies and a slight drizzle couldn't dampen the spirits of the enthusiastic crowd gathered at 99 West Portal Avenue on Thursday, February 24th to listen to and applaud Tony Hall as he opened his Mayoral campaign headquarters.

Hall, a veteran of more than 25 years in San Francisco politics, and a former District 7 Supervisor, jumped into the race for Mayor with a simple question. "When was the last time you had a city government you were proud of?" he asked the crowd of more than 60 supporters and volunteers. "I am in this campaign to provide service to the city and to lead a government where substance takes precedent over form and people take

Cont. p. 3

Cont. p. 6

More INSIDE

Public Notices	3
MUNI Switchbacks	6
Westside Real Estate	7
Money Matters	7
Around the Town	9
Trees in GG Park	9
Jack Kaye	10
Kocivar on Education	10
GGNRA and Dogs	10
At the Movies	11
Theater	11
Remember When	12
Phyllis' Findings	12
Sharon the Health	13
Open Late	13
Sudoku/Brain Füd	13
Calendar	14
Real Travel	14
From the Border	15

Parking in the Park

By Howard Strassner

A great City is more than a place with big buildings, wealthy people, perfect weather and fantastic views. A great City provides good services for all its residents and visitors. However, it does need the first in order to generate the revenues to provide the second. Because a great City has to provide so many services for so many different people it gathers revenues from many different sources. For years San Francisco has done a good job and the revenues were adequate for the services and we all took pleasure in paying our share and enjoying the services. More recently, essential services are beginning to disappear. We can probably suggest a lot of things that might be done better at lower cost but we also have to show a willingness to help cover the costs.

In November the Westside Observer published a heartfelt article about how our Recreation and Park Department has eliminated almost all of their local park recreational staff to reduce costs and is now privatizing public park buildings and leasing them to private businesses to scrape together some spare change. The RPD has to close our buildings to our children and older people because there is no staff. We paid to build these local facilities but they are closed to us. This is not the way to cover the costs of our parks.

I suggest that part of the better way to cover park costs will be to collect parking fees from within our parks and we should start this discussion now. First some history and examples of San Francisco and the ways in which our parks and other parks already charge for parking:

In 1940 the Union Square garage became the first public/private parking facility built in the country when RPD allowed the construction of a garage for downtown commuters and shoppers under Union Square. RPD was pleased when the construction bonds were paid off early, and the garage provided a revenue stream for our parks. When World War II ended and people purchased more cars, three more downtown parks were used to provide underground parking. Last year these parking fees provided RPD with



essential services are beginning to disappear. We can probably suggest a lot of things that might be done better at lower cost but we also have to show a willingness to help cover the costs.

over \$8 million. RPD even has a history of meters in Golden Gate Park where they installed multiple place meters for the choice parking spaces around the Concourse. This provided about \$100,000 a year but the metered parking was removed to allow construction of a garage under the Concourse for the museums in Golden Gate Park. RPD has some hope of future revenue from this garage when the bonds are paid off. This, however, will take over thirty years because the garage was so expensive to construct and must compete against free parking nearby. RPD also owns Kezar, a 300-place surface parking lot at the eastern end of Golden Gate Park which provides some revenue.

The SF Zoo charges for parking, and regularly increases the fee, while less convenient free parking is a few blocks away. Fort Mason charges for parking. The State Park on Mt. Tamalpais, and most State Parks, charge for parking. All of this shows that people are willing to pay for parking, even in parks, when they get some desirable convenience for their few dollars.

Suppose RPD implemented parking fees in the eastern half of Golden Gate Park for about 2,500 spaces, and in the Marina for about a 1,000 spaces. The average SF meter generates about \$1,600 each per year for Muni, and park meters should each produce about same amount, or \$5.5 million dollars a year, for our parks. These parks will use the same multiple spot unobtrusive meters and signs being installed on Van Ness. Each separate area would have a different fee schedule based on demand. The meters will conveniently accept payment in many forms. Drivers will pay a little for the part of the park they need for their car, our children and seniors will get their recreation services, and our parks will be maintained.

Some of the reasons that parking fees in Golden Gate Park are appropriate are: many park employees now have free parking while many other City employees and even Muni drivers have lost that privilege; many nearby hospital employees have free parking by moving their car once a day; there is ample nearby transit so people don't have to drive every day; many spots are near commercial areas and our local businesses need turnover more than they need free parking; those who feel that they cannot afford to pay for their parking can drop off their passengers near all attractions and enjoy a walk in the park. Many regular park users will be able to car pool to reduce their share of parking fees and their generation of global-warming gases. Studies show that appropriate parking fees reduce the cruising that drivers need to find a convenient parking space, and this further reduces driving and makes our park more park-like.

Some of the reasons that parking fees are appropriate in the Marina are: people with business in Fort Mason park there to avoid Fort Mason parking fees; commuters park there and get picked up by private buses and driven to their work site. RPD is actively studying implementing parking fees in the Marina but there is a problem: RPD is planning to use the fees to fund part of the cost of renovating the boat berths in the Marina. Yachting is an ideal use of our Bay and boats need access via berths in the Marina, but berthing fees should cover all of the costs of renovation. This would be an egregious example of privatizing public facilities by collecting fees from the public for the use of a public space and then using the fees to subsidize a private use. However, collecting fees from the public for the public use of a public space is an appropriate measure in lieu of taxes. Note the writer of this article has a boat in the Marina and he is willing to pay all of the costs of parking his boat.

If you want to help keep your parks available for public use and are and are willing to pay a few dollars for your parking, or if you can suggest a better way then this is the time to contact the RPD at recpark.commission@sfgov.org and say you are willing to pay for parking in the park if RPD will guarantee that all parking fees will be used for public recreational services and park maintenance, not Harbor renovation. Or, send them your better funding suggestion. When you demonstrate your support for your parks by your willingness to use some of your "green" to keep your park green, you obligate a contribution from many who use our parks for non-park purposes on a regular basis and are less willing to contribute.

Howard Strassner is former President of the Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, and Sierra Club, Transportation Chair.

The Oversight Committee



MY TWO CENTS By Will Durst

THE SLEEVES OF A VEST.

This is but a snapshot. A frozen moment in time, guaranteed to transmogrify on an hourly basis. So, knowing the situation is fluid, here's your Friday budget update and if I were you, I'd find a nice comfy chair to plop down into, because this promises to be more frustrating than translating Sanskrit into Japanese using Morse Code smoke signals in the rain. President Obama released HIS budget plan, which calls for tens of billions of dollars of program cuts mixed with tax increases. The Republicans countered with THEIR plan specifying nine figures of cuts only, and Ron Paul, well, he just wants to invade China, give them a proper thrashing and take all our money back. Meaning that although we're less than two months deep into the 112th Congress, looks like business as usual.

Abstract theory time is over now and actual programs are being singled out for devastation, decimation and elimination, and as we all know: one man's pork is another man's paycheck. But this is about symbolism, not jobs. Tea Partiers were promised \$100 billion in cuts and they're going to get \$100 billion in cuts, even though Charlie Sheen has a better chance of being appointed St Sebastian's Girls School choir chaperone on a field trip to Vegas than the GOP proposal has of surviving a Presidential Veto.

Nevertheless, Conservatives are cementing their ideological bona fides by rounding up the usual suspects and painting budgetary crosshairs on the faces of their mortal enemies: the EPA, AmeriCorps, Public Broadcasting, and AMTRAK. The ugly little secret being—spending at the Pentagon will rise and nobody needs talk about Social Security or Medicare until experts have analyzed the polls on this present skirmish at least a gazilliondy times.

As expected, folks have taken to each other's plan like a pod of giant squid to hot air ballooning. Obama continues his tap dance down the middle. The Right whines he hasn't cut deep enough and The Left pouts he's gone too far. He compares the GOP strategy to a dieter who vows to lose 30 pounds, and does so by cutting off a leg. And the Repubs fire back he's a girly man scared to make the tough decisions, who could provide better leadership by curling into a fetal position behind the couch licking the cat's butt.

Congress has to pass a spending bill before March 4, or the entire government shuts down, which wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for that whole roads and hospitals and customs and air traffic controllers thing. Everyone agrees the gulf between the two combatants is wide but a new fiscal reality is here to stay and will affect education, security and agriculture, meaning more students per class, fewer cops on the streets and larger pieces of pig hoof in your wiener.

While the adversaries bristle and posture in public like male porcupines in pre-mating heat, Barack remains confident he can find common ground with the GOP leadership in private. Good Luck. Considering the smug intransigence of the Boehner Clan, that sounds like the political equivalent of pinning your hopes to escape a burning building on tying together the sleeves of a vest.

Will Durst is a writer who often tells jokes to drunks in bars. Check him out at Zanies, Downtown Chicago, February 22- 27.



WESTSIDE OBSERVER

PO Box 27176, SF 94127 • 415 517-6331

www.westsideobserver.com

415 517-6331

Publisher/Editor: Mitch Bull
mitch@westsideobserver.com

Associate Editor: Alice Bull

Editor: Doug Comstock

editor@westsideobserver.com

Advertising Sales • Mitch Bull

Contributors: Jeff Adachi, Hank Basayne, Julie Behn, Brian Browne, Mitch Bull, Sharon Caren, Doug Comstock, Will Durst, Jonathan Farrell, Hilary Gordon, Flora Lynn Isaacson, Tony Hall, Katherine Howard, Joanne Jordan, Jack Kaye, Dr. Carol Kocivar, Jed Lane, Steve Lawrence, Dr. Annette Lust, Brandon Miller, Don Lee Miller, Patrick Monette-Shaw, Elias Moosa, Sergio Nibbi, Howard Strassner, George Wooding.

The ideas and opinions expressed in these pages are strictly those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the staff or publisher of this paper. The Westside Observer is a free monthly newspaper serving the entire West of Twin Peaks area of San Francisco. Circulation is 20,000 copies, distributed 10 times a year. 12,000 are distributed -to- door, 1,500 are distributed via free distribution racks in the West of Twin Peaks area, as well as libraries and other key drop-off points (see westsideobserver.com/hardcopy.html).

RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR

So Far, So Good

By Quentin Kopp

It doesn't surprise me that friends and even strangers who recognize me from past service on the Board of Supervisors or State Senate ask my opinion on Governor Jerry Brown's performance thus far. I find it reassuring. Having known the Governor since he was a much younger man (he's now a vigorous seventy-two) and having been the only San Francisco Supervisor who endorsed him before the Gubernatorial primary of June 1974 at a time in which I was a registered Democrat, and having watched him struggle through eight years as Governor (1975-1983), a failed United States Senate campaign, two unsuccessful presidential attempts, resuscitation as Oakland's Mayor and then California's Attorney General, I find his performance measured, purposeful and happily replete with vintage Jerry Brown actions such as removing cell telephones from state employees, reducing his own salary, driving a modest state automobile without his predecessor's Hollywood-scale entourage and flying economy class on Southwest Airlines. The money saved will not by itself cure the state's budgetary gap between revenue and expenditures, but such savings represent the very highest standard of taxpayer respect, no matter those critics that disdain such relevant symbols of fiscal discipline.



I especially appreciate his stated intent to eliminate redevelopment agencies throughout California. It's about time. These post-World War II multiplying agencies, which exceed 400 in our state, were formulated under the rubric of "urban renewal" primarily to supply new, clean, safe and affordable housing.

I note his salutary promise to eliminate the unnecessary office of Secretary of Education, which was created in 1997 by then-Governor Pete Wilson without statutory or constitutional authority, and whose budget has increased over the past decade to \$1,800,000! (We elect a Superintendent of Instruction and have a Board of Education.)

I especially appreciate his stated intent to eliminate redevelopment agencies throughout California. It's about time. These post-World War II multiplying agencies, which exceed 400 in our state, were formulated under the rubric of "urban renewal" primarily to supply new, clean, safe and affordable housing. Wielding freely the fearsome power of eminent domain, redevelopment agencies throughout California have disingenuously characterized various neighborhoods as "blighted," as required by the California Health and Safety Code to establish a redevelopment area, expended taxpayer money to seize private properties at market value prices by agreement or condemnation litigation and, frequently, turned such properties over to developers for golf courses, "automobile rows," theatres, athletic facilities and fancy high-rise condominium buildings and hotels. Redevelopment has been a developer and government bureaucratic paradise. Because of statutory limitations, California courts have been unable to interfere with arbitrary redevelopment agency findings of "blight" regarding even new areas, which an unwitting person would never consider so dilapidated as to require redevelopment. The objections of those comprising the governmental/real estate complex are subjecting Governor Brown to extraordinary pressure, but I am satisfied he will surmount that pressure with aid from sympathetic legislators like Assemblyman Chris Norby of Orange County.

I am also satisfied that once budgetary vicissitudes have been conquered, Governor Brown will concentrate on the devastating problems of government employee pensions and statutory "entitlements" to certain taxpayer-funded services. Meanwhile, I intend to support at a statewide special election the maintenance of current levels of taxation, indispensable to achieving a genuinely balanced budget between predictable

Cont. p. 5

Recycled Water Sites (Cont. from p. 1)

use. The capital cost was high, about \$12 per gallon of capacity. For comparison, recent capital cost for other cities is \$7 per gallon of capacity.

In 2006 another master plan issued. Under it, 4.5 mgd was to be produced—about half of what had been planned in 2002. Capital cost rose from \$12 to about \$45 per gallon of capacity. The voters had given their blessing in late 2002; no longer was there any need to keep the price-tag low.

Since 2006 the quantity of recycled water to be produced has steadily declined, and the cost per gallon of capacity has risen. Today the near-term plan is to produce 1.6 mgd, a third of what was to be produced in 2006, and less than one-sixth of the 2002 planned quantity. Capital cost of producing the 1.6 mgd is \$95 per gallon of capacity, about eight times what voters were presented in 2002. The quantity to be produced would amount to just over two percent of San Francisco's water use, down from 12%. (Eastside recycled water may one day contribute another nearly 3%, if the dreams of bureaucrats are realized.)

As proposed now, the Westside recycled water facility would be sited in the southwestern corner of Golden Gate Park. Now the space is a dump; many years ago it was home to an old treatment plant. The proposed plant site is in the Park because Rec & Park insists that recycled water be treated to a high level of purity. "Sensitive" plants and lakes require purer water, according to Rec & Park.

Earlier plans called for production of recycled water at the Oceanside Wastewater Treatment Plant near the Zoo. But there is room at Oceanside only for ordinary filtration, officials insist. There is no room for the higher level of treatment, using a process called reverse osmosis, which Rec & Park demands.

About eight-five percent of the recycled water is to be used in the Park. The remainder is to be used to irrigate Lincoln Park, and Presidio Golf Course.

By splitting recycled water's production into two parts done at separate locations, it would be possible to locate treatment outside Golden Gate Park, officials concede. But it would cost more. Not only would two facilities need to be built and operated, but also the recycled

water would need to be piped to the Park using a more costly route, through residential neighborhoods.

