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At Midterm: District 7 Supervisor Norman Yee



Photo: Nenita Quijano

Our Supervisor Norman Yee chatted amiably with staff and contributors to the *Observer*. Dismissed after 20 minutes, we still had several questions left to go—maybe next time.

By Doug Comstock

When the *Observer* met with District 7 Supervisor Norman Yee February 5th in his office at City Hall, we had several specific questions we had planned to ask, but since he could only spare 20 minutes, our list had to be greatly abbreviated. We dispensed with the soft questions and spent our few minutes asking the hard questions. We felt that our approach might appear to be focused on his more controversial decisions, and so we offered to allow the Supervisor to list his accomplishments as well at the end of the interview.

Re-election

Will you run for re-election? The response to our first question was an unequivocal “yes.”

AirBnB

Asked if he would support future exemptions from AirBnB rentals in RH1 and RH1 (D) neighborhoods, Yee explained that he does support such an exemption, and had offered to amend the legislation to prohibit such uses, but lost the effort on a 5 to 6 vote. While the final legislation to legalize short-term rentals ultimately passed, Supervisor Yee stands by his dissenting vote.

Happy Vape Lounge: Conditional Use Appeal

Supervisor Yee spent most of our 20 minutes explaining his opposition to the Appeal of the Planning Department’s

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Played for a Fool

By Nancy Wuerfel and George Wooding

Funding is the name of the game for San Francisco’s ambitious Department of Environment (SFE) which is now maneuvering to get the Mayor to allow the agency to draw funds directly from the City’s already over-committed discretionary General Fund.

The SFE currently is a City enterprise agency. This means that it has to be financially self-sufficient, generating its own revenue without subsidies from the General Fund. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC), the San Francisco International Airport, and the Port of San Francisco are all enterprise agencies.

If SFE becomes a “General Fund department” and annually takes a cut from the City’s shrinking discretionary money, other City agencies such as the libraries, Recreation and Park, Human Services Agency, Public Health, Children Youth and Families, plus several more departments will start to receive less annual funding. The City services that people depend on will foot the bill to pay for SFE.

Unlike other City enterprise agencies, the SFE is empire building, and refuses to cut back on employees, expenses or projects even though its revenue does not cover its costs. The result is currently a budget shortfall and SFE wants a City bail out.

“SFE grew from its creation in the revised 1995 City Charter with a budget of \$281,000 in 1997 to presently a \$20 million operation. It employs over 100 people and occupies a rented 24,400 sq ft space at 1455 Market Street”

SF Environment’s Financial Mismanagement

Financial mismanagement was revealed at the January 27th Commission on the Environment meeting to approve the 2015-2016 SFE budget. The budget was sent to the Commission with funding gaps in salaries and unfunded obligations for employees’ benefits, referred to as “structural problems.” There was no discussion of hiring freezes, layoffs or cutting programs to balance the budget.

During the meeting, the Commissioners did discuss various strategies for enticing the Mayor to make SFE a “General Fund Department” to backfill the gaps. Then they approved the budget, even though it was unbalanced. The Charter requires Commission approval before a budget is submitted to the Mayor.

To understand the department’s mismanagement, one needs to know that SFE grew from its creation in the revised 1995 City Charter with a budget of \$281,000 in 1997 to presently a \$20 million operation. It employs over 100 people and occupies a rented

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SFPeeUC

By John Farrell



Everyone deserves a second chance. But not all the time. Especially not in the case of a professional Water Department manager who was seen urinating in a City reservoir numerous times. I don’t know the person. I don’t care how long they have been on the job, their political clout, etc... All I know is that this person, with full knowledge that it is wrong, took a whiz numerous times in a City reservoir that supplies drinking water to nearly 2.5 million Bay Area residents. And just think, if he was seen numerous times, how many times did he actually do it. And if he wasn’t caught, he would be still using the reservoir as his personal toilet. This isn’t funny.

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (PUC) spokesman Tyrone Jue said that the agency confirmed anonymous complaints that a maintenance planner had urinated in the 674-million-gallon reservoir in the Sierra Nevada foothills early January. The reservoir had been drained for maintenance at the time and posed no health danger. Does that mean it was alright to pee in it?

Mr. Jue told the *SF Chronicle* “The bottom line is — you pee in the wrong place again, and you are toast.” It was reported that this manager was in line for a promotion before the incident and now faces a maximum penalty of a weeklong suspension without pay.

Here is a person lucky to be employed by the City with a \$111,000 a year salary not including benefits, a retirement pension, free health benefits for life, and he has total disregard and pees in our reservoir.

This isn’t the first time we have read about unethical practices at City Hall, or the last. Just keep in mind, we as citizens put our faith in the hands of our City workforce to respect, to do what is right, and to do what is in the best interest of our City - our Home.

John Farrell Broker/Realtor* – Farrell Real Estate, MBA, Former City Asst. Assessor-Budget/Special Projects, Westside resident - farrellreinvestments@yahoo.com



Magnolia campbellii. Photo by Bob Gunderson.

Magnificent Magnolias

In the winter of 1940, horticultural history was made at the newly opened San Francisco Botanical Garden when its exotic cup and saucer magnolia tree became the first of its kind to bloom in the United States. Huge crowds of excited and curious visitors stood in long lines to see the stunning large pink blossoms of this famous magnolia that still stands in the Garden today.

And that was just the beginning. The Garden, celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year, is now home to nearly 100 rare and historic magnolias. It is the most significant magnolia collection for conservation purposes outside China, where the majority of species originated.

Its current collection includes 51 species and 33 cultivars, including many prized examples from Asia.

The annual bloom of these magnificent magnolias, with trees reaching 80 feet, is at its peak from mid-January through March and is one of the city’s most breathtaking natural marvels. Velvety silver buds on the often bare branches of these elegant trees open into dazzling pink and white flowers, filling the wintery Garden with dramatic splashes of color and sweetly fragrant scents.

Visitors to the Garden can take advantage of free Magnolia Walk maps, docent-led tours, special signage, and more, as well as unique classes and activities, including a special Magnolias by Moonlight tour, to celebrate and learn more about these unique trees.

“Magnolias are absolutely the signature flower of San Francisco Botanical Garden,” says Don Mahoney, the

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in San Francisco



Patrick Moore
Senior Customer Care
Implementation Manager
INGLESIDE RESIDENT




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Ruminations From a Former Supervisor By Quentin Kopp



Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) published in 1893 *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*. He observed: “The good cannot seize power, nor retain it; to do this, men must love power. And love of power is inconsistent with goodness; but quite consistent with the very opposite qualities –pride, cunning, cruelty.”

Last month, I mentioned the continuing financial craftiness of Board of Supervisors members who, with easy acquiescence from the Mayor since 2012, have controlled directing \$1,100,000 of tax receipts within his/her district to chosen entities or persons. You won’t find that \$1,100,000 in the Board of Supervisors budget itself. Instead, my inquiries reveal the Supervisors appropriate such money to themselves through the Controller’s Office! That facilitates political support from constituents associated with various activities to which each supervisor distributes our taxpayer money. It’s not quite the practice of New York’s legendary Boss Tweed, but it’ll do as an approximation. The Supervisors in their role as the 11-member governing board of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority also have effectively doubled the ante with another \$100,000 for each supervisor to direct under the rubric of “neighborhood-based transportation planning.” You won’t find that money in the Board of Supervisors budget either. Not a whisper about such obvious Board maneuvering arises from a complacent local media or elected holders of the public trust.

Additionally, the BART Board of Directors on February 12 countenanced lawlessness by adopting a motion requesting the Alameda County District Attorney cease any effort to recover \$70,000 taxpayer/fare-payer damages stemming from a November 28, 2014 closure of most of the BART system by 14 lawbreakers previously charged by the District Attorney with criminal trespassing on BART property. The law enables any crime victim to recover damages arising from criminal conduct as part of the criminal case prosecution. BART estimates it lost approximately \$70,000 in revenue on November 28, 2014 from such unlawful conduct. Yet, five directors voted to abandon damage recovery; two of the four who voted “no” did so only because they wanted to instruct the District Attorney to dismiss all cases entirely! Yes, “love of power is inconsistent with goodness.”

Meanwhile, the *Chronicle* and it’s readers flagellate Roman Catholic Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone for instructing church school teachers to follow church doctrine publicly. I’m not Catholic, but I do understand the United States and California constitutional doctrines of separation of church and state. Eight California legislators and a couple or more San Francisco Supervisors have publicly criticized and issued demands on Archbishop Cordileone, manifestly

symbolizing government intrusion in religious affairs. If the Archbishop’s execution of his responsibilities offends the beliefs, religious or otherwise, of these intrusive legislators, I recommend they reread the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article XVI, Section 4 of the California Constitution. Our nation and state were founded on separation of state and religion.

I alert readers to a charter amendment introduced by Supervisor Scott Wiener to decrease voter ability to qualify an initiative for the ballot. It requires voters to present any proposed initiative to the Board of Supervisors before collecting signatures. It increases the number of citizen signatures to qualify an initiative. The California Constitution and our City Charter require 5% of voters in the last gubernatorial election or San Francisco mayoral election to sign, and thus qualify, an initiative for placement on the ballot. Wiener concocts his own formula from voter registration figures. Henceforth, initiative efforts to limit campaign contributions, increase governmental transparency or protect our waterfront from unnatural high rise development of luxury condominiums, sports arenas, and the like would be limited. Wiener will undoubtedly persuade power-loving colleagues to present his anti-democratic measure to November 2015 voters; I invite all readers to join efforts to stop the silencing of voters by voting “No” on Wiener’s sly scheme this November.

Lastly, let’s burst a professional football balloon. As founder and chairman of the Bay Area committee which secured the 1985 Super Bowl at Stanford Stadium, I claim modest credentials to forecast taxpayer subsidies in Santa Clara County for the February 2016 Super Bowl at the 49ers stadium there. In 1985, my committee raised privately and spent but \$175,000 to sponsor that Super Bowl. The National Football League paid for night lights at Stanford Stadium and other expenses. An economic study thereafter estimated about \$116,000,000 of visitor spending before and after the game. In 2008, the small city of Glendale, Arizona lost more than \$1,000,000 from Super Bowl XLII. Glendale’s mayor predicted this year Glendale would lose more than \$3,000,000 in taxpayer money on the 2015 game. It lost more. All that glitters is not gold in contemporary America, which Santa Clara will find true next year.

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

Bloody Monday (Cont. from p. 2)

The owners of the Willow Brook Inn, located on route 101 near Petaluma, identified Belote as the man who stopped in for drinks on the night of the murder and told them he was driving back from San Francisco.

Confronted with this evidence, Belote confessed. “I killed him because I loved his wife,” said Belote, and he denied that Blanche was involved. The coroner’s jury was suspicious but there was not enough evidence to indict Mrs. Friedman.

Blanche received \$75,000 from Friedman’s estate, \$8,000 of which went to pay for Ray Belote’s defense.

During the trial Belote testified that Albert Friedman had no objection to his affair with Friedman’s wife. Ray also claimed that he shot through the keyhole to “scare” Friedman. The jury disagreed. Belote was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Paul Drexler, Director, Crooks Tour of San Francisco, www.crookstour.com 415-713-3077

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San Francisco native Ron Blatman is making a new TV series called “Saving the City,” which follows his PBS series “Saving the Bay.”

Saving San Francisco

By Joel P. Engardio

Saving the Bay is an Emmy award-winning PBS series about the local activists and environmentalists who fought and stopped development plans in the 1960s that would have filled in San Francisco Bay until it became a river.

Now the documentary filmmaker and San Francisco native who told the “Saving the Bay” history is working on an even bigger and more immediate topic: “Saving the City.”

Ron Blatman, 57, sees that San Francisco is in a crisis without enough housing, public transportation and infrastructure for all the newcomers driving up the cost of living.

At first glance, Blatman looks like the anti-change and not-in-my-backyard demographic who wants to strictly preserve and protect San Francisco’s neighborhoods with the same playbook that saved the Bay. But the solutions in Blatman’s “Saving the City” will surprise fans of “Saving the Bay.”

Start with Blatman’s view of the No Wall on the Waterfront campaign that fought against new housing by the Bay.

“Where was the wall? The plan I saw wasn’t on the water. It would have turned a parking lot on the westside of The Embarcadero into something really nice,” Blatman said. “San Francisco is so afraid of its waterfront, but that’s where people go in other great cities.”

For Blatman, a saved urban Bay is squandered when people can’t live or recreate near it.

Initial footage of “Saving the City” compares San Francisco’s newly developed Mission Bay neighborhood to a similarly situated area of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Vancouver’s Mission Bay has tall, skinny housing towers and lots of green, open space for families to picnic and play.

The difference is striking. Tall, skinny housing towers in Vancouver leave lots of green, open space between the structures for families to picnic and play. Schools and recreation centers anchor the high rises to create a vibrant community.

Short, squat buildings dominate Mission Bay because anti-height activists got their way. Sites for schools and parks to attract and retain families remain empty.

“San Francisco likes to get mired in its planning process without concern for the end product,” Blatman said. “Now we have Mission Bay, which is broken from the start. It’s blocky and sterile with no sense of place. Community facilities should have come first, not last.”

Blatman’s expertise goes beyond filmmaking: He was City Hall’s director of business development in the early 1990s and he has masters degrees in city planning and business administration from the University of Pennsylvania. He studied architecture as an undergrad at UC Berkeley.

Blatman said he wants his “Saving the City” series — 13 hours of public television with a \$7 million budget — to teach lessons and change mindsets by letting people see for themselves what works and doesn’t work in today’s cities.

“The Transbay [Transit Center] we’re trying to build in San Francisco is a mess,” Blatman said. “But everything our Transbay [Transit Center] is supposed to be, Denver’s Union Station is.”

While Blatman calls for more density and height in San Francisco, he is a not an urban purist. For example, he doesn’t believe cars are the enemy.

“It’s ludicrous to think people don’t need or won’t use cars,” Blatman said. “How can we enforce people to live like we have the Paris Metro when all we have is Muni?” Blatman also said neighborhoods with single-family homes are good for keeping larger families in San Francisco, as long as adjacent transit and commercial corridors provide more multistory housing for young professionals, couples and downsizing seniors.

“You don’t want to see 10 stories in West Portal, but four stories of condos above retail will retain its village quality,” said Blatman, who grew up near West Portal Avenue. “Just don’t touch the family homes behind it.”

In his effort to save San Francisco, Blatman’s series will highlight successful cities willing to embrace change to meet future needs — cities that know what to preserve and what to let go.

“The idea that everything should be frozen is nuts,” Blatman said. “Cities change, and if they don’t, they die.”

Joel Engardio lives west of Twin Peaks. Follow his blog at www.engardio.com. Email him at info@engardio.com. Photos courtesy of Ron Blatman



Above: Vancouver, British Columbia – Top photo: Mission Bay, San Francisco

Part 2: Gambling With San Francisco Employees' Retirement Fund

Wendy Paskin-Jordan's Troubling Reappointment

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

In his haste to reappoint Wendy Paskin-Jordan — wife of former Mayor and former Police Chief Frank Jordan — to the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System's (SFERS) Board of Directors, Mayor Ed "Shared Prosperity Agenda" Lee sloppily ignored vetting his reappointment recommendation required through the San Francisco Board of Supervisors Rules Committee where public testimony and a Rules Committee recommendation to approve or oppose mayoral appointees are then forwarded to the full Board of Supervisors for consideration.

Paskin-Jordan has a number of conflicts of interest that should have disqualified her from reappointment. Mayor Lee just turned a blind eye. Later, the Board of Supervisors turned a blind eye, too.

As widely-respected financial journalist David Sirota noted in an International Business Times article on December 13, 2014, Paskin-Jordan "appears to have blurred the lines between her responsibility to the city and her personal financial interests." Sirota reported "Paskin-Jordan has invested her personal funds in a firm called GMO, which also manages almost \$400 million of the San Francisco pension system's money."

Sirota reported that "San Francisco has rules designed to prevent people who manage pension systems from placing personal money in the same entities in which public funds under their supervision are invested." In addition to concerns about her relationship with GMO, it's unclear whether Paskin-Jordan and her clients have also invested in Northern Trust by aggregating personal funds with SFERS' pension funds, a key question all but ignored by San Francisco's Board of Supervisors when it held a second hearing on her reappointment on January 7, 2015. She had been a no-show at the Board of Supervisors first hearing on December 16, 2014.

Paskin-Jordan's investment firm — Paskin Capital Advisors, LLC — has \$627 million in assets under management for her clients. Her activities have raised serious concerns about her fitness to be an SFERS Commissioner.

Two Conflict-of-Interest Ethics Complaints

When Mayor Lee recommended handing Paskin-Jordan a five-year reappointment to SFERS Board, he had to have known that two conflict-of-interest complaints against Paskin-Jordan had already been filed with the City's Ethics Commission.

Luckily, the Board of Supervisors were aware of the two separate formal anonymous complaints about Paskin-Jordan's Form 700's Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) that had been filed with the Ethics Commission in 2014.

The first Ethics complaint filed on April 3, 2014 to SFERS, with copies to the Ethics Commission, alleged Paskin-Jordan had potentially received reduced fee structures for her account and her client's accounts by aggregating SFERS' fund balance with that of her and her clients accounts, saving her millions of dollars in investment and transaction fees. The complaint also claims she had received favorable fee structures for her business, and her clients doing business, with Northern Trust between September 2011 and September 2013.

The second ethics complaint alleging Paskin-Jordan's financial misconduct dated September 2, 2014 involves a violation of the Statement of Incompatible Activities applicable to SFERS Board members, regarding Paskin-Jordan's investments in GMO's Quality Fund. SFERS Executive Director Jay Huish forwarded the second complaint to San Francisco Ethics Commission Executive Director, John St. Croix on December 8, the same date the Mayor reappointed her to SFERS.

As John Coté reported in the San Francisco Chronicle on December 15, 2014, the September complaint "centers on her

investment of between \$100,001 and \$1 million in Grantham, Mayo, Van Otterloo and Co., an international investment firm headquartered in Boston known as GMO that has a minimum investment threshold of \$10 million."

Coté noted that City law prohibits Retirement Board members from investing with "managers of private equity, limited partnerships and non-publicly traded mutual funds that are doing business" with the City's retirement system. GMO describes itself on its website as "a private partnership," although San Francisco Employees' Retirement System staff considers GMO a "manager of public market assets," despite the \$10 million minimum investment threshold.

Not only does GMO consider itself a "private partnership," and not a "public market," GMO notes on its web site that:

"[GMO] serves a primarily institutional client base. Although we do have a small number of high net worth clients, GMO is an investment manager and does not offer investment advisory services that one might find at an organization that is dedicated to servicing high net worth individuals."

As Supervisor John Avalos noted during the Board of Supervisors hearing on December 16 on Paskin-Jordan's reappointment, GMO is not listed on eBay as an investment opportunity open to run-of-the-mill public investors. The GMO fund does not appear to be a "publicly traded mutual fund," but when the Supervisors finally grilled Paskin-Jordan on January 7, the question of whether GMO was indeed a publicly-traded investment Paskin-Jordan was entitled to invest in, the question didn't garner sufficient scrutiny by the 10 City supervisors. Paskin-Jordan claimed several times on January 7 that GMO was a "public mutual fund," despite the fact GMO itself notes it's a private fund that trades in hedge funds, not exclusively in mutual funds.

Indeed, she failed to report her investment in the GMO Quality Fund — an equity fund investment — on her Form 700 for the period ending December 31, 2011 in April 2012, and only got around to reporting in March 2013 that investment on her Form 2012 for the period ending December 31, 2012, fully 16 to 19 months after acquiring it in August 2011.

Gaming the System?

In addition to Paskin-Jordan's questionable conflicts-of-interest, other observers also question whether she feels entitled to game the system.

First, Mayor Lee noted in a short biography of Paskin-Jordan attached to his reappointment letter, that she served on Barclays Global Investors' board of directors until it was acquired by BlackRock. The Mayor claims she serves as a Trustee of various funds of BlackRock Funds. She probably should have rescued herself — but didn't — from a key SFERS vote involving BlackRock Investments during a full SFERS Board meeting on May 8, 2013, when the Board entertained a motion to terminate BlackRock Investments from a currency overlay program that did involve hedge funds. Although she cast a vote to terminate BlackRock, she shouldn't have voted at all, given her probable conflict of interest.

Played for a Fool (Cont. from p. 1)

24,400 sq ft space at 1455 Market Street in order to house everyone.

SFE gets 46% (\$9,389,000) of its revenue from grants. This is an enormous amount of their budget that varies from year to year. The funding that many staff rely on is not guaranteed. Also, many grants do not pay for all the staff benefits the City affords its employees, so these costs are shifted to other funding sources by bending the rules.

Frequently, grants do not pay for indirect costs. These indirect costs include such things as the \$756,000 that SFE pays annually for rent, with a remodeling loan financed at 8%. There are other administrative expenses that bring the total to \$4 million a year. When grants do not pay for indirect costs, they must be absorbed by other funding sources.

Now those other funding sources cannot sustain underwriting all the grants, so it's City Hall to the rescue.

The culture of SFE has not reflected a desire to be a fiscally responsible enterprise department with a sound business plan. Why would they be any better at managing money if they were a General Fund Department? There is no oversight by anybody, including City Hall.

SFE could curtail some financing problems by stopping the practice of hiring long term costly City employees with short term grant funding. For example, last July SFE got the Mayor's approval to convert four staff from temporary employees to permanent status with all the benefits that includes. Now SFE is advertising for another new permanent employee in the salary range of \$84,000 - \$102,000, knowing this adds to ITS deficit.

Grants can be used to hire independent contractors without City benefits to perform SFE's work, instead of hiring employees with benefits. When the grant money ends, so does the need to pay somebody. Problem solved.