If recycled water is produced in the Park, there is a tunnel running roughly under the Great Highway that can be used to convey treated wastewater. But per the state Health & Safety Code, the existing tunnel cannot be used to convey already-produced recycled water. So, not only will the split treatment facilities cost more, but also a new pipeline must be built. That would be more costly and would impact residents and traffic in the outer Sunset.

Cost and convenience are lesser considerations for Park advocates who seek to keep the Park free of what they imaginatively style a "factory." Actually, the plant producing recycled water would be low profile. No smokestacks. There would be planted berms on three sides, screening trees in front, and a green living roof. For years the site has been a dump. Rec & Park has no money to develop it.

Any park needs irrigation water. Is it unreasonable



View of Water Treatment Facility looking north from Martin Luther King Drive in Golden Gate Park



Current site of Water Treatment Facility looking South toward Martin Luther King Drive in Golden Gate Park

Restore Free Access to the Arboretum

March 17th • 1 pm • Budget and Finance Committee • City Hall Rm. 250.

#110113 [Appropriating \$80,000 of General Fund Property Transfer Tax and Reducing Botanical Garden Fee Revenue for FY2010-2011]

Sponsors: Avalos; Mirkarimi, Mar, Campos and Kim

Ordinance appropriating \$80,000 of General Fund from new property transfer tax and reducing botanical garden fee revenues, which will be rescinded as of March 17, 2011, in the Department of Recreation and Park for FY2010-2011. Budget and Finance Committee.



Housing Element at the Planning Commission

March 24th • 1 pm • Planning Commission • City Hall Rm. 400

Based on public comment received during previous Commission hearings, input received via email and letter, and specific comments received on previous 2009 Housing Element Drafts 1 & 2, including comments from the state Department of Housing & Community Development, Planning Department staff will develop a third Draft, as a final draft for consideration for adoption. Planner: Kearstin Dischinger. Kearstin.Dischinger@sfgov.org/ (415) 558-6284

Community Meeting Notices cannot list every important meeting, we depend on our readers to inform us of upcoming meetings that are important to you. Please send details to editor@westsideobserver.com

Taraval's Community Police Advisory Board

The Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB) was established early last year by the District Station's Commanding Officer (Captain) comprised of civilian volunteers from their respective residential and commercial communities, and a representative from the San Francisco SAFE office.

The role of each CPAB is to advise the District Captain about crime and quality of life issues that affect the community and help problem solve and brainstorm creative solutions to recurring issues. Within this varied community a rash of auto-boostings in an otherwise sleepy residential corner is no less disturbing to its residents than an uptick of violence is to the neighbors in an edgier neighborhood in the district. It is the understanding that the entirety of our district is best served when our residents and the police work in partnership that drives the CPAB structure and motivates its members. Individually, each of the Taraval CPAB members described his or her vision for the CPAB in terms of fostering a partnership with better communication and coordination between the needs of the district residents and the Police Department.

Your Taraval CPAB is made up of 13 civilian volunteers as diverse as the district would indicate. From retired teacher to recent student, contractor to community activist. The members of the CPAB include Captain John Sanford, David Chan, Marc Christensen, Jared Steven Giarrusso, Al Harris, Mary C. Harris, Glen Hatakeyama, Carolyn Ho, Rizwan Hussain, Yat H. Lam, Laurel Moeslein, Norman J. Meunier, Vicki Seiler Pate, Pierre' R. Washington and John Zwolinski.

NEWS & VIEWS West of Twin Peaks Central Council • By Mitch Bull



State Senator Leland Yee addresses the WOTPC

Budgets, Golden Gate Park, Pensions, a new Supervisor and a little larceny were the topics as the West of Twin Peaks Central Council closed the ledger on February in their monthly meeting on February 28th.

When WOTPCC President George Wooding called the meeting to order about thirty people had arrived to fill the seats at the Forest Hills Clubhouse. After the Treasurer’s report, Elliot Wagner of Dimitra’s Spa confirmed to the group that the **Bank of America** on West Portal Avenue had indeed been robbed on Saturday afternoon, and that no new information was available. As of Monday evening, nothing had been posted on the Taraval Police Station website. In addition, the Taraval Station has a new Captain. **Captain Curtis Lum** has taken over from Captain Sanford, who retired in mid-February. It is expected that Lum will address the WOTPCC in the near future.

Matt Chamberlain spoke about four topics where he is drafting policies and reports on behalf of the Council. He is currently working on policies relating to **Residential Urban Power Generation** (the windmill issue), Cellular Antennas on Power poles, a WOTPCC policy statement on the recently approved EIR for the Parkmerced Special Use District, and a follow up statement for the soon to be approved 2009 **Housing Element** document, of which a big concern is the ratio of owned homes versus rentals, where rental units numbers are dramatically greater than home and condo units owned by individuals. The **Planning Commission** is slated to meet on the **Housing Element** on March 24th.

Avrum Shepard followed with transportation information that MUNI is reporting that they could have a shortfall of up to \$1,600,000,000 over the next 20 years. In an effort to increase revenue the agency is looking at several fees and taxes such as a **Vehicle Impact Mitigation Fee** for all cars; a **parcel tax on homeowners**; and possibly increased costs in **off-street** parking fees or permits.

Gus Guibert, of the Open Space Committee, spoke about the myriad of projects planned for the Westside, including the follow up on the options being reviewed for locating the **Wastewater Treatment Plant** (GGPark is still an option), and the **Beach Chalet playing field** project. The concept of public open space was also covered by **Walter Kaplan** in a short discussion about the plans that the DPW has for current open space in the **Laguna Honda/Clarendon** reservoir area. There is a major disagreement with DPW over the concept of what open, public space is and does the DPW have the right to use it anyway it sees fit.

After that, what could be better than a report on the **Sacramento budget debates**, by **State Senator (and SF Mayoral Candidate) Leland Yee**. Yee explained some of the processes that the Sacramento politicians are working on to help solve the budget crisis, and asked for support on the **tax extension** that is being proposed by the governor and the legislature. He also discussed the need for reforming how we fund **California schools** and, when asked, admitted that the current plan to extend taxes for years, and cut \$12 B out of the budget will not permanently solve California’s **expense/revenue shortfall**. **Council President Wooding** asked Yee about why he is **running for Mayor** and he explained that he is a San Franciscan (since 3 years old) and he wants to help fix what’s wrong with the city and return it to the San Francisco that it can be.

Newly elected District 8 **Supervisor Scott Wiener** greeted the crowd and discussed the issues that he sees in the city, including their **repair and maintenance** of the crumbling streets and that the repair budgets could be “zeroed” out again this year. Wiener stressed the change in atmosphere at City Hall since the election and explained that **Mayor Lee** is working well with the supervisors. He also answered questions about several pieces of legislation he is working on, including the “**registration**” of **dogs in the public parks** to regulate the possible large influx of dog owners and dog walking services if the **GGNRA bans dogs** from its parkland.

Supervisor Sean Elsbernd addressed questions next and spoke about his work to **reform the pension obligations** of the city. He stressed that San Francisco has and will always honor the obligations that were promised to its pension holders, but added that the costs are sometimes detrimental to the General Fund. He explained that officials from both sides are having “meet and confer” types of discussions to try and come to compromises.

He also explained that it is probable that **Jeff Adachi** will move forward with a ballot measure to **again address the pension situation**, but that Adachi would probably “stand down” if significant progress was made through the current discussions. If the progress is not perceived as significant the ballot measure will probably move forward.

The concept of having **Golden Gate Park** designated as a **Local Historic District** was brought forth and discussed by **Alan Martinez** of the Historic Preservation Commission. A flier was distributed explaining that “Historic” status wouldn’t mean that the Park or Buildings could not be changed, but that **any proposed change** would have to be examined by the Commission to evaluate if the historic features of the park were being preserved and not damaged.

In the final action of the evening, **Karen Wood** of the Miraloma Park Improvement Committee discussed a resolution asking the WOTPCC to endorse the MPIC’s resolutions to have the new **CVS Pharmacy** at 701 Portola Avenue (current site of the Miraloma Gas Station) ban selling packaged alcohol, and stay open until 11 PM. (*See the related article on Page 1*). A representative from the CVS group was in attendance and will be speaking to the WOTPCC delegates in the March meeting.

The next meeting of the WOTPCC is on Monday, March 28th at 7:30 PM in the Forest Hills Clubhouse.

From the Chicken Coop

By Brian Browne

The Revenue Bond Oversight Committee was created by 2002 Proposition P in a thrust led by Rich Bodisco, the Mayor’s Infrastructure Task Force, Tony Hall (put the legislation on the ballot), Phil Ward, Sean Elsbernd, and the voters. It was the best chance to ensure fiscal oversight for huge expenditures of citizen wealth.

The Revenue Bond Oversight Committee (RBOC) is finally getting attention. All for the good. After eight years the Board of Supervisors is considering its parental responsibility regarding who supports this committee, where it should live, and what it’s supposed to be really doing.

“The SFPUC can pick the ratepayers’ pockets almost at will. \$4.6B for the Water Improvement Project, \$4-\$5B for the sewer overhaul plus power funding (unknown at this point) . . . Water and wastewater estimates are at the \$10B threshold — all to be funded by revenue bonds which are repaid through rate hikes.”



For the first 8 plus years of its life, the RBOC has been a willing ward of the octopus-like SF Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). The RBOC was intended to oversee and monitor the SFPUC’s expenditure of revenue bonds on behalf of ratepayers. It meets monthly in the bowels of the SFPUC. Its voting system, notwithstanding the enabling legislation, has allowed this committee to remain inept as to its mandated mission and ensures that any opposition is muted.

Independent or co-opted? The RBOC has the power to pull the financial plug on the issuance of revenue bonds as a result of its *independent* audits. This is a contradiction in terms for this committee. Three contracts have been issued by this committee to the same consultant. None of those contractual processes were *independent* of SFPUC influence. The last *independent* contract was signed by the General Manager (April 2009) of the SFPUC without a full vote by the full committee. The City Attorney compelled the RBOC to bring this contract to the full committee for approval (September 2009).

Final Straw The SFPUC can pick the ratepayers’ pockets almost at will. \$4.6B for the Water Improvement Project, \$4-\$5B for the sewer overhaul plus power funding (unknown at this point) means \$10B plus is not an overestimation of SFPUC spending plans. How much on power depends on the political will to implement Community Choice Aggregation (Migden AB117)? Water and wastewater estimates are at the \$10B threshold — all to be funded by revenue bonds which are repaid through rate hikes.

The marginal increase per unit (748 gallons) of wholesale (city gate) water under a fixed coupon and term scenario (4.6% and 25 year) is shown below. The amount of water delivered (denominator in the \$/unit) also affects cost. 239MGD (million gallons per day) is what SFPUC and the Peninsula forecast as the long-term Hetch Hetchy system reliable delivery average based on hydrologic history and system integrity. 251 MGD is the average delivery of the Hetch Hetchy system for the 25 year period between the two water agreements (1984/2009) between San Francisco and its Peninsula customers. 265 MGD is the number used to set water assurances between the City and its suburban customers.

-subcommittee) of the RBOC agreed that academia would be a productive place to look for such independent and overarching multidisciplinary input. Over a three-year process of requesting letters of interest and engaging in dialog with great universities. UCLA (Luskin Institute) and UC Berkeley (UCB) emerged as contenders. They agreed to co-submit. UCLA dropped out, due to work load, after the first rounds and a spirited, productive and intense negotiation continued with UCB. UCB requested, and the RBOC provided, a detailed history of all aspects of the WSIP. UCB then submitted an excellent draft scope of work. This entire process was the most transparent and competitive contractual process to date by the RBOC. It was abruptly terminated in mid-process, without real prior notification. It must be reinstated to gain back voter confidence in so-called *independent* oversight.

To bring this process to a final milestone, for contractual negotiations, and move forward toward a contract, a motion to hire UCB was made at the RBOC meeting of 1/24/11. It was defeated with only one affirmative vote (author). The usual naysayers appeared like well organized parrots. This occurrence at RBOC meetings is a regular menu item. Cost to ratepayers is yet to be quantified. Their statements clearly lacked detailed knowledge of the exhaustive search and negotiation process undertaken to date.

One contrarian rationalized away the idea of a systemic approach by saying the RBOC could only look at capital costs. This would mean the SFPUC could build a major dam in a dry river bed with revenue bonds and the RBOC could not ask why. Proposition P is about the efficacy of revenue bond expenditures. The question of debt service remaining inelastic over such a large price hike has never been properly addressed.

A previous study (2 years ago) by the SFPUC failed to adequately answer this question. It was based on very relatively rate changes, and the model innards were never revealed to this writer. If demand becomes elastic, even a 1 percent price increase would cause a greater than 1 percent decrease in demand and total system revenues after the rate (price) increase would decrease. Such a situation would be devastating for paying debt service. The professors were willing to do a thorough

Add-On Wholesale Rate Increases Required to Retire the \$4.6BN WISP Debt		
264 Million Gallons Per Day	251 Million Gallons Per Day	239 Million Gallons Per Day
\$2.42/Unit	\$2.56/Unit	\$2.69/Unit

These amounts only include those increases required to service the \$4.6 billion debt. Other embedded and escalated costs that increase rates are not included.

SFPUC has promised to fix San Francisco’s aging Hetch Hetchy system by 12/31/2015. Without questioning the quality of the three prior RBOC studies, it was clear another study, by an independent team of dedicated researchers, was required immediately – a study that should ask and answer:

“Can the SFPUC complete the current Water Supply Improvement program on time (12/31/2015) and on budget (\$4.6 Billion)?”

The Contracts Working Group (CWG

analysis of this frightening prospect.

The 44 member strong Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, after considering this academic thrust, unanimously endorsed using UCB and urged the RBOC to move forward immediately. An activist suggested that because of the time constraints and importance of the subject that the Board be asked ASAP to provide a legal exception (if required under law) because of the incredible importance of the subject, time constraints (RBOC sunsets on 12/31/2012 and WSIP must be legally completed by 12/31/15) and the unique and extensive set of skills found at UCB (together with other academic

Cont. p. 12

WE'RE ALSO ON THE WEB

www.westsideobserver.com

Revenue Shortfalls: Discontinue The Arboretum Fee



By Elias Moosa

February 25, 2011: New information from the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) reveals that the non-resident fee at the Arboretum and Botanical Garden is performing poorly compared to expectations. Given the devastating impact of this fee on non-resident attendance, the facts argue it is time to discontinue the fee and provide support for ordinance #110113 currently sponsored by Supervisors Avalos, Mirkarimi, Mar, Kim and Campos.

The Arboretum, now named the Botanical Garden at the Strybing Arboretum, was established by Helene Strybing as a gift to the City and was free for nearly 70 years until Mayor Newsom's RPD directors, pushed to establish a fee for all as a means of turning the 55 acres of Golden Gate Park into a tourist revenue-generating destination.

Contrary to RPD director Phil Ginsburg's claim that the non-resident fee was initiated in 2010 as a pilot program, the initial effort to establish the fee was by then director Jared Blumenfeld in 2009 when it failed to gain support and was rejected by the Supervisors of the Budget Committee. It was at this point that Mr. Blumenfeld informed the Rec & Park Commission that, "We will start by charging non-residents."

In 2010, new director Phil Ginsburg re-introduced the non-resident fee in the midst of a fiscal crisis and tied it to firing gardeners from the Arboretum, claiming that it would generate \$650,000 of revenue and \$250,000 of net income. It was intended to be permanent until Supervisor Avalos, with support from his colleagues on the Board, introduced amendments demanded by citizens active in keeping the Arboretum Free that included a clause to 'sunset' the fee on June 30, 2011, and also allowing it to be eliminated by authority of law if new tax money was adopted which could be used by RPD at the Botanical Garden for operations and maintenance. This latter amendment led to Supervisor Avalos introducing ordinance #110113, to be heard shortly before the Budget & Finance Committee that can terminate the fee as soon as March 17, 2011.

Also contrary to Mr. Ginsburg's recent claim that the fee was partially intended to support recreation directors, the RPD fired 166 recreation and assistant recreation directors (average pay \$37,000/year) in August 2010, after the fee was passed by the Board, and then hired seven property managers and other senior managers at salaries of \$125,000/year.

The fee has fared poorly: Analysis of gate returns suggest that the fee program is falling short. Now, RPD Director Ginsberg estimates that about \$405,000 can be generated this year – a roughly 38% shortfall from the \$650,000 promised. Mr. Ginsburg proposes to still deliver \$250,000 of income, but this figure is a result of unsustainable accounting maneuvers such as counting capital costs and membership dues towards the fee program's bottom line. By using accounting gimmicks and not reflecting the true costs of operating the fee program, RPD's forecasts appear disingenuous. San Francisco law-makers are urged to consider the facts about the fee and not the failed promise and

financial maneuverings of the RPD.

The impact of the fee has been harsh: Gate counts also suggest that non-resident visitation is down 70% from the pre-fee estimates the RPD was using. The severe drop in non-resident attendance means that many Bay Area visitors are permanently turned off from the Arboretum. Resident attendance is also down with many visitors comparing the inside of the garden with a tomb. Hours of operation are down to 10am to 4pm since operating the gates now costs money – prior to the fee, gates were often open at 8am, and closed very late afternoon. All this is a grave disservice to the legacy of the Arboretum, to the citizens of San Francisco and to all who visit our city.

To maintain this misguided fee program is harmful: RPD's forecasts regarding the fee have proven unreliable and to again depend on them to formulate policy would be careless. Our Mayor and Supervisors must direct the RPD to find a solution that keeps the Arboretum free and open to all as before and reverse the goal of converting it to a revenue-generating tourist attraction. The Arboretum is a special public garden occupying 5.5% of the Golden Gate Park and has been operated free for 70 years. The financial benefit of the fee is too little and the harm to the Arboretum is too great to follow RPD's goal of making this underperforming fee program permanent. Eventually, RPD's goal is to institute fees for all – including residents.

Keep Arboretum Free urges RPD, the Mayor and our Supervisors to work with the community to reverse the fee and find sustainable sources of funding for the RPD. A first step would be to implement ordinance 110113 to remove the fee program and halt the damage being done to the Arboretum.

Elias Moosa, www.keeparboretumfree.org, keeparboretumfree@earthlink.net

Wisconsin Events Don't Affect Pension Reform

By Jeff Adachi

While the Tea Party and others who do not value government may be rejoicing at the oppressive tactics of Wisconsin's governor, the effect here in California may be very different, although equally negative. Most Californians probably see Governor Scott Walker's tactics for what they are—a blatant attempt to hobble government, cripple unions, and ultimately, undercut the Democratic Party. It goes without saying that Governor Walker's actions are deeply polarizing, and, by cutting off communication between workers and the State, anti-democratic.

Many in the union movement fear that Governor Walker's actions will have a domino effect, and encourage other states to eliminate unions' bargaining rights. However, the danger nationally is just the opposite: despite the urgent need to solve the current pension and health benefits crisis, elected leaders who are beginning to address this crisis will shy away, for fear of being branded Walker "clones."

leaders understood the consequences of their actions at the time. And, of course the entire pyramid scheme on which enhanced public pensions were based was the financial markets – which, it turns out, was manipulated by financial gurus whose incentives ran only toward their own greed. We should not have been fooled; but, of course, almost everyone was.

For unions, there is a message as well.



"The Tea Party is intent on reducing both the size and cost of government. Pension reform is one way to do that. However, progressive Democratic leaders support pension reform for a very different reason: because pensions and retiree health benefits are "crowding out" essential government services..."

And some unions may be tempted to take advantage of this "Wisconsin Effect," to put off the hard discussions on pension reform.

While both supporters and opponents of government may agree that pension reform is essential, they support pension reform for different reasons. The Tea Party is intent on reducing both the size and cost of government. Pension reform is one way to do that. However, progressive Democratic leaders support pension reform for a very different reason: because pensions and retiree health benefits are "crowding out" essential government services, from police and fire, potholes and education, to the social "safety net." This is a very important distinction.

What can't be disputed is that in order to save local and state governments, pension reform is absolutely essential, and it must happen now.

It is not a matter of blame. Public unions are not villains for having sought better retirement benefits. One could blame the politicians who granted the benefits, but the truth is very few

The Wisconsin unions are willing to contribute more towards their pensions and benefits. But it should not have taken the draconian threat of losing collective bargaining rights to obtain this agreement. Although it is not easy for union leaders to convince their rank and file to pay more for their benefits, it is important that they do not treat the current problem as a typical negotiation in which the less the employees "give," the better the deal. The unions' interest in saving jobs and services is at least as great as the public's. The jobs we are going to lose are union jobs; the services we are going to lose will hurt everyone, including union members.

The political outcome from Wisconsin won't change the fact that local and state governments are in deep trouble. Most governments will not declare bankruptcy; unlike Vallejo, they will just become increasingly less able to provide basic services if we cannot take on the hard issues of pension reform. The "Wisconsin Effect" is no excuse for delay.

Jeff Adachi is SF's Public Defender. Feedback: adachi@westsideobserver.com

Kopp (Cont. from p. 5)

state revenue and authorized expenditures. Unless circumstances change wildly, I'll urge all readers to do the same. If, as forecasted, Governor Brown and the legislature agree on a special election on June 7, 2011, one can expect a plethora of local ballot measures. A special election presents opportunities for our busy City Hall denizens. One set of proposals will emanate from the Municipal Railway, aka Municipal Transportation Agency, including a potential charge of \$150 annually to register vehicles, a tax of perhaps \$200 per parcel and even a "transportation utility" tax of maybe \$180 every year for each San Francisco household. (The registration fee is dubbed "Vehicle Mitigation Impact" fee. Don't you just love bureaucratic "newspeak"?)

Each of the aforementioned taxes, however, requires a super-majority approval by two thirds of those voting. I doubt that most voters, especially motorists, will rush to raise taxes for a government which openly proclaims the need to issue more parking tickets and elevate parking meter charges for more revenue, but eternal hope manifestly controls City Hall bureaucrats so batten down the hatches.

One proposal which genuinely could generate voter enthusiasm emanates from a magnificent analysis by Budget Analyst Harvey M. Rose and may reach submission to San Francisco voters at any such special election. I predict San Franciscans will jump at it. Arising from a proposed

resolution to authorize the Department of the Environment (DOE) to execute a new Landfill Disposal Agreement with the renamed NorCal Waste, now known as "Recology San Francisco" ("Recology") for ten years, using Recology property in Yuba County as the City's landfill site, Mr. Rose's report to the Board of Supervisors strikes a blow for garbage rate payers in San Francisco who for nearly two decades have been subjected to ever-rising collection fees. There was a time when San Francisco boasted the lowest garbage fees in the state, governed by the Refuse Collection and Disposal Ordinance of 1932,

as approved by San Francisco voters. Now, our garbage rates are among the highest. That ordinance created 97 permanent garbage collec-

tions permits. Eventually all permits were acquired for residential collection by Sunset Scavenger, while Golden Gate Disposal handled commercial property collection. Those two firms were merged into NorCal Waste, Inc., and garbage rates began to soar without competitive bidding. Now, DOE forecasts that capacity of the city's current landfill site in Livermore will be exhausted by 2015. The existing agreement with Waste Management Co. will then expire. Garbage disposal, unlike collection, can be let for competitive bidding. DOE, thus, proposes to award the disposal contract to Recology and allow Recology to include an additional rail transport fee

Cont. p. 6



**Welcome to the
San Francisco
Botanical Garden**

BY STRYBING ARBORETUM

Celebrating the bond between people and plants

Admission

\$7	Adults (Non-San Francisco Residents)
\$5	Youth ages 12-17; Students (with valid ID); Seniors (65+)
\$2	Children ages 5-11
\$15	Family Pass
FREE	San Francisco City & County residents with proof of residency (valid California ID OR current utility bill + photo ID)
FREE	SF Botanical Garden Society Members (Memberships available at kiosk and online)
FREE	Children ages 4 and under

The Garden is FREE to all visitors on the 2nd Tuesday of every month, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Westside Real Estate Report / Jed Lane

Death Blows to the American Dream

Homeownership in America: will it remain an attainable part of the American dream or will it become ridiculously prohibitive and a rare occurrence. The political leadership in the nation's capital is talking about ending the mortgage interest tax deduction (MID) and they are also actively exploring how to reduce the government's involvement in the mortgage market. If either one of these changes is implemented there will be consequences that will change real estate drastically. If both are implemented, it will be like tossing everything into the proverbial fan.

Financing real estate for purchase or using real estate as a security for a debt has been in existence almost a thousand years. The evolution to our current situation only goes back to the end of the Great Depression. Prior to the 1930's a borrower typically needed 50% down payment to qualify for a mortgage. The mortgage was to be repaid in 5 to 10 years while the interest on the loan was paid monthly. Franklin Roosevelt started the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), which insured mortgages thereby removing much of the risk from the private sector. Roosevelt also created the Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA or Fannie Mae) to buy mortgages from the local savings and loan. This created the secondary mortgage market; by buying the loan the money is replaced and the savings and loan can lend to another borrower. Fannie Mae would in turn sell the mortgage as a security in the financial market. The 30 year amortized loan, so common now, was started at this time. After the last world war the demand for homes skyrocketed because of the GI Bill and the development of the interstate highways. For many years this worked well. The S&L made money from fees and servicing the loan, the government made money selling the bonds to Wall Street and the investors made money while people bought more homes.

By the end of the 1980's the S&Ls were reeling from inflation and high interest rates. The national leadership of the time decided that deregulation of the S&L industry was the method needed to stabilize the mortgage market and the S&Ls. As it turned out then the lack of regulation coupled with the depositor insurance allowed the S&L owners to make even riskier loans bringing the crisis to a head and forcing the seizure of over 1,000 S&Ls and a loss of \$160 Billion dollars. From then till now the mortgage market has been based on competitive loan offerings by banks and private equity funders. Most of the loans were sold to either Fannie Mae or other government sponsored enterprises (GSE) such as Freddie Mac or Ginnie Mae or to investors in the form of securitized bonds. Believing in removal of the GSEs which currently are buying 95% of all mortgages on the secondary market is akin to believing that the stock market is a good place for your retirement funds; it all looks good on paper as long as you don't have much memory or need your funds when the market has dived. Believing that private markets will make affordable, fair mortgages available is turning a blind eye to the recent abuses that have occurred. It wasn't the GSEs that decided to offer 120% loan to value mortgages, or no down payment loans. It wasn't the GSEs that decided it wasn't necessary to check credit ratings or verify income. Actually it was the private money market that saw an opportunity to make a profit and its excesses were natural. Money seeks more money, it doesn't seek regulation, it doesn't have morals and it just seeks profit till those profits dry up then it moves to another market. Doing it now, with the market as it is, would be a disaster.

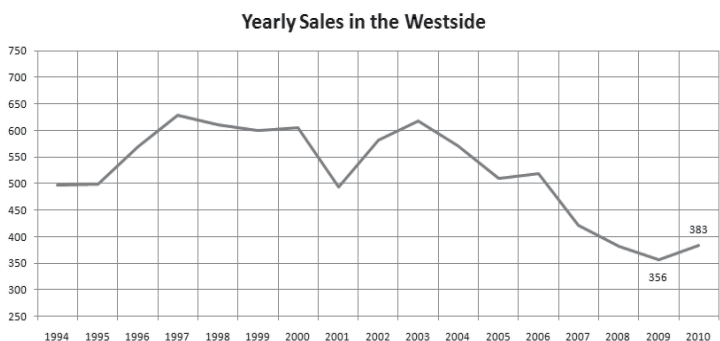
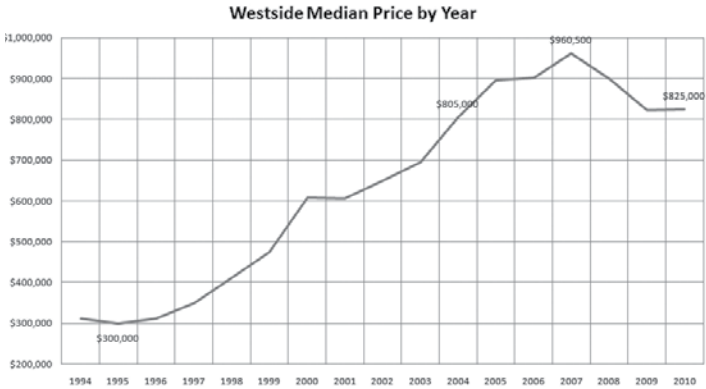
The mortgage interest deduction (MID) has been part of the tax code since the beginning. All interest was deductible, but then most interest was part of business expenses since few homeowners had mortgages. Remember that till the 1940's most property was bought with 50% down and a short term mortgage. With homeownership rates of 67% in America now, many can deduct the interest they pay banks for their home loans. Most arguments for ending the MID center on either the lack of real effect it will have on homeownership rates, because of the value of the standard deduction versus the mortgage interest deduction, or that it allows people to buy more home than they need. Not in San Francisco! The median price in the Westside for 2010 was \$825,000 while the median for the US is still below \$300,000. The difference between the tax savings from the interest deduction for our price and the national price is \$7,000 dollars when using a 28% tax bracket, 6% interest, 30 year amortization and 20% down payments on each property. The median American saves \$4,429/year while the median San Franciscan saves \$11,446 in taxes paid.