The rest of the \$20 million budget comes from other City departments who contribute 9% (\$1,752,000) to SFE in the form of work orders, and from the Solid Waste Management Program (SWMP) for 45% (\$9,323,000). The SWMP money is a fee added to the residential garbage rates renegotiated whenever the Recology rates are periodically increased. SFE tells Recology how much money to collect on behalf of the City, and this sum is then part of the rates. The Refuse Rate Board always approves whatever SFE asks.

The Plan To Fool The Mayor

At the same January 27th meeting where the budget was approved, the Commission heard a presentation by a Mayor's Budget Office staff member on the Controller's 5 year financial plan to the year 2020. It projects a shortfall of \$15.9 million for next year's budget, and that expenditures are continuing to grow faster than revenue. Because the 5 year plan is presenting a "recession scenario," the city proposes to curb growth and increase revenues.

The Commissioners heard these words of warning, ignored them, and decided that now is the ideal time to get on the City's gravy train, before the financial picture gets any worse. Then they discussed various strategies for convincing the Mayor to make SFE a General Fund Department. Since the Mayor referred to SFE programs in his recent State of the City speech, they decided he could be manipulated into providing funds for them.

Previously, at the Operations Committee meeting on January 21st, Commissioners talked about ideas for getting the General Funds:

1. Commissioners discussed the need for more funds and how to get their expensive City Attorney fees paid with City money. They assume that becoming a General Fund Department with just "a dollar" allocation will automatically provide SFE with a large budget appropriation to pay these fees. This is a primary reason for pursuing General Funds.

Commission President Arce: "We have to get General Fund [money] period. Why? It solves the City Attorney problem. If we get \$1 we get an allocation. Right? So we have to win. We have to get in there [into the General Fund budget]."

2. Commissioners discussed what would be the best way to justify and sell to the Mayor a request for General Fund money. Would it be by asking for either "discretionary" funding to pay for expenses, or for a to-be-determined "program component", or both reasons?

Commission President Arce: "We can work hard on this to make it happen. And that's what we're here for as Commissioners, to work all kinds of little angles and stuff." - including fooling the Mayor.

3. Commissioners discussed how to make their SFE budget proposal look better, "create a buzz," and be more appealing to the Mayor by parroting back the ideas from his recent State of the City speech.

Commission President Arce: "We just say the exact same words. We just copy and paste from the shared prosperity agenda [from the Mayor's speech] and put it into our proposal for General Fund [money]. We'll get it. Period."

At the January 27th meeting, Director Deborah Raphael reported that she had already had discussions with Kate Howard, Director of the Mayor's Budget Office, about the importance of General Fund money for SFE and thanked the office for their support in this effort. Clearly, this idea is now being discussed behind closed doors on the second floor of City Hall.

It is important to note that the Commission made no effort to get any public opinion on this controversial decision to cease being an enterprise department. The topic was never on any Commission agenda. This is exactly the kind of issue that the Sunshine Ordinance intended to keep in front of the public at all times with full disclosure. That did not happen.

Conclusion

SFE has been left to its own devices and is now out of control. They want funding from the taxpayers as well as from the ratepayers with no oversight.

The City needs to audit SFE's fiscal practices and business plan long before considering giving them any taxpayer money, and to decide what procedural changes need to be made. Detailed financial oversight from the City is definitely required for all of SFE's funding sources.

SFE needs to balance the books and live within its revenue restrictions. It should not be rewarded with general funds to cover up poor management of grants.

SFE should hire independent contractors on grants, rather than City employees.

SFE should faithfully apply the Commission-approved Guidelines for Use of the funds from the Solid Waste Management Program, with periodic City audits of the expenditures for compliance.

New activities should not be accepted without the underwriting to finance them. If necessary, other City departments can take on programs SFE has trouble funding.

SFE needs a viable fund raising plan to endow the department, and then needs to implement it.

The Commission on the Environment needs to agendize all fiscal matters according to the Sunshine Ordinance. Major financial decisions are discussed without being clearly publicized in violation of the Ordinance and Brown Act, and without inviting an informed public to comment. Financial matters need full disclosure and transparency.

The Mayor needs to immediately fill two vacancies on the Commission on the Environment with people who have experience in overseeing multimillion dollar business operations and have a working knowledge of fund raising and grants.

Nancy Wuerfel, a government fiscal analyst, served as a member of the Park, Recreation Open Space Advisory Committee (PROSAC) for 9 years as an appointee of 3 District 4 Supervisors, George Wooding is a Westside Observer Investigative Reporter.

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Commentary

Limiting Water and Sewer Rising Rates

By Steve Lawrence



SFPUC—water, sewer, power—is a sizable public enterprise that spends close to a billion dollars a year. Within the past decade it moved into fancy headquarters with artworks and cool wind-powered machines. It is mostly finished with its \$4.8 billion water system improvement program, and has launched its \$6.9 billion sewer system improvement program. In 2002 these, then combined, were priced at \$4.4 billion.

Who minds the very considerable spending of SFPUC (San Francisco Public Utilities Commission)? It's your money; in rates for water and sewer, you pay for its spending.

Firstly, there is a commission of five mayoral appointees. Each of these must be confirmed by the Board of Supervisors. A decade ago this commission sat twenty times a year, said very little, and voted as staff (through the SFPUC general manager) asked. More recently commissioners have an "office." One is the environmental commissioner, another is supposed

to have experience representing ratepayers, as examples. Today commissioners are more likely to express themselves, and in small ways, guide affairs of the enterprise. As a group the commission represents the ratepayers; one of the enterprise's goals is affordability.

Secondly, there is RBOC, the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee. As SFPUC is spending by going deeply into debt, the idea is for this group to oversee spending of debt (bond) money to make sure it is not wasted. The group meets about ten times a year for a couple of hours at a time. It has some money to spend, and hires professionals to evaluate the effectiveness of spending.

The largest project of the water system improvements is called Calaveras Dam. About fifteen years ago the 1925 dam was deemed a risk, as it is on an earthquake fault and old. A new, better dam is being built just downstream. The project started out with a supposed cost of \$265 million; now its cost is expected to be \$718 million, according to a report commissioned by RBOC. On the project there are nearly one hundred change orders, eleven of which are over one million dollars. One is for nearly one hundred million dollars. The delay to the project's completion: 2554 days, i.e. years. Costs of clearing environmental hurdles and construction management both more than doubled. Of five projects studied, including Calaveras Dam, a RBOC report says, "the results of the [WSIP] change process have been much less than desired. Per the [available data, changes add] 27.4%, which is very high."

In addition to added cost due to changes, there are "soft costs" over and

above the "hard" cost of contracts for work done by contractors. RBOC concluded that WSIP's soft costs are too high.

These results are concerning. WSIP is about two-thirds the size of the upcoming SSIP. But half of WSIP is paid by suburban water agencies supplied by our Hetchy water system. Moreover, the sewer improvement work (SSIP) is almost entirely to be done here in the city. City work generally generates more changes; there are many underground obstructions and hindrances. The change process, and controlling the cost of changes, will be more important.

Perhaps SFPUC will learn from WSIP. If not, expect your sewer bill, which while separate from your water bill is tied to it, to rise faster. Water use is down. While that sounds like a good thing, and mostly is, delivering less water cuts SFPUC's costs hardly at all. With our gravity system power is not saved; indeed, less power may be generated. The same cost is divided fewer ways. That means higher rates. A utility must recover its costs.

SFPUC is committed to keeping rates at no more than 2.5% of median income, considered "affordable." For the past eighty years, what with the gift of the Hetch Hetchy watershed after the great earthquake of 1906, San Franciscans have enjoyed a much lower rate cost than that. Alas, all good things end.

There may be little that ratepayers can do to slow the rapid rise in yet another cost of living in the special city. Voters rejected an initiative to employ a ratepayer advocate. In 2002 voters gave up their right to vote on issuing bonds (incurring debt). Commissioners heed staff, who cater to their needs and whims. RBOC meets for perhaps twenty-five hours a year; it mainly can engage outside professionals. The outside professionals hope to continue to be hired on city matters, and are constrained to temper their critique.

When a city enterprise becomes so big and powerful, spending so much money, it is essentially unstoppable. It does and spends what it wants, with very little constraint.

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

Free Muni for Seniors and People with Disabilities Began March 1 It's not too late to apply

Free Muni for low-to-moderate income seniors and people with disabilities program begins March 1. In just over one month, the SFMTA has processed more than 38,000 applications for the Free Muni program expansion.

The program is available on Clipper® card only, and in most instances, new applicants have received their Clipper cards in the mail. While, existing Clipper cardholders were mailed letters notifying them of their application acceptance. The notice will also include instructions on how to use the Clipper card. Customers who already have a Senior or Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Card may apply immediately online, by mail or by dialing 311. A new card is not required.

"Free Muni has income, age, residency and other requirements that govern this unprecedented program," said Tom Nolan, Chairman of the SFMTA Board.

The SFMTA Board engaged in a careful review of the agency's financial health before voting to expand Free Muni. Nonetheless, over the next two years it is estimated the cost of the Free Muni program will be approximately \$6 million.

Applications may take up to four weeks to process.

"It is getting harder and harder for low-income seniors and people with disabilities to live in San Francisco," said Betty Traynor, Board President for Senior & Disability Action.

The SFMTA Board also voted to approve a 12 percent increase in Muni service last year as part of the agency's two-year budget. Info: sfmta.com/freemuni.

Proud Papa



My 2¢ • Will Durst © 2015

Message. Message. Who's Got The Message?

Don't look now, but the Democratic Party is undergoing an identity crisis of such monumental proportions, the Dissociative Identity Disorder people have called and are requesting artifacts for their Hall of Fame. Going to put Obama's basketball hoop right next to Sally Field's purple crayon.

In the realm of improbabilities, it's hard to beat... Democrats and their message. A lot like saying the Eskimos and their convertibles. The Mormons and their all-night dance marathons. ISIS and its art appreciation seminars.

In the wake of suffering what can only be described as the most gruesome drubbing in the history of midterm elections, and yes, that includes the Republican sweep following The Panic of 1893, the Democrats commissioned a report to investigate what the hell went wrong and how to get their mojo back. Although, Harry Reid using the word "mojo" is probably not something you want to be ruminating upon right before bedtime.

Ironically, this was the same self-analysis Republicans turned to after losing the presidency in 2012 to a black guy named Hussein in the middle of a lousy economy. There's a word for contemplating your navel as a form of meditation: omphaloskepsis. And who can dispute that Democrats are the most naturally omphaloskeptic of the major parties? With Tea Partiers suffering from sesquipedalophobia-fear of long words. And Libertarians most likely to be ablutophobic-which is fear of bathing.

This election post-mortem was based on interviews and studies and surveys and astrological forecasts and ratings on IMDB of the first two Hobbit movies and some random notes found on the backs of spindled lunch receipts and fortune cookie messages but only from indigenously correct restaurants in the Chinatown sections of 4 large metropolitan areas on the west coast.

Though the official report isn't scheduled to come out until May, preliminary findings of the soul-searching have been

released, and the Dems have come to the considered opinion that it isn't their message keeping them from a humongous pile of electoral victories, but the delivery of it. This time they really do blame the messenger. And it's them.

Yeah, and Domino's would be renowned for terrific pizza if only it could figure out how to keep it from arriving cold and mealy with congealed cheese stuck to the inside top of the box. And they used quality ingredients.

Want the middle class to turn to you for opportunity, provide some middle class opportunity. For crum's sake, stand for something. Anything. Besides the national anthem, that is.

Oh yeah, there's that. Amazingly, this is the same exact conclusion the GOP reached in its post-Romney autopsy. You have to wonder if these guys use the same consultants. And guess what, they do.

Former Democratic National Chairman and Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell blamed his party's inability to get its point across because "our message is reasonable and intelligent, and almost inherently nuanced." Well, there's your problem right there. Inherently nuanced? Yeah, that floats down the middle of Main Street like a buzzard on a zephyr.

Hey guys, the answer is pretty simple. You want to be the smart party, stop doing stupid stuff. You want to be known as a party with a winning message, quit being such losers. Want the middle class to turn to you for opportunity, provide some middle class opportunity. For crum's sake, stand for something. Anything. Besides the national anthem, that is.

Will Durst is an award-winning, nationally acclaimed political comic. Go to willdurst.com for info about "Boomeraging: From LSD to OMG," and the documentary film, "3 Still Standing," plus a calendar listing future personal appearances.

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BRINEGATE REVISITED

By Brian Browne



In the February issue of the *West-side Observer*, Mr. Steve Ritchie, Assistant General Manager SFPUC, authored a rebuttal to my December-January article: "SFPUC Don't Experiment with Our Drinking Water." It was a general rebuttal, short on facts, and full of misrepresentations as to my research and knowledge. I did not write the caption. The caption is one-hundred percent accurate. Blending aquifer water with pristine Hetch Hetchy supplies is statistically not a zero sum game as to expected outcomes. I challenge the SFPUC to prove otherwise. There are no solid reasons why San Francisco should have its pristine supplies expropriated as planned by the SFPUC at the whim of

Blending aquifer water with pristine Hetch Hetchy supplies is statistically not a zero sum game ... There are no solid reasons why San Francisco should have its pristine supplies expropriated as planned by the SFPUC at the whim of peninsula wholesale customers.

peninsula wholesale customers.

Mr. Ritchie's states I have not followed the development of Brinegate and he discounts my knowledge of diversified systems. He is absolutely wrong on both counts. Had the SFPUC revealed its real water-supply goals for San Francisco in 2002, as it does in Mr. Ritchie's rebuttal, when it requested funding for the current Water Supply Improvement Project (then Capital Improvement Project [CIP]), 2002 Propositions A and E would have failed miserably. The SFPUC would have still needed to seek voter approval to issue revenue bonds; these issuances would be contingent on real progress, not multiple PR illusionary pronouncements; the Hetch Hetchy system would remain owned and operated by the SFPUC; and our local water would not be subject to arbitrary expropriation by decision makers who apparently believe more in Marx than Friedman.

When SFPUC presented one of its first efforts of Brinegate to the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee (RBOC) I asked staff if the 4 MGD of recycled bore water it was then proposing would count as part of San Francisco's 81 MGD assurance under the 2009 MWS. If so, would we still be required to pay the wholesale charge as a function of the ratio of 81/265 or would it now be 77/265. No answer. I did mention that recycled well water cost multiples of Hetch Hetchy water. No answer.

I have worked on many recycled projects in the U.S. and abroad. My last project was on evaluating blending (the SFPUC's three dollar word) water from an ancient and non-refillable aquifer with existing potable water supplies from ground-water sources. There were many components to this project, especially health.

In August 2004, I authored an article for Reason Foundation, *Western Water Wars - Efforts to take over San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy system*. Mr. Ritchie's article proves the accuracy of my 2004 prophecies. The SFPUC used to say they "owned and operated" the Hetch Hetchy system. They now just "operate" the regional system. The admitted appropriation (theft by fiat) of possibly more than twenty-percent of our historic water deliveries, as confirmed by Mr. Ritchie, is depressing.

Mr. Ritchie states that because San Mateo, Daly City, and eighty-percent of Californians drink blended aquifer and other-source potable water, he infers so should San Francisco. Mr. Ritchie's logic: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need, as stated by Karl Marx, is not the logic that drives our capitalistic economy. San Francisco built the Hetch Hetchy system without any governmental subsidies and has been generous in sharing water and power provided by the system, as the federal appointed grantee.

People who live in San Francisco capitalized the value of having one of the country's best water systems. It is reflected in our asset valuations. People who want to benefit from this phenomenon are not restrained from moving to San Francisco. Following Mr. Ritchie's logic, this traditional American market mechanism can be replaced by politicized decisions via the mechanism of forced wealth reallocations. No one would suspect that the then Mayor, Gavin Newsom, had political ambitions well beyond the boundaries of the City on whose behalf he pledged to work in its best interests, and not his own statewide or national ambitions.

San Francisco has entered into two water agreements with its wholesale customers. The first one was in 1984 and the second one in 2009. For the intra-agreement twenty-five year period, San Francisco received from the

Cont. p. 17

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL By Mitch Bull

The February meeting of the West of Twin Peaks Central Council featured discussion about proposed changes to the operation of **Sutro Tower**, an update from **Supervisor Norman Yee**, a visit from **D6 Supervisor Jane Kim**, and further discussion of the process of looking at **housing on the Balboa Reservoir**.

Following the opening of the meeting by **President Roger Ritter** and the monthly meeting items and officers reports, a discussion was held focusing on the proposal by the operators of the **Sutro Tower** to install 15 new antennas onto the structure. **Denise LaPointe**, the delegate representing the Twin Peaks Improvement Association, asked the assembled delegates for a general statement of support for the TPIA in **opposing the new permit** for additional antennas and other work at the Tower site. LaPointe explained that the TPIA is concerned with issues at the site such as clear cutting of trees, additional traffic, and the issue of inadequate neighborhood notifications. **George Wooding** explained that the operations of the Sutro Tower is permitted on a conditional use basis, so that as the operation is changed, public and neighborhood hearings are required to be conducted. The **WOT-PCC voted unanimously** to prepare a letter containing a general statement of support for the TPIA challenge.

In a "public health" discussion, **George Wooding** spoke of the EPA pulling its support of the "ground up tire" turf dressing that is being used throughout the city on artificial surfaced playing fields.

District 7 Supervisor Norman Yee then addressed the gathering on the progress of the recent **participatory budgeting project**. This year, 44 proposals were received and Yee said the number of proposals and the quality of proposals were much better than what was received last year. With budgeting guidelines, he estimates that approximately 24 of the 44 proposals will be vetted down and put to a district vote on what should be funded in District 7. Supervisor Yee also spoke on the opening of the **Ingleside Library garden-open space**, which he proclaimed to be the first open space area created in decades.



District 7 Supervisor Norman Yee

Yee also addressed the new **Senior Services program** at the West Portal Playground that operates from 9:30 - 2:00 PM. Prior to this new program, the district had only one Senior Services program (the Stonestown YMCA Senior Services Program) available to the 20,000 local seniors.

District 6 **Supervisor Jane Kim** addressed the attendees next, covering several areas such as the recently passed **AirBnB** legislation, (about which she has doubts about the City's ability to enforce the rules), the progress of the **Public Education Enrichment Fund**, Pedestrian Safety, Homelessness, and Public Safety.

Following a short discussion on the **AirBnB** legislation and the lawsuits recently filed against property owners by the **Tenants Union**, the supe explained that over **\$77,000,000 has been cut from public education in the state budget** over the past 10 years, and that the Public Education Enrichment Fund has been successful in making up some of these cuts with the expansion of amenities in schools such as on-site nurses, expanded art programs, increased counseling staff, music instructors and similar programs.

In addressing Pedestrian / Public Safety, Kim noted that her district, comprising the South of Market, Tenderloin and Treasure Island, has the highest number of vehicle/pedestrian interactions in the city, with over **\$13,000,000 in hospital-related costs** incurred last year. Seniors and children are the most likely to be injured or killed, and over 60% if the injuries in her district are located in just 6% of the traffic corridors, and that improvements and changes in those corridors would get the number closer to the "**Vision Zero**" goal of eliminating all traffic fatalities in three years.

The supervisor next addressed the issue of homelessness and the perceptions versus the realities of the crisis. Kim spent an evening in a homeless shelter and was surprised by the age of the occupants. While expecting a

younger crowd, Kim was shocked to see that most of the people in the shelter were older; in fact, with **San Francisco's shelters**, 60% of occupants are aged 40-59, and an additional 10% are 60 years and older. She stated that another misconception is that homelessness is just a financial issue, when in fact it is a public health issue, as many occupants of the shelters and those on the streets are ill with physical and mental impairments. Most shelters have no medical or psychiatric units available.



District 6 Supervisor Jane Kim

In the area of Public Safety, Kim noted that more **police officers are being added** to the rolls in SF after years of budget cuts and no academy classes. Another new program has been the installation of **three public restrooms** in the tenderloin. These staffed restrooms are open during the day, with locally-hired staff "checking" on people after 5 minutes or so to ensure that no illegal activities are going on. Since the implementation of the program, there has been a 60% reduction in the number of requests for the "**steam cleaning**" of sidewalks in the neighborhood, and the savings from water use and labor to clean the streets and sidewalks has resulted in the restroom program paying for itself. In addition, the city has passed legislation to ban parking on Turk Street, and the enforcement of this has resulted in a large reduction in people on the street and loitering in the area doing drug deals. The residents and merchants have been pleased with the progress so far.

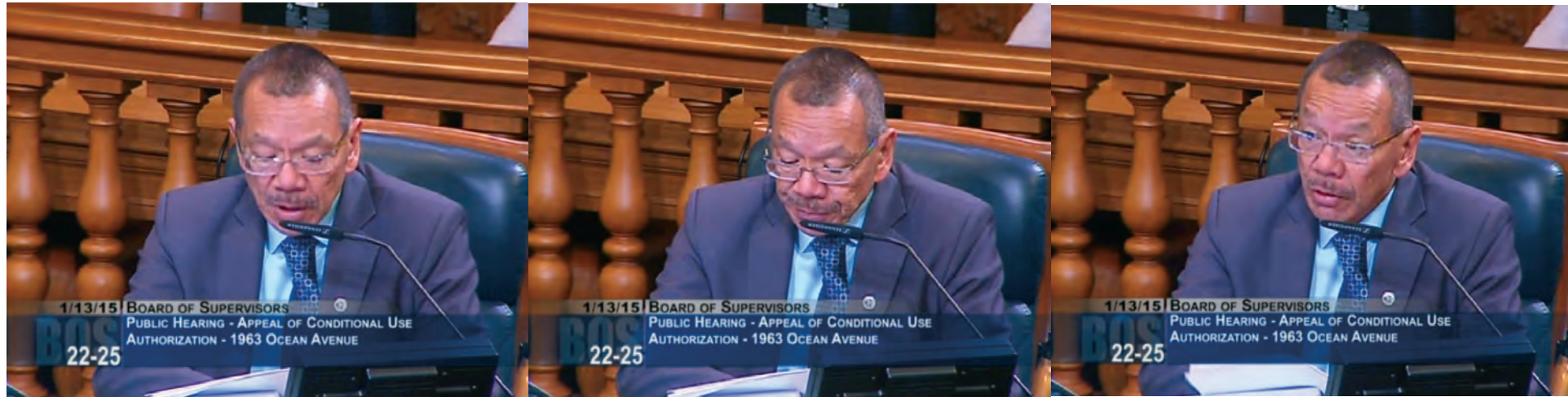
The **Balboa Reservoir** project was next, with a presentation by **Mike Martin**, representing the Mayor's office on the proposal to examine the building of "affordable housing" on several city-owned parcels including the Balboa Reservoir, adjacent to City College. The "Public Lands for Housing" program was created to examine how to best utilize parcels to make an impact in the housing crisis in SF. Four sites are being considered: 4th St at Folsom (the air rights above the Central Subway station); 1950 Mission St. (School District property); the MUNI "Upper Yard" near the Balboa Park station; and the Balboa Reservoir adjacent to City College.