While the MID is one of the last middle-class income tax deductions it seems to benefit the lenders more than the homeowner. When interest rates are much higher than now lenders can still make loans because the interest isn't taxed, and why should it be taxed when paid? Shouldn't it be taxed when received by the banks as income or profit?

To the market report - Westside values are slightly above where they were in 2004, \$825,000 now versus \$805,000 in '04. The volume of sales is down by more than half from 2004 when it hit its peak of 617 units sold in our area. Sales volume has grown 7% from the sales volume in 2009.

If you want or need to sell now, you need to prepare well and be realistic. If you want to buy in any of our lovely areas, this is a great time regardless of all the brouhaha. You will love living on the Westside of the City.

Jed Lane is a Realtor & Real Estate Broker associated with Coldwell Banker's Lakeside office. He is a Westside native and resident. If you have questions or comments contact him at jed@westsideobserver.com



MONEY MATTERS

Uncle Sam, Retirement and Being Self Employed

By Brandon Miller, CFP and Joanne Jordan, CFP



Being your own boss at this time of year can feel more like you work for Uncle Sam than for yourself. By the time you pay federal, state and self-employment taxes (for Social Security and Medicare)—not to mention what you owe if you have employees—your wallet may be feeling pretty thin. But there are several (legal) ways you can keep more of your earnings for yourself—and build your investments for the future.

You're probably already familiar with a traditional IRA (Individual Retirement Account). It lets you contribute up to \$5,000 – \$6,000 if you're 50 or over—and deduct that amount from your taxable income. It's a quick and easy way to reduce your taxes now. Of course, when you're ready to withdraw your money, Uncle Sam will be there with his hand out and you'll have to pay taxes at the going rate.

A Roth IRA reverses this arrangement and has you pay taxes now at today's tax rate, which may be lower than when you retire. While this doesn't reduce your tax bill now, it does allow you to have tax-free distributions during retirement. And like a traditional IRA, you can contribute up to \$5,000 or \$6,000 if you're 50 or over.

Both plans have some restrictions based on your income bracket, marital status and other factors, so check with a tax or investment advisor to make sure you qualify.

While investing in a traditional or Roth IRA can help keep you from dining on cat food during your retirement, you may be seeking more significant tax advantages and investment opportunities.

If you're totally on your own with no employees, consider a SEP IRA (Simplified Employee Pension). Like a traditional IRA, it reduces your current taxable income, but the government takes its cut when you take out money later. The difference is that this plan lets you contribute up to 25% of your self-employment earnings up to a maximum of \$49,000. That translates into significantly more money in your pocket today and during retirement. One drawback is that you need to know your income before you know exactly how much you can contribute. But you have until the April 15th tax deadline to set up and fund this plan for 2010.

If you want your retirement years to be more fabulous than frugal, you may want to look at a Solo 401(k). For most individuals, this plan allows even higher contributions—and therefore tax deductions—than a SEP. You can contribute up to \$16,500 (\$22,000 if you're 50 or over), plus an additional \$32,500 in profit-sharing contributions. The actual amount is based on a percentage of your net income. If your spouse is your only employee, he or she can contribute this same amount.

(This is a bit of a grey area if you're a same-sex couple, so please see an investment professional for advice.)

A Solo 401(k) is very easy to set up and administer and there are no income restrictions that would keep you from contributing. If you don't need to lower your tax bill, you can even set up all or part of your contributions as a Roth Solo 401(k) for tax-free distributions later.

If you have a small staff, a SIMPLE IRA may work well for you. While you "save now, pay later" on taxes like a traditional IRA, both you and your employees can contribute up to \$11,500 per year—\$14,000 for that magic age of 50 or over. Employees do not have to contribute. But as the employer, you are required to match 1-3% of each employee's annual salary. That means you have to ensure the ability to fund contributions each year for each employee. The good news though, is that

your taxable income is reduced by the amount you contribute for yourself and your employees. And as its name implies, a

SIMPLE IRA is simple and inexpensive to administer.

If you run a slightly larger or more profitable business, you can set up a regular 401(k). Maximum annual contributions for you and your employees is \$16,500 or \$22,000 for those 50 or older. While you'll need a third-party administrator for the required annual compliance, these plans are becoming easier for smaller companies to establish. In fact, many payroll services will now set up and administer a 401(k) for you. Besides the tax advantages, having a 401(k) plan can help you hire and retain great employees, which can lead to even greater profitability.

Our lawyers would like us to remind you that all of these plans have restrictions, including deadlines for plan set up, contributions and distributions. Make sure you understand your plan so you can meet your obligations.

Armed with the right advice and plan, you can keep Uncle Sam from taking more than his fair share at tax time—and fund your dreams for the future as well.

Brandon Miller, CFP and Joanne Jordan, CFP are financial consultants at Jordan Miller & Associates, of Ameriprise Financial Inc. We specialize in helping LGBT individuals and families plan and achieve their financial goals. Info: www.ameripriseadvisors.com/brandon.j.miller/profile/

RESIDENTIAL

Now only

DRAIN CLEANING

\$98.00

CABRILLO

Plumbing Heating & Cooling

OPEN 7 DAYS

\$98 Drain Cleaning

800-908-3888

DiscoverCabrillo.com

CABRILLO

Plumbing Heating & Cooling

Some terms and conditions apply. Please call for details. This special offer expires 4-30-11. Not valid with other offers or discounts.

LIC#629538



333 Oak Park Drive The Best of Both Worlds: Artistic and contemporary retreat-like home with panoramic views.

Exceptionally elegant & spacious entertainer's dream home. Fully detached mid-century architecture. Wood burning fireplace. 2 levels. 3 bedrooms & 2 bathrooms. Gourmet kitchen. Newer modern and spacious cabinetry. Corian counters. Ceramic floor tiles. Upscale appliances. Formal living room, formal dining room. Family/media room. Solid oak hardwood flooring. Patio, garden and large wooded lot. Dynamic views. 2 car side by side parking & storage. Central San Francisco location near the center of the City—minutes from The Haight, Castro, Noe Valley, West Portal, Irving and 9th Avenue.

Nestled nearby a number of ideal hiking trails around Mt. Sutro and Twin Peaks with simply amazing views.

Offered at \$875,000



John Kirkpatrick

Superior Performance. Superlative Results®



415 412-0559 | john@johnkirkpatrick.com | www.johnkirkpatrick.com | DRE#00921345

**Discover.
Connect.
Take Action.**



What's next in your life?

Get inspired, find your passion, and chart your path to a fulfilled future through *Coming of Age* programs, workshops & volunteer opportunities!

Registration is now open for new "Explore Your Future" workshops in San Francisco & the East Bay. Visit www.ComingofAge.org/BayArea or call (888) 308-1767 for more info.

**Capturing the Talent,
Energy & Expertise of People 50+**

ADDITION & GARAGE BUILDER

DESIGN/PERMIT & BUILD SERVICES

FOUNDATION & RETAINING WALL
FRAMING & STRUCTURAL UPGRADE
DECK, BALCONY & WATER DAMAGE REPAIR
SOFT STORY EARTHQUAKE UPGRADE



More than 20 Years of Experience
Civil Engineer Lic.#043437
General Contractor Lic.#564297

415-747-1000

SAFE ENGINEERING



www.SanFranciscoFoundationConstruction.com

A STERLING SALON & SPA

hair, skin and body

Spring Clean Your Image

Come to reserve your, **FREE Reflective Color with Haircut**
New Cuts, Colors, Styles, Make up Technique right from fashion week



Smart Beauty, to reinvent your Image with an edgy, polished look

Sunday March 13th 4 til 7
Presentation & Refreshments

Please RSVP
Paul Strom Salon - 450 Dondee Way Suite 8 - Pacifica
650 - 219 - 5776

Retail wines and by the glass

Tues-Thur: 4-10 pm • Fri, Sat & Sun: 3:30-11 pm
Closed Monday

Tuesday Happy Hour

\$1 off all wines by the glass from 4-8 pm

Now serving

TAPAS

On Thursdays

Small Plates \$3 - \$7

Also available for private events

230 W Portal Avenue

415.731.7000



Que Syrah
a wine bar

specializing in small production wines

A place to share and care.

"Residents are the heart of our community."



Assisted Living | Memory Care

Join us for information about Alzheimer's disease and dementia care Sunday, March 27.

415.335.4867 | www.almaviaoofsanfrancisco.org

ALMAVIA
of SAN FRANCISCO
an ELDER CARE ALLIANCE community

AlmaVia, an Elder Care Alliance community, a nonprofit organization, is cosponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas West Midwest Community & the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. RCFE Lic # 385600270.

Sebastopol Center for the Arts Presents

SEBASTOPOL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

March 18-20, 2011

At Sebastopol Center for the Arts,
Sebastopol Cinemas, Sebastopol Youth Annex,
Hopmonk Tavern, Guayaki Yerba Mate Bar,
& GTO's Seafood House

sebastopolfilmfestival.org



Hunkered down under piles of blankets and layers of clothing, many were disappointed when snow did not happen. Many news outlets had been predicting. Snow is a rare sight in San Francisco with the last memorable **snowfall** occurring in 1976. City officials and planners were preparing trucks ready to spread sand on the icy slopes. As a transplanted Easterner, but being here almost 30 years, I cannot recall any city where freezing temperatures and icy roads could be more hazardous. (OK maybe Pittsburgh.) Heck, even our driveways are steeper than most hills in many parts of the country. At least we did get to have a colder version of our “normal” winter weather with ice forming on windshields, and wind chill temperatures below freezing. Were you scraping your windshield with a credit card too?

The **race for Mayor** is heating up with former District 7 Supervisor Tony Hall, and former District 2 Supervisor Michaela Alioto-Pier joining the race, as well as current City Attorney Dennis Herrera. It will be a crowded field as Board President David Chiu, Assessor Phil Ting, former District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty, State Senator Leland Yee, and venture capitalist Joanna Rees also launching their campaigns to succeed interim Mayor Ed Lee. I’m sure the number of candidates will continue to rise, as we get closer to spring. We look forward to many positive ideas and workable solutions from the candidates to continue to make San Francisco the great city that we all cherish. *Publisher’s note: With Tony Hall’s entry into the race, he will be taking an extended hiatus as an Observer columnist until the Mayoral results are in.*

“Great Eats” dept...for a brunch or dinner change of pace, guide your car (or Muni) down Upper Market to **Tangerine Restaurant**. Located at the corner of 16th and Sanchez it is an Asian-fusion restaurant with an extensive menu for brunch or dinner. I was there last weekend for brunch, and the food is terrific. My “blue crab” omelet

was the best I’ve had outside of my ancestral Maryland haunts. No reservations are accepted for brunch, so get there early. For a most romantic dinner that will take you back in time (with Frank or Dean on the jukebox) take a drive down Skyline Blvd., just South of hwy 92 to the **Bella Vista**. It’s a great “old-school” type of restaurant with great food, desserts like soufflés made to order, a very romantic destination. A bit of a drive, but one of the great hideaways from the past that is still delivering great food, service and ambiance.

B of A Newsflash....The Bank Of America on West Portal Avenue was robbed at gunpoint on Saturday, February 26 at about 3:00 PM. If you have any information or insight that will help the police get in touch with the SFPD’s Tara-val Station.

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

VICTORIA TOBAR D.M.D.

Family and Cosmetic Dentistry

A professional and friendly neighborhood dentist, specializing in high quality dental care.

NEW PATIENT SPECIAL

Complete Exam, Full set of X-rays and Cleaning for \$99.* (\$344 value)
*non-insurance patients only

800 Santiago Street, Suite A
At the corner of 19th Avenue, San Francisco

415 566-2222
www.drviCTORIATobar.com

All New Adult Patients Receive a FREE Gift!



These are just a few of the trees that will be cut down if the water treatment facility is built in Golden Gate Park.

209 More Reasons to Protect Golden Gate Park

Katherine Howard, ASLA

The SFPUC met with the public on February 15th and discussed adding five alternative water treatment plant sites to the Environmental Impact Report. All of these sites are outside of Golden Gate Park.

Why is this important? First, let’s review the reasons for this industrial facility. San Francisco is mandated by the State to develop alternative sources of drinking water for the future. As a result, the SFPUC is going to build a large water treatment plant somewhere in the western part of San Francisco. This plant will take the secondary output of the Oceanside sewage treatment plant and process it further into what is known as tertiary treated water.

Currently, water from the aquifer under Golden Gate Park is used to irrigate the Park. Once the new water treatment plant is completed, the resulting tertiary treated water will be used to irrigate Golden Gate Park. The water from the aquifer underneath Golden Gate Park will then be pumped out for drinking water for the western part of San Francisco.

Finding another site is important for keeping this 40,000 square foot industrial building out of our parkland. But the massive building is only part of the problem. The construction site takes up four acres. According to a recently released report, the project will result in the removal of 136 trees and the threat of removal or damage to an additional 73 trees. These trees are all located in the western end of Golden Gate Park and are part of the windbreak that protects the rest of the Park from the brisk winds that blow constantly off of the Pacific Ocean.

Way back in the 1870’s, Golden Gate Park’s surveyor and designer, William Hammond Hall, had to find a way to stabilize the sand dunes, before he could start to establish the green park that San Franciscans know and love today. A combination of native plants and imported seeds helped to get the area stabilized. From those first plantings, and with the application of the abundant manure from the streets of San Francisco, the first topsoil and new plantings were developed; this is the windbreak that now protects all of Golden Gate Park.

The western section has been reforested since that time, partly as a result of the 1980 Golden Gate Park Forestry Management Plan, when many of the current trees were planted. But this new building project will remove many of the trees planted at that time. The Park’s windbreak trees must be retained, both for the Park’s protection and for the enjoyment of future generations of San Franciscans.

Please talk to your Supervisor and the SFPUC, and encourage them in the search for new locations for this industrial facility outside of Golden Gate Park.

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



Janet Moyer Landscaping is a full-service landscaping company specializing in sustainable landscapes

One of the “100 Fastest Growing Private Companies” in the Bay Area
SF Business Times, 2008 & 2009

Award winning design - “Outstanding Achievement” Award
California Landscape Contractors Association, 2007 & 2008

415-821-3760 · 1031 Valencia Street, San Francisco · jmoyerlandscaping.com


Landscape Contractor License 853919 · Pest Control License 36389

53 WEST PORTAL AVE.
665-(ROTI)7684

Roti

INDIAN BISTRO

WWW.ROTIBISTRO.COM
RSVP/CATERING/PARTIES
RUSTOM SWALEH



EXPERIENCE WORLD CLASS DINING
LUNCH: TU-SA 11:30AM-2PM • DINNER: SU/TH 5-10:30PM/FR-SA 5-11PM

SECOND THOUGHTS / By Jack Kaye

Who are We and What Do We Want?

Being a native American born in our nation's largest city of immigrant parents, I always thought I had a clear idea of who we Americans are and therefore, what we wanted.