In discussing the Balboa Reservoir site, Martin handed out maps showing pipelines under the site, the proposed building area, and the challenges of access and egress for traffic to and from the site. The city is looking for neighborhood input and is planning a **Community Workshop** to discuss the proposal in April. The proposed plan for the housing would focus on households earning below 80% of the localized AMI (Area Median Income) and 120% of the AMI. By doing this, the city hopes to affect housing options to keep firefighters and teachers local.

The final speaker of the evening was SF Unified School District Board member **Emily Murase**, who shared that the SFUSD is now one of the top performing school districts in California, and that with changes in curriculum now Lincoln, Balboa, and Washington High Schools have more applicants than Lowell. She also shared that the district just was audited and came through "squeaky clean."

A motion for adjournment followed at 9:15 and the meeting was wrapped.

The next meeting of the WOTPCC: Monday, March 23rd at 7:30 PM at the historic Forest Hills Clubhouse. Info: WOT-PCC website (www.westoftwinpeaks.org).



Supervisor Yee (Cont. from p. 1)
Conditional Use Permit at 1963 Ocean Avenue for a business that will sell e-cigarettes and plans to install a communal hookah in the basement. This controversial business use had considerable opposition from the neighborhood, including a petition signed by over 30% of neighbors within 300 feet of the permitted use. Some neighbors in favor of the Appeal noted that there were several schools just blocks away from the site.

“I looked at several aspects of the Appeal — and I co-authored an anti-clustering measure of such businesses — but in the end, I considered it strictly as a land use issue,” Yee said. He found no evidence to support discrimination against the business strictly on a land-use basis.

The health studies are not conclusive. “There are studies that show there are no

adverse effects and some that are not,” he said. “Is there any scientific proof?” At the hearing on the Appeal, several people testified that e-cigarettes had helped them overcome their addiction to cigarettes, and they are happy there is a healthier alternative to smoking. One man testified that his father, a life-long smoker, is no longer smoking and his health is greatly improved. Several speakers attested that e-cigarettes helped them stop smoking cigarettes. “There were an equal number of speakers for and against the Appeal,” Yee said. “I had to go with what is legal, I can’t make it illegal.”

“I’ve asked the Police Department for Crime Reports, and compared areas that have such businesses with areas that do not, (and they) showed no difference in crime,” he said. “And, as a condition of the permit, the business must come back in six months before the commission to review crime reports to determine that they are good neighbors, including increased criminal activity, noise and loitering.” Yee concluded, “Planning passed it — I couldn’t

find a good reason not to support it.”

The vote on the Conditional Use for the vaping lounge was 9 to 2, with Supervisors Cohen and Mar dissenting. Supervisor Yee said that he is “working to tighten regulations on e-cigarettes to prevent the proliferation of vapor shops and tobacco paraphernalia shops in the city. Last year, he also passed legis-

lation to prevent the clustering of medical cannabis dispensaries on Ocean Avenue.”
Korean War Memorial
Will you support a city donation to the Korean War Memorial in the Presidio? (The initial \$3.1 million has already been raised, but still needs \$400,000.)

“You are the first one who has ever asked me that,” replied Yee, “I don’t like to give away money—but I need more information.”

Artificial Turf in Golden Gate Park
Our last question was about Yee’s support for artificial turf, especially now that evidence is surfacing of a higher degree of cancer among students (especially goalies) who play on artificial turf made from recycled tire crumb rubber. We asked if he would be supporting SB 47, Senator Hill’s Artificial Turf Moratorium (The Children’s Safe Playground and Turf Field Act of 2015*)?

Yee replied that, as a School Board Member, he “had to make a decision regarding artificial turf at Burton High School, and I had been assured at that time that artificial turf is no longer made of the same stuff. I haven’t heard of any health issues from that field.”

Regarding the field at Beach Chalet, Yee noted “I was a soccer coach for four years, and I know first hand how bad conditions of the field at Beach Chalet were, and that’s why I supported the new field.”

Rec and Park is now looking to replace 4 soccer fields, and they are looking for a different material, would you support a moratorium on artificial turf at those fields until the health concerns are mitigated?* Yee replied that he would like to see the information our reporter has about the cancer concerns, and that he would revisit the high schools where artificial turf has been installed and make inquiries about health concerns that they may have.

We had planned to ask questions about Supervisor Yee’s less controversial votes and advocacy, including his support for maintaining the current CEQA Appeal Structure — increasing notice requirements and clearer appeal timelines.

Yee has been a strong supporter for pedestrian safety and we had questions about his hearing on safety in District 7, which brought \$450,000 in additional funds to improve safety in the district.

We also agreed with his support for Free Muni for Seniors and People with Disabilities that will begin March 1st. The Ingleside Garden Project, West Portal Playground renovation, playground at Golden Gate Heights Park, as well as the new boat

ramp at Lake Merced are among the other accomplishments we would have liked to discuss. For a more complete list of accomplishments provided by the Supervisor visit our website.

* This bill would require the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, by July 1, 2017, in consultation with the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, the State Department of Public Health, and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, to prepare and provide to the Legislature and post on the office’s Internet Web site a study analyzing synthetic turf, as defined, for potential adverse health impacts. The bill would require the study to include certain information, including a hazard analysis of individual, synergistic, and cumulative exposures to the chemicals that may be found in synthetic turf, as provided. The bill would prohibit a public or private school or local government, until January 1, 2018, from installing, or contracting for the installation of, a new field or playground surface made from synthetic turf within the boundaries of a public or private school or public recreational park, as provided.

** nbcnews.com/news/investigations/how-safe-artificial-turf-your-child-plays-n2201



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Money Matters By Brandon Miller

Seven Essential Things You Need to Know About Social Security



As more baby boomers reach retirement age, they're realizing the valuable role Social Security will play as a source of lifetime income. Claiming Social Security benefits can be far more complex than you may realize.

Here are seven essential things about Social Security to understand as you determine how Social Security will fit into your overall retirement income strategy:

1. You can start claiming benefits anytime between ages 62 and 70

When you're working and paying Social Security taxes (via your paycheck), you earn credit toward your Social Security retirement benefits. To qualify for these benefits, you need to contribute at least 40 credits to the system, which is typically 10 working years (although it does vary). Alternatively, if you have never worked and you're married to someone who qualifies, you may earn a spousal benefit. When claiming your own benefit, you can begin receiving Social Security at age 62 or delay receiving Social Security up to your 70th birthday.

2. Full retirement age is changing

The age to qualify for a "full" retirement benefit from Social Security used to be 65. Now it is up to 66 (for those born between 1943 and 1954). It increases by two months per year for those born between 1955 and 1959. For those born in 1960 or later, full retirement age is currently defined as 67.

3. The longer you wait, the larger your benefit

The amount of your benefit depends on the age you choose to first begin receiving Social Security. For example, if you collect beginning at 62 and your full retirement age is 66, your benefit will be about 25 percent lower. On the flip side, your benefit will increase by about 8 percent each year you delay taking Social Security after your full retirement age up to your 70th birthday.

4. Spousal benefits give married couples extra flexibility

If both spouses worked, they each can receive benefits based on their own earnings history. However, a lower earning spouse can choose to base a benefit on the higher earning spouse's income. A spousal benefit equals 50% of the other spouse's benefit. Note that if you claim a spousal benefit before full retirement age, it will be reduced. The maximum spousal benefit you can collect is by taking the benefit at your full retirement age (based on the benefit your spouse would earn at his or her full retirement age). You also can choose to collect a spousal benefit initially and delay taking your own benefit, allowing your benefit amount to increase. Then you can claim your benefit when you turn 70.

5. There may be a long-term advantage if a higher earning spouse delays Social Security

If the higher earning spouse is older (or has more health concerns that could affect longevity), it may make sense to delay taking Social Security as long as possible up to age 70. When the spouse with the higher benefit dies, the surviving spouse will collect the higher benefit that was earned by the deceased spouse. The higher the deceased spouse's benefit, the larger the monthly check for the surviving spouse.

6. Claiming benefits early while still working can reduce your benefit

If you begin claiming Social Security before your full retirement age but continue to earn income, your Social Security benefit could be reduced. If your earnings are above a certain level (\$15,720 in 2015), your Social Security checks will be reduced by \$1 for every \$2 you earned in income above that threshold. In the year you reach full retirement age, that threshold amount changes. \$1 is deducted for every \$3 earned above \$41,880 up to the month you reach full retirement age. Once you reach full retirement age, you can earn as much income as you want with no reduction in your Social Security benefits.

7. Benefits you earn may be subject to tax

According to the Social Security Administration, about one-third of people who receive Social Security have to pay income tax on their benefits. You may want to consult a tax professional to determine what impacts this will have on your overall benefits.

These essential points are just a beginning. There's much more to consider. Consult with your financial advisor, tax professional, your local Social Security office and/or Social Security's website, www.ssa.gov to find out more before you make your final decisions about when to first claim Social Security benefits.

Brandon Miller, CFP is a financial consultant at Brio Financial Group, A Private Wealth Advisory Practice of Ameriprise Financial Inc. in San Francisco, specializing in helping LGBT individuals and families plan and achieve their financial goals

...discovered near Kathmandu, Nepal around 1803. The highly fragrant white flowers are about six inches across, opening from velvety-brown buds. It is often grown in the Bay Area, sometimes as a street tree..."



Magnolia doltsopa Photo: James Gaither

Magnolias (Cont. from p. 2)

Magnolia sprengeri 'Diva' – This cultivar has particularly dark, rich, rose pink petals. The Garden's tree is one of the very few mature specimens in cultivation.

Magnolia doltsopa – An evergreen magnolia, formerly known as *Michelia doltsopa*, it was discovered near Kathmandu, Nepal around 1803. The highly fragrant white flowers are about six inches across, opening from velvety-brown buds. It is often grown in the Bay Area, sometimes as a street tree, but the specimens in the Garden are some of the largest in cultivation in California.