I knew that ours was an international country with many of the best qualities of other homelands. Our people had a bit of the charm of the Irish, the warmth of the Italians, the hard work ethic of the Germans, the integrity of the Hungarians (I added this because my mother was Hungarian) and the childlike simplicity of a humble Latin American Latin American. We were free and loved our freedom. We were generous and shared our prosperity with the less fortunate. We gave everyone a chance to be the best that they can be, just like the slogan of our all-volunteer army.

In America a foreigner could enter our land legally, learn our language and culture, become a citizen after renouncing all others (kind of like a wedding vow) and be considered an American as would his or her children, born in this country as I was.

When our President campaigned for office, he told us that there is one America, not two or three, but just one. There was no Blue America or Red America. There was no Italian-American or Hungarian-American or Black-American. We are all Americans. This idea, like so many in life, is both true and false.

Compared to people of other lands, we are all the same. We're like the Bette Midler song "From a Distance." From a distance we are all Americans, but the closer you get, the more different we seem.

We saw it in the past election. A black candidate got more than 90% of the black vote but lost the white vote to his absurdly inferior rival in every age category except for that of our youngest voters. If an American of Asian, Hispanic or Jewish heritage runs for office, he or she can be sure to get the vast majority of his or her group's members' votes. So much for our non-hyphenated equality.

We have somehow forgotten the notion that an American must renounce all other citizenships. Some



X + Y = Success????

By Carol Kocivar © 2011

We learn lots of lessons when our children are in middle school.



- There is the amnesia lesson: Your child no longer recognizes you in public places.
- There is the 'stylin' lesson: Nothing you wear is ok with your 13 year old. Nothing.
- There is the 'who is right' lesson: Clue—it is never mom.
- Then there is the math lesson: Should your child really take algebra in the 8th grade?

When my kids were attending Herbert Hoover Middle School in San Francisco, they had a really great math teacher—Shirley Huizenga. And as they moved from 7th to 8th grade, we had the math discussion.

Both kids were doing fine in math. No problems. But should they take 8th grade math or go for algebra?

Mrs. Huizenga was not one to push for algebra just for the sake of getting a head start on high school math. No, she carefully assessed each student's math facts and skills and made a recommendation. There is no rush. Let's make sure they have everything down. They can take it in 9th grade.

So my kids did not hop on the algebra train early. And I am here to tell you they did just fine in high school and college math.

So it is with more than just a little bit of personal experience that I have watched the push for all kids to take algebra in middle school—the great gate keeper to their future.

Is the equation $3(2x - 4) = -18$ equivalent to $6x - 12 = -18$? (I just threw that in to see if you are paying attention.)

A recent report from EdSource on the subject finds that "California's Push for Algebra I in 8th Grade Has Had Mixed Results"

According to the study, "since 2003, California schools have increased by 80% the number of students taking Algebra I in 8th grade. That change has been most dramatic among low-income, African-American and Latino students, many of whom did not previously have access to the course in the middle grades."

And how did they do? The findings:

- "While the state's push to put students into Algebra I in 8th grade has opened up opportunities for many, it has also had some negative consequences."
- "For the state's most prepared math students (as measured by their 7th grade CST scores), placement into Algebra I in grade 8 appears to have served them well, with these students generally (but not always) scoring *proficient* or higher on the Algebra I CST"
- "Placing all 8th graders into Algebra I, regardless of their preparation, sets up many students to fail."

I told you Mrs. Huizenga was a great teacher.

Read the report for more insight. Go to <http://www.edsource.org/> and look for Improving Middle School Math Performance.

And remember: The sum of two binomials is $5x^2 - 6x$. If one of the binomials is $3x^2 - 2x$, what is the other binomial?

Feedback: kocivar@westsideobserver.com

GGNRA No Dog Allowed?

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) is a Federal agency. They recently released their Dog Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The document and its recommendations would have significant impact on use of Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, Lands End, Sutro Heights, Baker Beach, Fort Point, Fort Mason and Crissy Field. The document is available at all SF Public Libraries and also online at parkplanning.nps.gov/dogplan

The Dog Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement presents several different alternatives for each park in the GGNRA, ranging from "no dogs" to severely restricting off leash areas. Our office wanted to make you aware that public comment on the plan will be accepted through April 14, and that it is important that the GGNRA and National Park Service (NPS) hear the concerns of San Francisco residents.

To comment:

- Online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/dogplan>
- By mail: Frank Dean, General Superintendent, GGNRA

Fort Mason, Building 201, San Francisco, CA 94123

Public Meetings:

March 2, 4 – 8pm, Tamalpais High School, Marin County

March 5, 11am – 4pm, San Francisco State University, Seven Hills Conference Center

March 7, 4 – 8pm, Fort Mason Bldg. A, San Francisco

March 9, 4 – 8pm, Cabrillo School, Pacifica

Comments will be considered during development of the final plan, which is expected to be completed by late Spring/early Summer 2012. When making your comments, please refer to the specific area of the plan you would like to see implemented, and your ideas for alternatives.

If you have any further questions about the Dog Management Plan/Draft EIS, please call the GGNRA at 415-561-4728.

So what is the answer? How do we unite a badly divided nation?—Plato and Aristotle had the answer. I think that they called it the Golden Mean. Buddha had the Middle Path. President Obama has finding common ground. I call it moderation.

of us are trying to see how many passports we can qualify for. Did your great grandmother come from Germany? You can be a German. And if your grandmother was from France, you can also become French. Wasn't there a great-grand parent from Ireland? Let's add that to your nationality shopping cart.

So as our country of melting pot fame becomes one that strives for salad bowls with each difference among us taken to its greatest extremes, we seem to lose our cohesiveness, our national identity.

But in addition to these cultural divides, I think there is a deeper one, one becoming harder to bridge. The polarization of our political parties has created extremists on both sides—the Left and the Right.

The Left is for the underdog. Our underdogs include most minority members, union workers, government employees, the disabled and best of all, illegal immigrants (referred to here as document-free residents). The document-free residents have everything a Left-leaner is looking for. They are usually less educated, unskilled, poor, living in the shadows and unable to fend for themselves.

Many in the Left have lost their faith and declare themselves to be atheists (or just claim to not believe in any of the controversial parts of their religion) primarily because the idea of absolute truth flies in the face of their quest to reduce causes of low self-esteem that violators of objective laws (read "sinners") might feel. They do not believe in Adam and Eve as described in Genesis, but rather in Nature and its laws of natural selection via the survival of the fittest. But they don't want even these laws applied to our least fit, our underdogs, their *raison d'être*. They believe that a force greater than the individual, like the State (or G-d if He exists) should step in and help the helpless. Food stamps should provide food for the hungry, welfare programs should provide for the living needs of the poor and disabled and the government should ensure that all Americans have health care coverage. The underdogs cannot be allowed to fail no matter what Nature demands.

Many in the Right are devoutly religious. The vast majority claim Christianity as their proud national religion whose main teaching is that the way we treat the most needy is the way we treat our Savior. Jesus, Himself, helped the lepers, the poor and the disenfranchised. He demonstrated the ultimate example of noblesse oblige.

But the Right also believes in maintaining the supremacy of the top dog. Their top dogs are the rich and powerful. To the Right, the top dog is everything that America stands for. The top dog works hard to win in whatever he attempts and is not inhibited by objective moral laws or agreed upon rules of conduct to successfully compete. The Ten Commandments, whatever they actually say, are really important until

of business leaders, the Right insists. They don't need a bunch of government regulations to make sure that their product and service are of the highest standard. Business is self regulating, they want us to believe, despite thousands of class-action suits, the BP oil spill, the discrimination against its female employees by the country's largest retail corporation, the manipulation of the energy market in California by large energy companies, the fraud and moral bankruptcy of Enron, Providian, MCI, Countrywide, Arthur Anderson, Lehman Brothers, Bernie Madoff, Goldman Sachs et al notwithstanding. These many examples of systemic failure have failed to dampen their world view.

And while members of the Left, no matter how successful in their own pursuits, still identify with those least able to excel, the members of the Right, no matter how unsuccessful and unlikely to ever be otherwise, identify with the top dogs. They want the rich to get tax breaks because they think that someday they too may join their privileged ranks, disregarding all signs to the contrary. These misguided believers will defend the very people who are exploiting them against the laws and government trying to protect them.

So what is the answer? How do we unite a badly divided nation?

Plato and Aristotle had the answer. I think that they called it the Golden Mean. Buddha had the Middle Path. President Obama has finding common ground. I call it moderation.

We must stop looking for our top dogs or underdogs so that we can see all of our people and attend to their common needs and goals. The rich are much too rich, even for their own good and the poor are too poor even for all their shortcomings. We must have a tax code that is both simple and fair. Our government must free itself of waste, corruption, inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Holes in our safety nets like Social Security and Medicare must be mended. We must stop subsidizing industries that are doing well on their own like agriculture and oil. American businesses, while continuing to work to increase profit, must also strive to make this a better country by treating their American workers and customers fairly. And, it would really help if we stayed out of the affairs of other countries by neither attacking them nor bribing them with foreign aid and military bases to protect them.

And let's go back to being 100 percent Americans and not also citizens of other lands. We marry only one person at a time, why not be a citizen of one country at a time?

Then, perhaps we will truly be, up close as well as at a distance, one nation with a united, non-hyphenated people who know who we are and what we really want.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

THE GREEN HORNET
Playboy Britt Reid/The Green Hornet: Seth Rogen (also co-producer, co-writer) starts cleaning up Los Angeles' criminal element with the aid of Kato: Jay Chou. He hires a new secretary, Lenore Case: Cameron Diaz. His wealthy father, James Reid: Tom Wilkinson and the Daily Sentinel Editor, Mike Axford: Edward James Olmos inspire Britt in his battle against D.A. Scanlon: David Harbour, and L.A.'s leading gangster, Chudnofsky/Bloodnofsky: Christophe Waltz, last year's Supporting Actor Oscar-winner for *Inglorious Basterds*. Interesting cameos include hood Tupper: Edward Furlong and Danny Crystal Cleer: James Franco: each has a few minutes of screen time. Director Michel Gondry keeps the action flowing fast. Comic book violence, profanity.

I AM NUMBER FOUR
A Sci Fi Horror film has high school senior, John: Alex Pettyfor (a British Robert Pattinson-type hunk) and his 'protector-father' figure, Henri: Timothy Oliphant, on the move because they are sought by violent Mogadore males who want to brutally murder all immigrants to Earth from the planet Lorien. They have already killed three of the nine arrivals to Earth and are hot on John's trail; he is Number Four. John is developing an interest in the Paradise, Ohio High School blond shutter-bug, Sarah: Dianna Agron (Glee's head Cheerio). Slightly-built Sam: Callan McAuliffe is bullied by a nasty threesome until John uses some of his extraordinary powers to protect the young man; his hands eject a blue laser light. The arrival of Number 6: Teresa Palmer intensifies the battle. D.J. Caruso directs the 'new kid in town' venture with the complications of intergalactic violence with appeal for teenagers. Profanity, hideous critters.

JUST GO WITH IT
LA plastic surgeon Danny: Adam Sandler almost gets to the altar before being jilted, so part of his story is that he's unhappily married. When new hot date, a school teacher, Palmer: Brooklyn (2010 Swimsuit cover model, Sports Illustrated) Decker, wants to meet the wife he's divorcing, he thinks fast and has his assistant, Katherine: Jennifer Aniston, play the part. She mentions her two kids

and guess who's up for meeting the kids. Daughter Maggie: Bailee Madison comes up with a lousy British accent. Before you know it, they're all in Hawaii...staying at the same resort! Mom's old school nemesis, Devlin Adams: Nicole Kidman, isn't half bad as a comedienne. Her husband, Dave Matthews adds humor. There are some laughs. Wait until Katherine and Devlin have a hula competition! Don't miss the Sexiest Woman Alive (*Esquire*: Oct., 2010) Joanna Damon: Minka Kelly, who dates NYY Derek Jeter and is the granddaughter of actor Richard Ney (who married 1943 Oscar-winner, Mrs. Miniver: Greer Garson). Profanity, near nudity, toilet humor.

JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER 3D
On the big screens on stage during his World Tour at age 16, films and stills of The Bieber's early life are projected. JB's parents captured his entire youth in Ottawa, Canada in movies which are displayed. Only 35 songs are included here, including his duets with Usher, Boyz II Men, Miley Cyrus, and Jaden Smith on the title tune at Madison Square Garden. His crew passes out tickets in the first ten rows to female teens who are crying, screaming, and entranced. The talented, affable youth presents a likeable, if a bit saintly, image. His life, background and the interactions/workings of his crew fill in moments when he's not singing and dancing on stage.

THE MECHANIC
Hitman Arthur Bishop: Jason Stratham works for Dean: Tony Goldwyn and picks up a bundle of big bills after each hit. Everything turns sour when his next hit is on his foster father who raised him, Harry McKenna: Donald Sutherland. Arthur starts to train young, alcoholic Steve McKenna: Ben Foster in the fine art of killing. Directed by Simon West from a screenplay by Richard Wenk with story and screenplay by Lewis John Carlino (nominated for Screenplay Oscar in 1978 and for Writers Guild of America [Best Drama Adapted], 1978 and 1981, [Original] 1969). This well-written action adventure gets into the characters. Profanity, violence, nudity.

NO STRINGS ATTACHED
Newbie doctor-in-residence Emma: Natalie Portman works 72

hours a week and on her rare free ten minutes, phones Adam: Ashton Kutcher to pop over for a quickie in a linen closet or sometimes a hospital bed. Their agreement is for sex only, nothing serious...guess how long that lasts. One drunken night, Adam wakes up wearing a hand towel with full exposure of his bare behind. His father, a comedic TV actor: Alvin: Kevin Kline, starts dating his ex-girlfriend. Supporting cast of friends includes Dr. Metzner: Cary Elwes, Patrice: Greta Gerwig, Lucy: Lake Bell, Wallace: Ludacris and Sandra: Talia Balsam. Portman should pray that Academy voters had already cast their ballots for her work in *Black Swan* before seeing this lightweight fluff and change their vote for Annette Bening's skilled performance in *The Kids Are Alright*. Ivan Reitman directs. Profanity, nudity.

UNKNOWN
For a mesmerizing suspense tale, the best is *Unknown*! Lecturer at a Green Bio Tech conference in Berlin, Dr. Martin Harris: Liam Neesom leaves his wife, Elizabeth: January Jones behind at their hotel when he returns to the airport to retrieve his missing briefcase. Unfortunately, his cab plunges into the Elbe River and he dies for a few seconds, until his cab driver, Gina: Diane Kruger, rescues him. Unconscious, he is treated at a local hospital, is in a coma for four days, and doesn't recall his identity until he sees a TV report on the conference. When he gets to the meeting, Martin finds Dr. Harris: Aidan Quinn is already there. A nurse gives him the contact of a tracer of missing persons, Ernst Jürgen: Bruno Ganz, whom he hires to prove his identity. His oldest friend, Bradley Cole: Frank Langella comes to his aid then all hell breaks loose. Men appear who are trying to murder Martin and the casualty list around him grows. Jaume Collet-Serra skillfully directs the screenplay by Oliver Butcher and Stephen Cornwell from a novel by Didier Van Cauwelaert, a French novelist-scenarist. This is one of those rare movies where you never suspect what is going to happen next. Profanity, violence.