Magnolia laevifolia 'Strybing Compact' – This species, native to Yunnan province in China, can grow at altitudes as high as 9,000 feet, far higher than most other magnolias can survive. The flowers are fragrant and used to make perfume. This special cultivar is unique for its outstanding dwarf form.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

Free Magnolia Walk maps, highlighting key species and their location within the Garden, are available to the public. In addition, the Garden offers a free Magical Magnolia family adventure map that

takes families on either a stroller friendly path or a more adventurous route off the beaten path to search for furry buds and giant flowers on magnolia trees large and small. The Garden also offers free magnolia docent tours every Saturday, January 10 through March 28 at 2 PM, and visitors of all ages can ask questions and explore magnolias in more depth at Garden Interpretation Stations on Sundays, January 11 through March 29, from 1:30-3:30 PM.

In addition, visitors can find over 250 magnolia related items in The Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture, Northern California's most comprehensive horticultural collection. Free bibliographies for children and adults will also be available on a variety of magnolia-related themes. A special exhibition *Fotanicals: the Secret Language of Flowers* will be on display January-April 2014 and features the work of photographer joSon whose flower portraits are presented against a solid black or white background, offering a striking visual display of their intricate beauty. All works are for sale.

SF Botanical Garden is in Golden Gate Park at 9th Avenue.

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Where Friends Meet



Not all crimes are reported in the weekly reports. Reports below are partial excerpts from www.taraval.org

Taraval Police Station will hold its community meeting on March 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Taraval Police Station. All are welcome to attend.

Daily Crime Report :: Sun – Feb 01, 2015

Robbery • 5:53 am • 600 Lincoln Way

Officer responded to a report of a robbery. Two men walked into a business and robbed at gun point. Crime Scene Investigators were notified to respond.

Suspect #1: Black male; 30-40 years; 6’0” tall; 190 lbs; LSW black mask, green jacket, black gloves

Suspect #2: Black male; 40-50 years; 6’0” tall; 190 lbs, white hair. LSW Grey ski mask, dark jacket, blue jeans

Burglary 10:40 pm • 1800 Wawona St

Officers responded to a report of a burglary. A man returned to his previously locked home to find a window damaged. Numerous belongings were taken from inside.

Domestic Violence Assault-Unlawful Entry Battery 11:57 am • 2200 46th Ave

Officers responded to a report of a fight. A woman who was arrested on the previous day for assault at the same location unlawfully gained entry and assaulted the occupants. One of the occupants was the same person whom she fought yesterday. She was arrested for the above violations.

Daily Crime Report :: Mon – Feb 2, 2015

Suspicious Occurrence 6:49 am • 1500 45th Ave

A woman reported she received a recorded phone call message allegedly from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The message asked her to ‘key’ in the ‘following’ prompts. She hung-up.

Bomb Threat 7:57 am • 400 Sargent St

Officers responded to a report of a bomb threat at a school. The campus was evacuated. A search by bomb detecting canines revealed no explosive devices.

Burglary 11:28am • 1200 Ortega St

An officer responded to a report of a burglary at a school. A recorded surveillance footage showed a man enter through an unlocked front door. The man goes into an unoccupied room empty handed and then exits while carrying someone else’s belonging. The suspect then leaves the campus.

Suspect: Light skin male; 20-30 years; LSW gray beanie, blue “Code America” sweat-shirt, light color shorts

Possession of a Weapon on School Grounds-Possession of a Controlled Substance 11:00 am • 2100 24th Ave

An officer responded to a report of a student found in possession of an unlawful weapon and a controlled substance. A school dean had detained a student for the above violations.

Theft 12:03 pm • 700 Taraval St

An officer responded to a report of a shoplifting. A known shoplifter was seen exiting a store with unpaid merchandise items. The shoplifter then returned and showed a random receipt to a clerk in an attempt to get a grocery bag. A store manager detained the shoplifter. Officers recorded the shoplifter’s identity. The manager then refused further police action.

Fraud 12:55pm • 3200 20th Ave

A person who earlier used a fraudulent debit card to make a purchase attempted to do the same again. When employees tried to authenticate his identity, the suspect left the store.

Suspect: Hispanic male; 30-40 years; 5’6” tall; 230 lbs; LSW black jacket, blue jeans

Burglary 4:37pm • 2400 41st Ave

Officers responded to a report of a burglary. A man walked into a shared garage and saw his bicycle and two other

bicycles–each belonging to two of his roommates, missing. The next day on February 2nd he saw a male suspect and a female suspect each ride two of the three stolen bicycles. He confronted the suspects and was able to recover one of the bicycles. The suspects fled.

Suspect #1: Hispanic or Middle Eastern male; 20-30 years; 6’1” tall; 175 lbs; black hair; brown eyes; LSW red rain jacket, black pants; scruffy and unshaven

Suspect #2: White female; 25-35 years; 5’6” tall; 130 lbs; blond hair; blue eyes; LSW yellow rain jacket, dark pants, curly long ‘poofy’ hair, crown or tiara on head

Theft From Person 8:20 pm • 19th Ave and Holloway Ave

A woman walked into Taraval Station report a theft. She was waiting in a line to board a MUNI bus when she felt an unknown person brush up against her backpack. She immediately checked her backpack and saw a belonging missing.

Hot Prowl Burglary 9:38pm • 2500 41st

Officers responded to a report of a burglary. A victim was inside a home near a partially opened window when she saw hands push through the blinds and slide the window open. She yelled she will dial 911. She heard two males voices speak softly in English. The men then fled.

Suspect #1: Black male; 5’4” tall; 150 lbs

Suspect #2: Unknown race male

Daily Crime Report :: Tues – Feb 3, 2015

Battery 1:34 pm • 1400 20th Ave

Officers responded to a report of a fight. Two men got into an argument and got into a fight. One of the combatants had come to retrieve his firearms that were stored in the other man’s home. The firearms were confiscated for safekeeping.

Commercial Burglary Reported 8:35 am / 2400 Ocean Ave / forced entry through a window

Suspect – Black male :: 45-60 years :: 6’0” tall :: 190 lbs :: bald :: brown eyes :: LSW black hat with a star, black puffy jacket with gray hoodie :: dark pants, black shoes

Daily Crime Report :: Wed – Feb 4, 2015

Suspicious Occurrence 12:46 am • 100 Vernon and Randolph St

An officer responded to a report of a threat. A man claimed his landlord sent her nephew to intimidate him. The nephew supposedly threatened the man to move out before the nephew left.

Suspect – White male :: 40-50 years :: 6’0” tall :: 260 lbs :: brown hair :: LSW black “Hell’s Angels” shirt, black pants, “Hells Angels” tattoo on neck

Battery-Arrested 8:52 am • Sunset Blvd & Vicente St

A couple get into an argument and one of them strangled the other. A threat to harm was also made against the strangled victim. The suspect then left the scene. Officers responded to the suspect’s location and arrested him for the offenses.

Aggravated Assault 3:43 pm • 1400 32nd

An upstairs resident confronted her downstairs neighbor regarding creaky floors. The downstairs neighbor threw warm water at the upstairs resident. The neighbor then hit the upstairs resident’s head with a pot. Paramedics responded to treat the victim. The downstairs neighbor was arrested for assault with an object.

Robbery 6:44 pm • 1700 Ocean Ave

Officers responded to a report of a robbery. A store employee tried to retrieve a stolen merchandise item from a shoplifter. The suspect pulled away and hit the employee before fleeing.

Suspect – Hispanic male :: 40-45 years :: 5’5” tall :: 175 lbs :: LSW black beanie, black jacket, gray jeans, black and red shoes

Daily Crime Report :: Thurs – Feb 5, 2015

Theft 7:25 pm • 200 Winston Dr

A man walked into Taraval Station to report a theft. The man was a department store investigator. An employee was caught on surveillance footage stealing customers’ belongings.

Suspect – White male :: 21 years :: 5’10” :: 135 lbs :: black hair :: brown eyes

Daily Crime Report :: Fri – Feb 6, 2015

Battery 12:55 am • 1100 Taraval St

Officers responded to a report of a battery. A man punched three men—one of whom suffered a bleeding cut, during an argument on a sidewalk. The suspect then fled on foot. The victim who suffered the cut refused to cooperate and appeared intoxicated.

Suspect – White male :: 20-25 years :: 6’0” tall :: 160 lbs :: brown hair :: LSW white T shirt, dark pants :: slick back hair :: medium build

Battery 9:25 pm • 19th Ave & Holloway

Officers responded to a report of a battery. The victim was riding in a MUNI bus when a suspect approached and assaulted her. She exited the bus and the suspect followed. The suspect hit her again before fleeing with another person.

Suspect – White male :: 25 years :: 5’8” :: 150 lbs :: brown hair with blond highlights :: LSW black beanie, black pull over jacket, black jeans

Daily Crime Report :: Sat – Feb 7, 2015

Theft 7:54am • 00 Grijalva Dr

Officers responded to a report of a theft. An unattended delivery package was stolen from a victim’s doorway.

Daily Crime Report :: Sun – Feb 8, 2015
Battery-Vandalism-Resisting Peace Officer-Arrested 12:01 am • 3600 Taraval St

Officers responded to a report of a fight. An intoxicated suspect approached and hit one of three victims who were standing on a sidewalk. The victims went inside their nearby residential building to get away from the suspect. The suspect then tried to climb the building, caused damage, and fell down on the ground. Officers attempted to detain the suspect however he physically resisted. Paramedics responded and transported the suspect due to his erratic behavior and possible injury. He was arrested for the above listed charges.

Possession of Narcotics Paraphernalia 6:12 am • 1800 21st Ave

Officers responded to a report of a suspicious person. The person voluntarily agreed to be searched. Officers found narcotics paraphernalia. He was arrested and released for the violation.

Theft 6:32 pm • 1800 Ocean Ave

A man walked into Taraval Station to report a theft. He had locked his belongings in a locker in a fitness center and briefly left. Upon return he saw the locker was open and his belongings missing. There was no damage to the locker or to the lock.

Daily Crime Report :: Mon – Feb 9, 2015
Battery-Arrested 6:34 am • 2400 19th Ave

A couple had got into a fight. The primary aggressor was identified and was arrested for battery involving domestic violence.

Aggravated Assault 2:36 pm • 2300 28th

A man became verbally hostile toward a victim while the victim was talking to an another person on a sidewalk. The man then got into his car. The victim walked over and wrote down the man’s license plate. The man became upset and attempted to hit her with his car. The suspect then drove away. Officers arrested him for aggravated assault.

Driving Under the Influence-Reckless Driving-Unsafe Lane Change-Unlawful Possession Pellet Gun-Open Container of Alcohol-Possession of Marijuana-Possession of Controlled Substances-Arrested 9:58 pm • 19th Ave & Pacheco St

An officer stopped a vehicle for reckless driving and unsafe lane change. Officers smelled marijuana and alcohol reeking from the occupants. A search of the occupant area revealed an opened alcoholic beverage, marijuana, controlled substances, and a pellet gun. The driver was arrested for the above violations. Each

of the two other occupants were cited and released for being in reach of controlled substances.

Robbery 10:18 pm • Ashton & Grafton

Officers responded to a report of a robbery. A man was walking when two suspects approached and grabbed him. They threatened to shoot him if he did not surrender his belongings. The victim did not see any weapon on the suspects. The victim complied, the suspects fled on foot.

Suspect #1 – Black male :: 18-20 years :: 6’00” tall :: LSW black hoodie, blue jeans

Suspect #2 – Black male :: 18-20 years :: 6’00” tall :: LSW red jacket, blue jeans

Daily Crime Report :: Tue – Feb 10, 2015

Battery-Arrested 10:36 pm • 3100 Taraval

Officers responded to a report of a scream. A dispute between a landlord and a tenant occurred. The tenant alleged the landlord pushed him. Therefore the tenant placed the landlord under citizen’s arrest for battery. Officers took custody of the suspect, gave him a court summons, and released him at the scene.

Daily Crime Report :: Wed – Feb 11, 2015
Investigation 8:25 am • 1500 Sloat Blvd

Officers responded to a report of possible threats. Two men repeatedly entered a business making sexually suggestive comments to employees. They were asked to leave. Site security on one occasion asked the men to leave. An employee encountered one of the men outside the business and he suggested the employee shouldn’t have summoned security.

Suspect #1 – White male :: 35-40 years :: 5’8” tall :: 200 lbs :: black hair :: LSW black jacket, blue jeans, bright green shoes :: spoke Russian

Suspect #2 – White male :: 50-60 years :: 5’5” tall :: 130 lbs :: bald head :: LSW all dark clothes :: spoke Russian

Fraud 2:47 pm • 2000 29th Ave

A woman walked into Taraval Station to report a fraud. She attempted to apply for benefits for her and her husband. She was declined because her social security number was used by a suspect to gain benefits instead.

Suspect – 14 years :: “Dulce Ruiz”

Burglary in Progress Reported 4:15 pm / 500 Bright St / forced entry by prying open a garage door vent

Suspect – Hispanic male :: 5’8” tall :: 170 lbs :: short hair :: medium build :: LSW dark sweater, dark pants :: well dressed

Suspect Vehicle – gray 2014 Honda

Daily Crime Report :: Thur – Feb 12, 2015
Battery-Theft-Robbery 11:07 pm • 100 S Lake Merced Hill

Officers responded to a report of a battery. A victim got into an argument with two other women who pulled up in an SUV. The two women beat the victim as they argued over a man. The women took the victim’s belongings that dropped on the ground. They also snatched an item out of the victim’s hand. The suspects fled in their vehicle.

Suspect #1– Asian female :: 24 years old :: 5’0” tall :: 140 lbs :: brown hair :: brown eyes:: long hair :: LSW grey sweatshirt and black sweatpants

Suspect #2 – Asian female :: 5’3” tall :: 140 lbs :: brown hair :: brown eyes:: sister of Suspect #1 Vehicle – red Mercedes SUV

Daily Crime Report :: Fri – Feb 13, 2015
Battery 7:35 pm • 9th Ave & Irving St

Officers responded to a report of a battery. A homeless man punched a victim and knocked him to the ground. The victim had made a comment about the homeless man to another person. The homeless man became upset and an argument ensued. After punching the man, the homeless suspect fled the scene on foot. The victim was transported to a hospital.

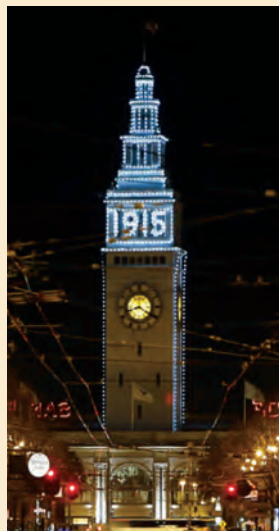
Suspect – White male :: 50-60 years :: 5’10” tall :: 175 lbs :: gray hair :: gray eyes :: LSW red scarf or blanket, black jacket, green pants, bare foot :: homeless

Warrant Arrest 8:01 pm • 1000 Ocean Ave

Officers responded to a report of a suspicious person. A man who previously exposed himself to a cashier at a cafe was at the scene. A record check revealed he had arrest warrants. He was arrested.



Phone Disorder... the time is here for the 628 area code “overlay.” If you’ve had problems with dialing locally, or your “auto dial numbers” are not functioning as they should, you may be caught in the new overlay. Simply put, you now have to dial 1-415-XXX-XXXX to dial any 415 number. Now that 628 is part of the local dialing plan for SF, Marin and Brisbane, the dialing structure has gotten a little more complicated. The cost of calls does not change, and you can still dial 311, 411, 511, 811 and 911 without dialing 1-415-xxx first. It’s the same as when the “650” was created by splitting much of the “415” and reassigning most of San Mateo County to “650.” Did you know that Brisbane, SF’s southern neighbor, is the only town with all three area codes in use, as a portion of the town is 650, some is 415, and now some will be 628.



100 years and counting... February 20, 2015 marked the 100th anniversary of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE), the World’s Fair celebrating the completion of the Panama Canal and showcasing San Francisco—its recovery from the ashes of the 1906 earthquake and fire and its world trade potential. In keeping with the 100th anniversary of the start of the SF World’s Fair, celebrate the ceremonial re-lighting of the Ferry Building in honor of the centennial of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition this year.

For the duration of the 1915 Exposition the Ferry Building was festooned with lights, a beacon proudly proclaiming “1915” to the world. On March 3rd this lighting will be recreated in a civic ceremony beginning at 5:30. Lights will be switched on at 6:15 and remain on until December 4, the night the Fair closed. All are welcome. Made possible by a grant from Taube Philanthropies, along with other community supporters.

That same evening, in the Ferry Building at Book Passage, Laura Ackley will be signing her book *San Francisco’s Jewel City*. Reservations may be made on the Park and Rec website using its eventbrite tool.

Can you hear me now?... On January 25, 1915, as one of the earliest events of the San Francisco Panama Pacific International Exposition, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (now AT&T) conducted the first transcontinental telephone call between New York City, San Francisco, Jekyll Island, Georgia and Washington, DC. Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone and co-founder of AT&T, initiated the historic call with a group of dignitaries in New York. His one-time assistant Thomas Watson received the call in San Francisco, AT&T President Theodore Vail participated from Jekyll Island, and U.S. President Woodrow Wilson spoke from the White House. The 4 phones used in the call are on display at the California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street.

Did you know?... The Japanese Pavilion at the PPIA is still represented at various locations throughout the Bay Area. The main gates and pagoda structure can be found within the Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park. It’s a great place to have tea and cookies on a rainy or foggy San Francisco afternoon. The Japanese exhibit main building also still exists. It’s high on a hill down the Peninsula, in Belmont. It’s known as “The Van’s” Restaurant and has been in Belmont after being floated down the bay on a barge after the closing of the PPIE. A very good restaurant with some authentic SF history.

Neighborly help... One of our readers in Balboa Terrace sent the following mis- sive to their neighbors regarding an attempted break in at their home on February 24th:

Dear Friends & Neighbors,
At 5:25 AM this morning someone tried to break into our home (northwest side win- dow). Our house alarm went off and after checking my boys rooms, the alarm service phoned. They asked to check the activated alarm but I waited to feel if air was coming from the room for if it had then the window would be broken and I would have retrieved back with my family. There was no air, window intact but then I heard my cow bells chime from my gate indicating that whoever jumped the fence, then our car alarm went off with no success of stealing and last my neighbors across the easement sensor light turned on as they exit.

The reason why I say “they” because you need two people to reach my side window, possibly a person on the shoulders of another.

Please make sure your windows are locked at ground level at all times and have your house alarm activated at all times especially when your in the house. I can’t tell you how nervous and nauseous I feel.

Residential burglary is on the rise and our district is experiencing these types of activi- ties. Be proactive and share these tips with your neighbors.

I asked the officers to please patrol our easements and the streets for these offenders are roaming around.

It’s a great lesson to see how neighbors can look out for each other and help keep the city safe.

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



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INFO: shnsf.com



March

CALENDAR

EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

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

EVERY TUE • COMPUTER SKILLS

Tue | 1:15-2:45 pm | Come get help with setting up email accounts, word processing and other basic computer related tasks. Each Tuesday at this time. Ask questions and learn the basics of using a computer! Main Library, 100 Larkin St.

EVERY TUES • QUE SYRAH HAPPY HOUR

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

EVERY THURS – NIGHTLIFE

Every Thu | 6–10 pm | The Academy of Sciences brings live music, science, mingling and cocktails. GG Park \$12 (\$10 Members). calademy.org/nightlife.

JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

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

FRIDAYS @ OFF THE GRID/FT. MASON

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

SAT • CHINESE NEW YEAR PARADE

Sat Mar 7 | 5:15 pm | Since the Gold Rush the parade continues to delight and entertain the many hundreds of thousands of people that come to watch it on the street or tune in to watch it on television. Starts at Market and 2nd St. to Kearny, Post to Powell, Sutter to Kearny, ends at Columbus.

TUE • IRISH POETRY FESTIVAL

Tue Mar 10 | 7 pm | 12th Annual Irish-American Crossroads Festival. Poets to be determined. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal.

TUE • 1915 - WOMEN, WORLDS FAIR

Tue Mar 10 | 6 pm | Women, the City and the 1915 World's Fair a panel discussion examines the politics of gender in 1915 Panama-Pacific Expo. Moderator: Robert W. Cherny, professor emeritus of history at SFSU. California Historical Society, 678 Mission St. \$5 Gen Adm. 357-1848 info@calhist.org

WED • FREE E-BOOKS DROP-IN

Wed Mar 11, 18, 25 | 1:30-2:30 pm | Do you have an eReader? You can check out more than 40,000 electronic books for free. Bring your Kindle, Nook, iPad or other eReader — we will show you how to use it to download from the Library website. W. Portal Branch, 355-2886, 190 Lenox Way.

THU • JERSEY BOYS

Thu Mar 12 | 6-8 pm | Jersey Boys, the story of four young men from the wrong side of the tracks in New Jersey who came together to form the iconic '60s rock group The Four Seasons. Directed by Clint Eastwood Ortega Branch Library, 3223 Ortega St..

TUE • AUTHOR CARA BLACK

Tue Mar 17 | 7 pm | Cara Black's *Murder On the Champ de Mars* is set in Paris, April 1999: Aimee Leduc has her work cut out for her—running her detective agency and fighting off sleep deprivation as she tries to be a good single mother to her new “bebe.” The last thing she has time for now is to take on a personal investigation for a poor “manouche” (Gypsy) boy. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal.

TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

Tue Mar 17 | 7 pm | Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 3rd Tue of the month. Taraval Police Station 2345 24th Ave. 759-3100.

WED • BABE: THE GALLANT PIG

Wed Mar 18 | 6:30 - 8 pm | Babe is a pig who makes herself indispensable by learning to herd

sheep. Movie was based on the 1983 children's book by Dick King-Smith, Babe won nomination for Best Picture. The book grew out of a true story! W. Portal Branch, 355-2886, 190 Lenox

WED • ON POET PAUL CELAN

Wed Mar 18 | 7-9 pm | Poet-translator Pierre Joris and multimedia artist Nicole Peyrafitte perform works from *Breathturn into Timestead* by Paul Celan, stellar 20th century German-language poet's memories of life as a Romanian Jew during the Holocaust. City Lights Books, 261 Columbus - 362-8193

THU • AUTHOR JACQUELINE WINSPEAR

Thu Mar 19 | 7 pm | Jacqueline Winspear's *A Dangerous Place*, political intrigue and personal tragedy, a brutal murder in the British garrison town of Gibraltar leads Maisie into a web of lies, deceit, and peril. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal.