Dr. Annette Lust



Flora Lynn Isaacson

AT THE THEATER • By Dr Annette Lust and Flora Lynn Isaacson

COLLAPSE
Although the title *Collapse* by Allison Moore playing until March 6 at the Aurora may evoke a psychological breakdown or the physical crumpling of an individual, or of a building, city, state or nation and beyond, the play is actually written and played quite the opposite to that of a tragic theme. Here the breakdown of a couple's marriage, parallel with the actual collapse of a section of 35 W bridge spanning the Mississippi River along with the economic decline in 2008, is written and played so comically that the audience, rather than being moved by these depressing circumstances, is roaring with laughter from start to finish. And this knack of transforming dejected events into spirited comedy is due to playwright Allison Moore's special talent for comic repartee that lifts the spirit in the most dire of circumstances.

Directed by Jessica Heidt with a vivacious and speedy pace, we first witness husband David (Gabriel Marin as the laid back husband) giving wife Hannah (Carrie Paff as David's neurotic worrisome wife) a hormone shot in the butt. Hannah, whose job is on the line, keeps reminding David, who misses reporting to work each day, that he should go to his meeting that we eventually learn is for AA members. A little later Hannah's sister Susan (interpreted by Amy Resnick as a calamitous and outspoken nuisance) visits supposedly for only a few days bringing with her a questionable package to deliver that lends comedy as well as mystery to the plot. Hannah's encounter with Ted (Aldo Billingslea plays Hannah's smooth and reassuring confidant), who is involved in the intrigue regarding Susan's package, heightens the mystery. It is Hannah's heroic will to survive these inner and exterior collapses that eventually grounds and strengthens her marriage. In David and Hannah's last lines (delivered a bit too rapidly opening night to fully appreciate their depth) Hannah and David discuss the latter's involvement in the collapse of the Mississippi Bridge in Minneapolis. As they wonder why the bridge fell and how to keep it and everything else from falling their heartfelt conclusion as they rediscover one another is "We just have to figure out how to fall together."

Collapse thru March 6. *Tennessee Williams' Eccentricities of a Nightingale* opens April 1 thru May 8th. Info 510-843-4822 or visit auroratheatre.org. Dr. Annette Lust

THEATRE CRITICS CIRCLE AWARDS CEREMONY
The San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle will proudly host on April 4th their 35th Annual Awards Ceremony, celebrating Bay Area theatre excellence during 2010. Awards will be given for Touring, Over 300 Seat Theatres (Drama and Musical), 100-300 Seat Theatres (Drama and Musical) and Under 99 Seat Theatres (Drama and Musical). Complete listing of Nominees (avail. mid-February) at sfbatcc.org.

The public is invited to join the Critics Circle in applauding the talented theatre folk who make magic on our local stages. The Awards Ceremony will be held at the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre Lobby, 3301 Lyon Street, SF (free parking). Doors open at 6pm, and Awards begin at 7:30pm. Dress is business casual to formal. To purchase ticket in advance, call (800) 838-3006 or at BrownPaperTickets/event/145208. Day of event, tickets may be purchased at the door (cash only). In addition to presenting the Awards, there will be refreshments and entertainment.

Representing the print and electronic media, the SF Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle will announce the winners of 37 Drama awards and 38 Musical awards from 400+ nominated actors, designers, productions, and more reviewed in 2010. Over 400 productions were seen in 2010 by the 28 Circle critics reviewing theatre from San Jose to Santa Rosa, San Francisco to Concord.

Again this year, Actors' Equity Association, representing over 1000 actors and stage managers in the Bay Area, is proud to partner with the Circle and sponsor the Awards.

HOBO GRUNT CYCLE
Puppets at the Exit Send a Message about War and Violence
Nationally renowned puppeteer and Exit Artist in Residence Kevin Augustine, now performing his *Hobo Grunt Cycle* at the Exit, begins with silent clowning recalling the early 20th century silent movies that had the titles and dialogue placed on a screen above or below the mimed silent action. The clowning and magic scenes of the first section of the piece are interspersed with life sized puppets, expertly manipulated by well hidden puppeteers. These life-sized puppets are juxtaposed upon the action to express through movement and grotesquely deformed mask

faces the consequences of war and violence. As we watch the hobo sweep the floor and feed and train his beloved dog to do simple clown tricks our attention is simultaneously drawn to veterans without an arm or leg sitting in a corner or to the side of the stage who evoke surrealistic images of creatures warped by war and violence.

The second half of the piece offers a less ponderous treatment of the war theme and introduces an integrated development of animal companionship and abuse. Hobo's beloved dog is kidnapped to be victimized in bloody dog fights. After Hobo finds his dog mortally wounded the action takes on a happy turn as he patiently cares for and retrains him to do his old dog tricks.

We empathize with the dog's subjection to cruel violence and rejoice in his rescue. The theme of the fatalities of war returns to leave us with the poetic message sent from a wife to her husband at war in July 1863, "May you live to see that men shall war no more."

Hobo Grunt Cycle's combination of an older style of silent clowning with touches of surrealism added to sentimental lyricism endows this puppet piece with a style of its very own. While these puppets move to perfection to make us wonder if we are not seeing a live dog performing with actors that resemble grotesque puppets they simultaneously impart a message that makes

us ponder about the devastating repercussions of warring.

Hobo Grunt Cycle plays until March 2nd. For info call 415-673-3847 or visit www.theexit.org. Continuing at the Exit until April 16th is *Obscura: A Magic show* by theatrical magician Christian Cagigal. Dr. Annette Lust

SEX AND DEATH
Pinter plays at Off Broadway West
Broadway West Theatre Company presents *Sex and Death*, a pair of one act plays written in the 1960s by 2005 Nobel Prize Winner Harold Pinter. In *The Lover*, Pinter chronicles an unusual love triangle while in *The Dumbwaiter*, two hit men waiting in a basement room for their assignment, question the nature of their profession. *The Lover* is directed by Cecilia Palmtag and *The Dumbwaiter* is directed by Durand Garcia. The Pinter shorts will be performed at the Phoenix Theatre in San Francisco Feb. 25 to March 26 on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

From April 2 to May 2 the company presents Pinter's *Homecoming* in which Teddy, a professor of philosophy, returns home with his wife to interact with family members in a comedy of menace.

For info and tickets call 800-838-3006 or visit www.OffBroadwayWest.org.

ON THE PLUS SIDE By Hank Basayne



Hank Basayne will be back next month.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE



Try something new

Join a learning community for baby boomers and seniors who enjoy the challenge, stimulation and quest for continued learning

- Take a drawing, improv or writing course
- Discover San Francisco's urban geography on our neighborhood walks
- Explore American art history
- Learn about Wagner's *Ring Cycle* and contemporary theatre makers
- Weekend workshops
- 4-6 week classes
- Seminars, guest lectures
- Classes at both main and downtown campuses

Attend a free event to learn more

- Class Preview**
March 15, 3–5PM
Main Campus
- Information Session**
March 24, 1–2PM
Downtown Campus

415/817-4243

CREATIVEARTS.SFSU.EDU/OLLI

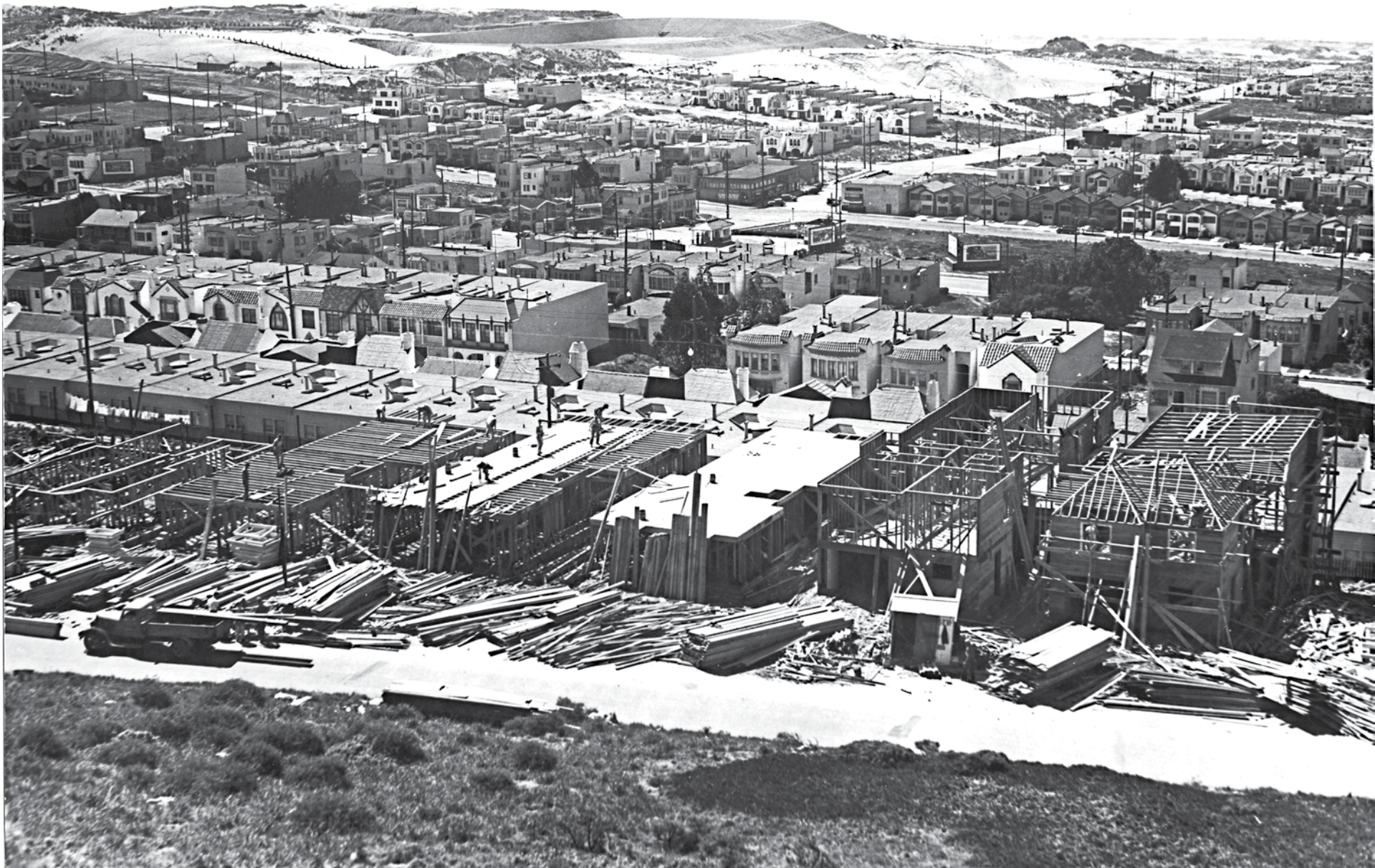


THE OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE IS FUNDED IN PART BY THE BERNARD OSHER FOUNDATION.



WE'RE ALSO ON THE WEB

www.westsideobserver.com



Sunset District Homes. Date [190-?]. Sunset-1900's. If you have more information about the date and location of this photo, contact: editor@westsideobserver.com. By permission from the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Chicken Coop (Cont. from p. 4)

institutions). This academia contract, which had taken three years, was DOA at the RBOC. Then a new and long-winded RFP appeared in the proposed agenda for the RBOC monthly meeting. Suspecting such a move, an email requesting proposed agenda items was sent to the Chair. No answer. Standard operating procedure for this “transparent” committee.

The RFP process is supposed to go through the subcommittee and not be usurped by the Chair. The RFP was a lengthy litany of unfocussed and eclectic items. It was out of context with the dynamics of required oversight. It appeared to give individual “officials” of the RBOC the right to issue work and purchase orders. Such powers, in a democracy, without a real constitution, render some stakeholders impotent. It also seemed to be camouflage for the abrupt cancelling of the effort with academia.

Do we have an oversight problem? I believe so. In quick order of magnitude, the SFPUC must finish the WSIP by 12/31/2015. The SFPUC has completed

approximately 20 to 22 percent of the work. The rest must be completed in about 1/3rd the legally allowed remaining time. The SFPUC has issued approximately \$3B in bonds and has spent (WSIP) about \$1B, with the difference in an account earning approximately 1.3%. The weighted average cost of the debt incurred by the SFPUC is of the order 4.5%. This is a negative arbitrage of -3.2%; a huge amount of money payable by the ratepayers.

Firms operate because they can produce at costs less than market costs. Owners hire anti-shirkers (managers) to protect their interest and ensure productive teamwork takes place. Managers have a lower propensity to perform if they become members of their own team. Oversight committees have the same role. Ratepayers are the masters and this must not be forgotten. On the other side of the coin, unions which are cooped by management are derisively called “company unions” and have been outlawed. The RBOC cannot become a “company” committee.

Brian Browne is co-author of 2002's Proposition P and Board of Supervisor appointed No. 1 Chair on RBOC

Phyllis’ Findings / Phyllis Sherman

Mother Teresa once said that “Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.” Several weeks ago I was invited to a lovely luncheon celebrating the Chinese New Year at a local Senior Facility. I was seated with three elderly women. I tried to make reasonably interesting conversation with two of them and was continually asked to repeat myself. They were both hard of hearing. Being hard of hearing is certainly a good recipe for loneliness.



The third lady in our little group was seated in a wheelchair and was definitely not hard of hearing nor hard of speaking coherently. She identified herself as “Lenore” and began talking about her various ailments. She said she’d had a mastectomy, has macular degeneration in one eye, and has polyps in her vagina. I said “don’t you mean polyps in your colon?” She insisted, “no..it is in the vagina.” She also added that she is 100 years old. I was taken aback. One hundred years old and still so lucid! She went on reiterating that all her friends and associated had died and she has no one. She obviously was happy to have a live one to talk to. She said her last boyfriend had died at 103 and said he was a wonderful lover and they had daily sex when in their prime. She reiterated how difficult it was to speak to any contemporaries in the Senior Facility because most of them had mental problems and couldn’t hear her. I’m not sure how the other ladies at the table would have reacted to Lenore’s sexual proclivities were they able to hear about them. Nevertheless, she continued speaking about her lack of contemporaries to commiserate with until an aide came over and wheeled her away with nary a glance.

In the entertainment department, I’ve seen very few movies that are worthy of your attention. CEDAR RAPIDS is about life in the Midwestern USA at an insurance convention and it received reasonably good reviews from the reviewers... and while there were some funny and tender bits, I found it basically contrived and not worth 1 + hours of your time. It’s at the local Empire Theater on West Portal and I’d give it a 5 or 6 on a scale of 1 to 10. In general, insurance conventions are kind of mundane anyway, so don’t waste

your time or money. The sound system in the Empire Theater could use some fine tuning. On the other hand, the foreign film, BIUTIFUL, is from Spain and although a somewhat depressing mortality story of sin and redemption, it’s done well. Actor Javier Barden is terrific in the lead role. THE FIGHTER is also a very worthy movie for a surprisingly prickly boxing film.

I read somewhere that dogs make good poker players. Whenever they get a good hand, they wag their tail. I was thinking a bit about getting a dog. They’re supposed to be wonderful companions and dog lovers are forever extolling the benefits of having a dog. I was especially interested when I watched the recent popular Westminster Dog Show. One lady trotted out with a Pekinese collie that the breeder called “ideal for apartment living or a palatial home.” There was an adorable Portuguese Water Dog and a Fox Terrier that was described as “having a lively disposition and a smooth coat”. There was a cute Chinese Shai-Pei which is a dog that dates back two centuries.. which can’t always be said about the rest of us. Then I started to think about the care involved in ANY dog...the vet visits, the cost of needed shots, the amount of food that gets consumed, the price of dog walkers and dog hostels if you go on vacation...and decided to wait a bit before I get a dog. While it’s nice to be treated with adoration, have someone who’ll be kind and faithful when times are hard, someone who will share your joys and sorrows. Time, then, to buy a puppy,

ADDENDUM: Better to have loved and lost a short person than never to have loved a tall...David Chambless

The Dog Spa

Truly Fine Grooming...

\$5.00 OFF

your next grooming

CONSUMER: limit 1 coupon per customer
Coupon only valid for grooming services.
Must present this coupon. Exp. 3/31/11

169 West Portal Avenue • 415 661-8333
www.thedogspasf.com





Got Indigestion? Time for a Diet Change

Do you have: bloating/gas, constipation/diarrhea heartburn nausea? If so, read on;

The digestive system is intricate and can be disrupted by disease, diet, and emotional stress. Millions of Americans have the symptoms mentioned above and suffer daily. These issues have tremendous impact and limit the quality of life. Learning about the digestive system may help with managing problems.

Heartburn/GERD 1 in 10 Americans experience symptoms at least once a week. Triggers include certain food, medications, obesity, or stress. Some remedies to control acid reflux are medications, home remedies and diet changes.

Acid Reflux happens when stomach acid splashes up from the stomach into the esophagus. Gastro esophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) is a severe or chronic acid reflux that leads to complications such as cancer. To complicate things, the same symptoms may also be caused by not enough stomach acid! Take these severe symptoms seriously. Both conditions can be triggered by certain medications and large meals. Some studies show a connection between GERD and Asthma.

Factors that may increase one's risk to suffer from acid reflux disease: stomach abnormalities/hiatal hernia, pregnancy, smoking, being overweight or obese, eating large meals and/or lying down right after eating, alcohol, chocolate, coffee, tea, spicy or high-fat foods, taking aspirin, ibuprofen, muscle relaxers, certain blood pressure medications

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, which causes inflammation in the digestive tract. Doctors don't know the cause of IBD. Symptoms include abdominal cramps, bloody diarrhea, fever, and weight loss. The goal is to eliminate inflammation.

Crohn's disease (named after the physician who described it in 1932) is a chronic inflammatory disease of the intestines that causes ulcerations (breaks in the lining) of the small and large intestines. It can also affect the digestive system anywhere from the mouth to the anus and may also be called colitis. It's closely related to another inflammatory condition that only involves the colon, called ulcerative colitis, explained below. There is no medical cure and these diseases affect approximately 500,000 to two million people in the U.S. See your doctor for diagnoses by having a colonoscopy (important to have one after turning 50 regardless of symptoms), blood tests, or barium X-ray.

People with Crohn's disease may have sores in the mouth, nutritional deficiencies because the intestines may not be able to absorb nutrients from food, bowel obstruction and signs of disease in or around the anus. Other symptoms may include a fever from infection (abscess), weight loss and anemia (too few red blood cells) because of low iron levels. Some doctors speculate it may also involve the immune system.

Other symptoms can develop due to complications related to the disease: arthritis, gallstones, inflammation of the eyes and mouth, kidney stones, liver disease, skin rashes or ulcers

Ulcerative Colitis is an inflammatory bowel disease of the colon and may result from an abnormal response by the body's immune system to normal intestinal bacteria as studies suggest. Disease causing bacteria and viruses may also play a role in the condition but doctors don't really know. Similar to Crohn's, changes in diet and anti-diarrheal medicines help with mild symptoms. More severe symptoms are treated with steroid medication to decrease

Diverticular Disease is a condition in which small pouches, called diverticula, develop in the wall of the colon, or large intestine. The pouches develop at weak spots in the wall of the colon. These weak spots occur because of excess pressure in the colon, or existing weakness in the colon wall, that eventually bulge out to form pouches. High pressure (constipation) inside the intestine may cause these outpouchings. The development of these pouches is called diverticulosis. Rarely, diverticula may also occur in the stomach or small intestine. When the pouches become inflamed (often as a result of bacterial infection), symptoms such as cramping pains, fever, and nausea can result. Such an infection (called diverticulitis) is potentially life threatening and requires immediate medical intervention. As people age it is a common malady, primarily due to low-fiber diets.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a disorder of the intestines causing stomach pain, cramping or bloating and diarrhea/constipation. Doctors think it's related to the signals sent between the brain and the intestines, causing the muscles of the intestines not to move as they should. Triggers can be hormonal changes, some medications (like antibiotics), eating, or stress.

Doctors report that IBS does not cause more serious diseases, such as inflammatory bowel disease or cancer. However, it's a long-term condition. It can be managed by changes in diet, regular exercise, and stress reduction.

Some Natural Tips Avoid eating large meals. Instead, eat small meals every 3 to 4 hours. Don't eat late at night. Stay away from spicy and high-fat foods. If you have abdominal pain, place a hot water bottle on the painful area for relief. Eat live yogurt before meals. Use a drop of essential oil of peppermint in your drinking water or make a hot tea with it. Mix a drop of lemon and a drop of ginger essential oil in honey and swallow it to coat the stomach. Take digestive enzymes before your meals to aid digestion and manage acid reflux.

There are other natural supplements that bring the body back to a more alkaline state. I'm happy to share what has worked in my family.

Use stress-busting techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or just a peaceful walk in nature. Stress is a leading cause of death in the U.S. as it creates extremely high Cortisol levels (the death hormone) in the body. These elevated levels then create disease. Please refer to my past article "Got Stress and How to Manage It," Nov. 2008 online at: www.westsideobserver.com/columns/Caren.html and June 2008 "Do You Have A Personal Water Shortage?" So important for good digestion!

A good Nutritionist can aid you in making important diet changes if you need help. Mandisa Fabris is a food and nutrition expert I've worked with personally one on one or over the phone, and also holds tele-classes and seminars: (650) 290.4802, request@simpleholisticliving.com website /www.simpleholisticliving.com/

The views expressed are those of the writer. If you have any questions about your health, you should always consult with your doctor. Call or email me at 650.359.6579 and sharoncaren@comcast.net.

OPEN LATE



By Julie Behn
www.JulieBehn.com

BRAIN FÜD

Find the two six letter words that are combined in each row of letters. Their letters are in the correct order.

1. JSOYOMFUBELR
2. SCDUARWDRLYE
3. DASNAGEFERTY

4. CLULOOTSCHEHN
5. USENEARSEYNE

3. Danger & Safety
4. Clutch & Loosen
5. Uneasy & Serene

1. Joyful & Somber
2. Scurry & Dawdle

Brain Füd Answer

Proudly Serving The Families of West of Twin Peaks

"Caring Service
is our Highest
Priority"



The Bud Duggan Family Serving the Bay Area Since 1903

Duggan's Serra Mortuary, Daly City	415/587-4500	FD1098
Driscoll's Valencia St. Serra Mortuary, SF	415/970-8801	FD1665
Sullivan's Funeral Home, SF	415/621-4567	FD 228



Parking Available at all locations
Most Convenient San Francisco/Peninsula Locations
Traditional and Cremation Services
Contact our Pre-Arrangement Department for your



FREE Personal Planning Guide
"My Funeral, My Way"

VISA, MASTERCARD & DISCOVER ACCEPTED
duggansserra.com driscollsmortuary.com sullivanfuneralandcremation.com

The Steak Experience

Alfred's
STEAKHOUSE

Since 1928
Real Steak Real Martini
Real San Francisco

Complimentary Self Parking (For Dinner Only)
At The Financial District Hilton's Public Parking Entrance on Washington St.

659 Merchant Street (by Kearny & Washington)
415.781.7058 www.alfredsteakhouse.com

Sudoku-fun!

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

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.

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



EVERY • SUNDAY MORNING

Farmers Market | Every Sun | 9 am–1pm | Stonestown: at Stonestown Galleria (19th Avenue @ Winston)

EVERY • TUESDAY NIGHT

Happy Hour Every Tues | 4–8 pm | Que Syrah. Take \$1 off each glass, 10% off of each bottle of wine consumed at the store. 230 West Portal Avenue 731.7000

EVERY • WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Tapas | 5:30–9 pm | Que Syrah. 230 West Portal Avenue 731.7000

EVERY • FRIDAY NIGHT

Friday Night Jazz Fri | 7–11 pm | Cliff House, Balcony Lounge – 1 Seal Rock.

THU • FRI • SAT • SUN • PACIFIC ORCHID EXPO

Thu Mar 3 (Gala) | 6:30–10pm | **Fri Mar 4** | 10am–6pm | **Sat Mar 5** | 9am–6pm | **Sun Mar 6** | 10am–5pm | The 59th annual Pacific Orchid Exposition is the largest orchid show in the country and features over 150,000 different orchids, as well as docent tours and educational lectures. “Natural Wonders” will open with our famous Gala Benefit Preview featuring celebrity appearances, live music, a silent auction, hors d’oeuvres and wine tasting from 20 California premiere wineries, hosted by the SF Orchid Society and is the organization’s largest fundraiser. Fort Mason Center.

SAT • GGNRA DOG MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sat Mar 5 | 11am–4pm | Sf State Univ. Seven Hills Conf. Center
Mon Mar 7 | 4–8pm | Fort Mason Bldg. A

THU • LIVING POSITIVE

Thur Mar 10 | 6:30–9pm | National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day-free dinner, raffle on-site HIV testing and child care. Attend the event to gain vital information about HIV disease. The Center, 1800 Market St., 4th Fl.

FRI—THU • 2ND ANNUAL TASTES OF TARAVAL

Fri Mar 11–Thu Mar 17 | The Second Annual Tastes of Taraval event happening March 11th–17th! During the week, mention “Tastes of Taraval” at any of the nine participating merchants and receive a discount or special, and a chance to win a nifty raffle prize. The following merchants have generously donated money to fund future projects, so come out and show your support for them.

Shimo Sushi, Gold Mirror, Tennessee Grill, Brown Owl Coffee, Kingdom of Dumpling, Ninki Sushi, Eagle Pizzeria, Parkside Tavern, Ristorante Marcello

TUE • TARAVAL PUBLIC SAFETY

Tue Mar 15 | 7pm | Meet the new Captain Curtis Lum, a 22 year veteran of SFPD at the he Taraval Station Public Safety Community Meeting, the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Taraval Station 2354 24th Ave.

THU • IRISH AUTHORS

Thu Mar 17 | 7pm | CROSSROADS IRISH-AMERICAN FESTIVAL Readings by Award-winning Poets. Celebrate the 8th Annual Festival with a very special poetry reading, followed by a post-reading social hour in honor of St. Patrick’s Day. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave. 564-8080

SAT • ORGANIC GARDENING CELEBRATION

Sat Mar 19 | 3–6pm | Garden for the Environment kicks off its new membership program with a spring equinox celebration. GFE’s organic demonstration garden has provided a space for the gardening community. Fun activities for kids and adults including face painting, button making, hand-screened t-shirts

Creative STATE

PERFORMANCES
EVENTS
EXHIBITIONS

WORLD-CLASS ARTS IN YOUR BACKYARD



SF STATE

SAN FRANCISCO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PLAYERS

MORRISON ARTISTS SERIES

In a 40th-anniversary celebration of this award-winning new music ensemble, San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra director Donato Cabrera conducts modern classics and new works. Du, Current, Ligeti.

MARCH 6, 3PM, MCKENNA THEATRE, FREE, PRE-CONCERT TALK: 2PM

FOOL FOR LOVE

Sam Shepard’s masterfully constructed play brings searing intensity and rare theatrical excitement to its probing, yet sharply humorous study of love, hate and the dying myths of the Old West. Directed by Rhonnie Washington.

MARCH 10–20, LITTLE THEATRE, FROM \$8 IN ADVANCE

LOS ANGELES PERCUSSION QUARTET

MORRISON ARTISTS SERIES

This one-of-a-kind ensemble bases its percussive repertoire on largely exclusive works created through ongoing collaborations with Southern California’s greatest composers and artists. Applebaum, Holmes, Cage, Xenakis, Guinivan.

MARCH 13, 3PM, KNUTH HALL, FREE



CREATIVEARTS.SFSU.EDU

415/338-2467

and a portable, compostable hair salon on site. 3:30Kale Cook-off, 4:30 Garden Chic Fashion Show, 5:00 Live Music from “The Slow Motion Cowboys” 5:30 Raffle Drawing. 7th and Lawton

THU • HOUSING ELEMENT/PLANNING

Thu Mar 24 | 1pm | The Planning Commission will discuss and possibly adopt the Housing Element of the General Plan. This may be the last opportunity for the public to comment before the plan goes to the Board of Supervisors for final adoption. Check agenda for specific time or contact Kearstin.Dischinger@sfgov.org/ (415) 558-6284

THU • BALLROOM DANCE CLASSES

Thu Mar 24 | Couples, learn the Samba, Rhumba, Cha Cha Cha, Mambo, Tango, Waltz, Foxtrot, Swing and more at Forest Hill Christian Church, Fellowship Hall, 250 Laguna Honda Blvd. Six lessons \$70 per couple. RSVP-Info (415) 661-2746.

SAT • O’DEATH - HARRIS - NEGRO

Sat Mar 26 | 8:30pm | O’Death + Arann Harris & The Farm Band + Helado Negro, The Independent, 628 Divisadero St. 665-0408 \$12

MON • CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING

Mon. Mar 28 | 7:30 pm | West of Twin Peaks Central Council | A resource for neighborhood organizations. Learn and comment on issues. Fourth Mon each month Forest Hill Clubhouse at 381 Magellan Ave.

TUE • HISTORIC INGLESIDE TERRACE

Tue Mar 29 | 7:30pm | SF History Assn. presents Woody LaBounty discussing 100 years-Ingleside Terrace: Racetrack to Residence Park. St. Philip’s Catholic Church, 725 Diamond Street (between 24th and Elizabeth sts.)

Got a local event? Send it to:
editor@westsideobserver.com

Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi

Santa Catalina



The Sapphire Princess is so huge the Crystal Serenity could easily be mistaken for one of its tenders. Between passengers and crew, the Sapphire is about the size of a modern aircraft carrier whose flight deck has been replaced with countless rows of suites and mini-suites, all with verandas, chaise lounges, tables, chairs, bars and casinos.

“Caribe104” sounds more like an exotic drink to be enjoyed on a wind swept beach of a Caribbean island rather than the marvelous suite that will house us for the next 10 days. Taking up the forward port quarter of the ship, the views rival those seen from the bridge which sits immediately above us. From our bedroom we would have seen that iceberg approaching, pounded on the ceiling, alerting the captain, and instantly changed the course of history. The Titanic would be tied up in Long Beach next to the Queen Mary, Disney would have one more hotel to manage and DiCaprio would have to wait a little longer for that career making movie.

Santa Catalina was a first for us and certainly worth the 20 minute wait to board one of the tenders for the short ride to town. I can certainly understand how Wrigley fell in love with the place and built the casino, still a marvel of Art Deco design which was used as a theatre and ballroom at the time. Along with it came the power plants, sewer systems, fresh water reservoirs and hotels as part of the island’s development. I imagine at the time it was quite the place, yet now Avalon is a mini Hawaii with all the trappings of a true tourist Mecca.

Unfortunately for us we found out too late that we could rent an electric powered cart by the hour and take a quick tour of the area. We opted for lunch and did our usual hat and pin run. Along the way, Karen was approached by a young woman looking for directions and started the conversation by asking, “Do you speak English?” Considering the currency is still the US dollar and the Capital of California is Sacramento the answer was obvious.

Back on board, we managed a quick nap before getting ready for dinner. Luckily for us, we ended up with Personal Dining which allows us the freedom of eating in any one of five restaurants at any time we choose. Our first night, Saturday, we ate at Sterling’s, a chop house where the prime rib was perfectly done, and our half empty bottle of wine was stored for our next night’s dinner, regardless of the restaurant.

Sunday it was Vivandi where the osso buco went perfectly with the remaining Zinfandel. A decaf cappuccino and it was off to catch another one of the fabulous shows.

Dressed in our Monday night best, we headed off to meet the captain. Attilio Guerrini greeted all of the near 3,000 passengers with a warm smile and a cold drink. We managed to smile back and then headed for a pay-as-you-go cocktail lounge, leaving the masses behind. Next stop was at Sabatini’s where the 17 courses (yes 17) soaked up three hours as we enjoyed the feast.

Our biggest surprise yet greeted us as we returned from dinner. The two chaise lounges we had requested had actually arrived, just in time for tomorrow’s sunshine. So now on our veranda we have two chaise lounges, two reclining chairs, a table and four chairs, a side table, and yes, a partridge in a pear tree.

Not wanting to fight the hoards from “Eaters Anonymous,” we’ve been enjoying breakfast in our room. Our stewardess, Noi, is a real sweetheart and has our hours down perfectly. No need for that plastic sign on the door that tells her when to come in and when to stay away.

We enjoyed an afternoon massage before heading back to Vivandi for dinner where Alberto promised me the best table in the house — the power of the greenback never ceases to amaze. Life is good.

Puerto Vallarta

Puerto Vallarta, Porto Cervo, Portofino. After a while they all become a blur. It doesn’t seem all that long ago that we were astounded by the mega yachts and spectacular shops on the island of Sardinia.

This morning we woke up as the ship was anchoring off Puerto Vallarta. Through the hazy we could see the beachfront hotels and the madness on shore about to engulf us. After two days at sea, the idea of land sounded good; after ten minutes on land we were ready to head out to sea. For two dollars each that turned out to be three — but that’s another story we were stuffed into what was once a Chevy SUV along with six other gringos. In that three mile ride we got to know each other quite well and quickly figured out who had showered that morning and who had not.

The main reason for going on shore in the first place was to find an internet café so we could send out my first missive. Although the internet café works very well on the ship, the wireless network had been down for the last two days, and not being allowed to upload anything from my laptop to their network, I could not send anything out.

My first question to one of the locals as we got off the tender was, “Is there an internet café close by?” Si, Señor,

right in the center of town, only two dollars to get there.”

What we found out later is there was a massive internet site right across the street from the tender landing. Oh, well.

We did find that internet café a block from where they dropped us off — next to all the jewelry stores, of course, and was shocked to see the steep prices.

What the heck, got to get this missive out, so twenty minutes later, after struggling with the Mexican version of Windows, we got the job done and went to pay. One dollar? It turned out the prices posted were in pesos.

We were so pleased with our good fortune we stopped in at the McDonalds next door, and for a whopping two dollars we got two “conos” and even got 80 pesos back. Not wanting to push our luck any further, we made a quick stop at the Hard Rock Café for a pin that says, appropriately enough, “Puerto Vallarta, 2004,” and headed back to the ship. Somehow we’re much too old for all of this.

While waiting for the tender I was tempted to try the \$35.00 massage from the parlor next to the Laundromat — according to the young man outside, this place is so good even the ship’s captain goes there. Come to think of it, he didn’t say which ship. Karen just about yanked my arm out of its socket as she led me back to the tender.

Dinner has worked out very well for us with Personal Dining. Mexican sounded great and appropriate for the day, so we headed for the Santa Fe Restaurant. Exchanging a few pleasantries in Italian with Mario, the head waiter, got us a nice, quiet table and excellent service. Not having to go to the International Dining Room, the Circus Maximus of gastronomy, or should I say “Gastroenterology,” has been our biggest treat. In the Coliseum the animals ate the Christians, here they’ve turned the tables and anything is fair game. Shop till you drop — here it’s eat till you pop.

Feedback: sergio@westsideobserver.com



The Waterwise Garden

By Hilary Gordon/Photos by Blair Randall, 2011

February arrived in a blizzard of plum blossoms, the fruit of a warm dry January. After deluges in December, the warm weather in January brought smiles to sunbathers and worried frowns to gardeners. Irrigation timers, turned off for the rainy season, were hastily re-booted. Rain brought relief at the end of the month . But for how long? (image: plum blossom)



Drought used to be an anomaly. When I first moved to California in the seventies we were learning not to flush the toilet every time, and to take short showers. But that was just for the duration; then things went back to normal. Normal at the time was virtually unrestricted cheap water. Plenty for everyone, we thought.

Now wet and dry years come and go, but drought is still the permanent model. California doesn't have enough water for everything everyone wants to do with it, and the pressure is not going away any time soon. In the future, people will look back at us and wonder at the way we irrigate our gardens and landscapes with perfectly good drinking water.

As environmentally responsible gardeners, one of the most important advocacies we can engage in is to create change in the predominant garden aesthetic. The thirsty lawns, clipped hedges, Japanese maples, rhododendrons, roses and annual beds which defined a beautiful California garden since the dam-building era cannot define beauty for the future. Perhaps in a public park or a garden museum like the Arboretum these gardens can be remembered. But we cannot have this landscape in every back yard any more than we can drive cars that get 8 miles to the gallon, or bring home sixteen disposable plastic bags home from the grocery store every time. (image: Rock Rose)

Please don't think that cactuses and rubber plants are our only other choices. There are many beautiful plants which need little or no summer water. Names like Lion's Tail, Rock Rose, Bee's Bliss, Harlequin Flower, and Mirror Plant conjure beautiful surprises. Whatever your garden

aesthetic; lush or flowery or dramatic or tropical or neat, there is a summer-dry plant for your purpose, from the tiniest groundcover to the towering cypress.

Creating many beautiful effects with summer-dry plants, and giving people opportunities to learn about them and fall in love with them is one of our goals here at the GFE.

That's why next time you stop by the garden, you'll see something new. Now many of our beloved, gorgeous summer-dry plants are labeled! Soon we will have more complete and professional- looking signs courtesy of the SFPUC, but for now, you will see the plants in the Water-wise Demonstration Area at the South end of the garden labeled with their botanical names. (image: Bugle Lily)

Hopefully this will help gardeners, whether they are



Plum Blossoms

planting in a school garden, a community garden, a median strip, or their own backyards. If we learn to love and choose plants that don't need

much irrigation for most of our planted spaces, we can save our precious water to grow food and save wild rivers.

Many, many thanks to Mark and Pilar, the dedicated vGCETUP graduates who turned our ID project from a dream to a reality!

HilaryHilary Gordon is Sustainable Landscape Education Manager at the GFE. A life-long gardener, trained at the City College Horticulture program, she has worked as a professional landscape gardener from 1984 until the present.

Have a question for Hilary? Meet her in the garden at 7th and Lawton on Wednesdays 10-2 and Saturdays 10-4.



Take a Ride with Meals On Wheels

Looking for something meaningful to do about three hours a week? Meals On Wheels delivers meals to over 1850 clients in San Francisco, an increase of almost 100 clients (6%) in only one year! We could use some more volunteer support with this enormous and ever-expanding task. When our drivers are faced with longer routes and more clients on a daily basis, it takes precious time away from the brief yet important conversational interaction that is an essential part of the service we offer. You can help as a Delivery Assistant to our regular drivers. It's a wonderful way to meet our clients.

Meals On Wheels of San Francisco, Inc.
1375 Fairfax Ave. | www.mowsf.org

Volunteer Department
Leslie Nipps | Director of Volunteer Department | 415-343-1325 | lnipps@mowsf.org
Danie Belfield | Volunteer Program Assoc. | 415-343-1311 | dbelfield@mowsf.org



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



Meenakshi Jain, MD
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Charles Delatore, MD
INTERNAL MEDICINE



Robert Napoles, MD
INTERNAL MEDICINE

WELCOMING NEW PATIENTS

Call **1-888-699-DOCS (3627)** or visit **sutterpacific.org** to find the doctor for you.

- PRIMARY CARE DOCTORS THROUGHOUT SAN FRANCISCO
- SAME DAY APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE
- MOST HEALTH INSURANCE ACCEPTED

Sutter Pacific has over 230 primary care doctors and specialists. In San Francisco we are affiliated with California Pacific Medical Center and Brown & Toland Physicians. All so you can have expert, personal care in a convenient location.



**Sutter Pacific
Medical Foundation**
A Sutter Health Affiliate
With You. For Life.

REVITALIZE AND RADIATE
WITH NEW MURAD® FACIALS



Massage Envy
SPA™

Introducing Massage Envy Spa's new
Murad Signature facials, featuring medically proven,
skin nourishing Murad products. Try one today.

ANTI-AGING, VITAMIN C (FOR SUN DAMAGE),
ACNE CONTROL, SENSITIVE SKIN

\$59

Introductory
1-hour Murad Signature
facial session*

EXCLUSIVELY
FEATURING

Murad® | m
Transforming Skincare™

DALY CITY
494 WESTLAKE CENTER, THE SHOPS ON LAKE
(650) 757-ENVY (3689)

Franchises Available | MassageEnvy.com | Convenient Hours. Open 7 days. M-F 8am-10pm, Sat 8am-6pm, Sun 10am-6pm

*One-hour session consists of a 50-minute facial and time for consultation and dressing. Prices subject to change. Rates and services may vary by location. Additional local taxes and fees may apply. ©2009 Massage Envy Limited, LLC.



1090 Point Lobos
San Francisco
415-386-3330

Back by Popular Demand!

Three-Course Prix Fixe Dinner – \$25.00

Wednesday Evenings in the Cliff House Bistro



Visit www.cliffhouse.com for the weekly menu.



CLIFF HOUSE NEWSLETTER

The Cliff House is pleased to announce the recent launch of our e-newsletter, *On the Edge*. Stay informed about specially priced dining promotions and historical tidbits that we'll have some fun with. To sign up for the Cliff House newsletter please visit:
www.cliffhouse.com/guest_book/newsletter.html

Your Local Grocer for Fresh Meat, Seafood, Poultry, Produce, Deli and Catering

MOLLIE STONE'S
The Best of Both Worlds®



Tower Market
635 Portola Drive • (415) 664-1600



Grand Central Market
2435 California St. • (415) 567-4902



WINE LOVERS' TUESDAY

On Tuesdays bottled wines
are half price all day with
purchase of entrée!
(Some restrictions apply.)

Serving Food As Good As Our Prices Are Low



TENNESSEE GRILL

1128 Taraval St. • (415) 664-7834 • Open 6am-9pm
Where Friends Meet



THANK
YOU...
...for ten years of
helping friends
and family with
their financial
planning needs.

Joanne F. Jordan, CFP®, CLU®
Senior Financial Advisor
joanne.f.jordan@amprf.com
CA License 0C44045
ameripriseadvisors.com/joanne.f.jordan

Brandon J. Miller, CFP®, CLU®
Senior Financial Advisor
brandon.j.miller@amprf.com
CA License 0C88907
ameripriseadvisors.com/brandon.j.miller

Jordan, Miller & Associates
A financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.
44 Montgomery Street, Suite 4210
San Francisco, CA 94104

When it comes to financial
planning, there are matters you
need to discuss openly with your
financial advisor without any fear
of judgment, or worse, ignorance.

Working with Ameriprise financial
advisors, you can relax knowing
we understand the financial
challenges facing our LGBT clients,
partners and parents. Issues such
as long-term health care, estate
planning strategies, home
ownership, obtaining credit and
financial planning can be much
more complicated.

Let us guide you.

Ameriprise
Financial

Contact us at (415) 623-2450

Brokerage, investment and financial advisory services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.
Member FINRA and SIPC. Some products and services may not be available in all jurisdictions or to all clients.

Heal+hy Pets

Veterinary Hospital

Your New Neighborhood
Veterinary Hospital Just Opened!

Healthy Pets Veterinary Hospital is a new state-of-the-art medical and surgical facility located on West Portal Avenue. We strive to provide the most gentle and comfortable medical and surgical care for your pets, and the best veterinary experience for our clients.

- + Annual Exams
- + Surgery & Dentistry
- + Comprehensive Pharmacy
- + Digital X-Rays
- + Flea and Tick Prevention
- + Nutritional Consultations
- + Exotic Animal Care (rabbits, birds & small mammals)
- + Traditional Chinese Medicine (herbals, Tui Na & acupuncture)

Extended Evening Hours Beginning in December

Mon, Tue & Thu 8am-8pm	Wed & Fri 8am-6pm	Saturday 10am-2pm
---------------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Make an Appointment: 415-742-5961
373 West Portal Ave. SFHealthyPets.com