SAT • YOGA IN A CHAIR

Sat Mar 21 | 2 - 3:30 pm | The afternoon class of yoga will consist of a combination of chair and standing poses, including breath exercises, and head, neck, shoulder, arm, and hand work. Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

SUN • FLEMENCO FESTIVAL

Sun Mar 22–29 | 7 pm | 10th Anniversary of Flamenco dance and music at the Palace of Fine Arts, 3301 Lyon St. bayareaflamencofestival.org for performance, location and ticket info.

TUE • SAVE CITY COLLEGE RALLY

Tue Mar 24 | 12 Noon | March and Rally to end the Special Trustee and reverse all illegal cuts stemming from the unlawful process. Ocean Campus: Ram Plaza

TUE • TWIN PEAKS TUNNEL MTG.

Tue Mar 24 | 7 pm | SFMTA will hold a community meeting to discuss the Twin Peaks Tunnel Trackway Improvements. West Portal Playground Clubhouse, 131 Lenox Way. INFO: sfmta.com/twinpeaks

WED • HANDS ON HARPS

Wed Mar 25 | 6:30 - 8 pm | Lisa Lynne's harp workshop is a unique interactive experience for all ages. Participants will hear Celtic harp music and be shown how to make beautiful music on the 15+ provided harps. No musical experience — OK. W. Portal Branch, 355-2886, 190 Lenox Way.

THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

Thu Mar 26 | 7 pm | Meets last Thu each month, at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street.

THU • AUTHOR C. W. GORTNER

Thu Mar 26 | 7 pm | C.W. Gortner *Mademoiselle Chanel*—the ambitious, gifted laundrywoman's daughter who revolutionized fashion, built an international empire—a seamstress and sometime torch singer—the petite brunette burns with ambition, an incandescence that draws a wealthy gentleman who will become the love of her life. And when Paris falls to the Nazis, Coco is forced to make haunting choices. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal.

SAT • TASTE IT: DUMPLINGS

Sat Mar 28 | 1 - 2 pm | Come to the library for a Chinese dumpling demonstration and tasting! Easy-to-follow recipes provided. Attendance is limited, please call 415-355-5700 to sign up. Ortega Branch Library, 3223 Ortega St.

SUN • ASIAN ART MUSEUM FREE DAY

Sun Mar 1 | 10 am-5 pm | Every first Sunday is free at the Asian Art Museum (save \$12) -17,000 artworks spanning 6 thousand years. Special exhibitions may require separate charges. 200 Larkin St.

MON • CENTRAL COUNCIL

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

TUE • POET JANE HIRSHFIELD

Tue Apr 7 | 7 pm | Jane Hirshfield *The Beauty: Poems*, a new collection from one of American poetry's most distinctive and essential voices. Using materials sometimes familiar, sometimes unexpected, to explore the magnitude, singularity, and permeability of our shared existence. For this poet, “Zero Plus Anything Is A World.” Hirshfield's riddling recipes for that world (“add salt to hunger,” “add time to trees”) offer a profoundly altered understanding of our lives' losses and additions, and of the small and larger beauties we so often miss. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal.

Local event? editor@westsideobserver.com

Priority: Westside Event

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Now At the Movies / By Don Lee Miller

BLACK OR WHITE

Corporate attorney Elliott Anderson: Kevin Costner mourns the passing of his wife Jennifer Ehle by hitting the bottle hard. He forgets to have his biracial granddaughter Eloise: Jillian Estell brush her teeth. He nearly drowns in his pool when he tangles with the pool cover. Grandma Rowena aka Wee Wee: Octavia Spencer lives in South Central L.A. Her drunken/drugged son Andre Holland, Eloise's father, could care less whether she gets to spend more time with her granddaughter. With 20 kids in tow, Wee Wee accepts Elliot's insincere invitation to use his pool, turning up one a.m. when he's still in his underwear, half-asleep with a hang-over. Costner approaches his pinnacle in *Dances With Wolves* with a solid performance. Director Mike Binder seems to be leaning more toward a white siding. Thematic material involving drug use and drinking. A fight. Brief profanity.



FIFTY SHADES OF GREY IMAX

Directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson from Kelly Marcel's soft porn novel disappoints on most levels. The R-rating cries for an X. The handsome billionaire Christian Grey: Jamie Dornan shows his six-pack chest and for a couple of quick shots, his bare butt. When her roommate Kate is ill, awkward Anastasia: Dakota Johnson has to sub for an interview with Grey for the college paper. He is a major donor to the school and is the upcoming commencement speaker. He's also 27, flies his own helicopter, sports a garage full of high-end cars and numerous homes around the country. When Ana finds Grey is attracted to her, she also learns his idea of sex is S&M totally. He likes her running around topless so she obliges, allowing the filmmakers to save a bundle on her wardrobe while waiting in his red torture chamber filled with every imaginable S&M toy. In real-life, Dakota is the daughter of Melanie Griffith and Don Johnson; Grandma is Tippi Hedren, the blond that turned Hitchcock on for two films: *Marnie* and *The Birds* set in SF and Marin. Ana takes her time signing his exclusivity contract, making demands of her own. His society mother, Grace: Marcia Gay Harden has two brief scenes. Strong sexual content. Profanity throughout.

JUPITER ASCENDING

Sometime in the future, Jupiter Jones: Mila Kunis, a Chicago housecleaner for the wealthy, specializing in toilets, dwells in a crowded apartment with Russian immigrants. She suddenly learns her mother is Russian royalty. She is the recipient of a huge inheritance. In this space opera sci-fi fantasy from 13 young adult novels, the new queen falls in love with an extraterrestrial wolf-human hybrid ex-soldier named Caine Wise: Channing Tatum, whose anti-gravity boots permit him to fly. Caine has been sent by Titus: Douglas Booth. The villain and brother of Titus, a petulant Balem: Eddie Redmayne makes it quite clear he was snarling all the way to the bank, unlike his brilliant Oscar-winning turn. (The eight-minute chase sequence above Chicago took six months of daily filming!)

An old comrade of Caine's, who is half-honeybee/half-human, Stinger Apini: Sean Bean, agrees to help protect Jupiter. The overstuffed plot could have been simplified to make sense. Jupiter has inherited Earth, which infuriates Balem's siblings who want to hang onto their planetary inheritances. Bounty hunter Caine has his hands full trying to protect Jupiter when not caressing her. The magnificent set pieces overshadow the befuddled story from here on. Get a load of her wedding outfit! It would have turned heads on the red carpet. Even though sibling directors Andy and Lana Wachowski started with a \$175-million budget, they ran over by a few bills, but Warner Bros. still couldn't spare \$2 for a cohesive script. All of the budget shows up on screen and is indeed spellbindingly beautiful, if only it didn't stretch credulity or credibility so thin. Rent the DVD so the sound can be shut off. Some violence. Fantasy action and peril. Some suggestive material. Partial nudity.

KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE

SS agent Harry Hart: Colin Firth comes to the rescue of South London trouble-maker Gary Eggsy Unwin: Taron Egerton, recruiting him for the secret service. Simultaneously, wealthy villain/twisted technical genius Richmond Valentine: Samuel L. Jackson sets forth on his diabolical scheme to control the world's climate, which involves mass murders. The supporting cast includes Merlin: Mark Strong, Arthur: Michael Caine and Gazelle: Sofia Boutella. Eggsy catches on fast, which is necessary under the circumstances. The unusual weapons, ranging from pens to umbrellas, are fascinating. Director/cowriter Matthew Vaughn and screenwriter Joan Goldman borrow a lot from James Bond films and the Secret Service comic book creators, Mark Millar and Dave Gibbons. Filmed in England, Canada and Australia. Sequences of strong violence. Profanity. Some sexual content.

A MOST VIOLENT YEAR

Standard Heating Oil owner, Abel Morales: Oscar Issac chases a gunman from his Westchester mansion, incurring wrath from wife Anna: Jessica Chastain. She's the daughter of the Brooklyn hood who sold him the business, plus she has an inflatable temper. The 1981 turf wars culminate in a shootout on the Queensborough Bridge so awkward that it reveals that it is not the Mafia behind the full truck-hijackings but just guys who competitively are trying to make a living. Abel's lawyer, Andrew Walsh: Albert Brooks has to contend with an ambitious asst. district attorney Lawrence: David Oyelowo who forces Abel's bank to pull their money from his purchase of a bayfront terminal that would establish Abel as a major player. He has less than a week to gather the \$1.5-million to close the deal. Director J.C. Chandor's work has been compared to Sidney Lumet. Profanity. Some violence.

Awards: National Board of Review: won Best Picture, Actor: Isaac, and Supporting Actress: Chastain. Also numerous film society awards for Pic and Sup. Actress.

SEVENTH SON

It is just possible this early in the year that Seventh Son will be the worst movie of the year! Master Gregory: Jeff Bridges portrays a spook grand master of the supernatural, saddled with a phony accent he never quite masters. Mother Malkin: Julianne Moore was surely praying that none of the Academy voters saw this film before *Still Alice* and cancelled their vote. [This being her fifth Oscar nomination, she is known for much better performances. She won!] MM is an interchangeable witch-dragon. Radu: Djimon Hounsou is a shape-shifting evil body. Tomorrow's hopeful stars: Tom Ward: Ben Barnes as Gregory's apprentice; Billy: Kit Harrington was the apprentice for a very short time; and Alice: Alicia Vikander is a half-witch who woos Tom, getting him to steal MM's trinket that is the source of her powers. This mess was directed without much thought by Sergei Bodrov with screenplay by Charles Leavitt and Steven Knight from a story by Matt Greenberg based on a novel by Joseph Delaney. Brief strong profanity. Intense fantasy violence and action. Frightening images.

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STILL ALICE

Renown linguistics professor Alice Howland: Julianne Moore suddenly starts forgetting words and consults a specialist, learning the worst: that she has early onset Alzheimer's. She is happily married to John: Alec Baldwin with three grown children. The youngest, Lydia: Kristen Stewart, is deciding whether acting is the right career for her. Julianne has won the Best Actress Oscar and numerous other awards for her brilliant portrayal as the Alzheimer's progresses, capturing all the nuances along the way. The family has to learn to cope. Emotionally gripping, never afraid to show her vulnerability, Moore's performance doesn't bloviate but requires handkerchiefs. Directors/co-writers Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland based their screenplay on the novel by Lisa Genova. Mature thematic material. Brief profanity including a sexual reference.

Awards: Winner: Best Actress: AA, Golden Globe, SAG, BAFTA + 32 other wins!!

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

THE BAT

Elaborately staged at NTC by Clay David, Novato Theater Company is currently presenting *The Bat* by Mary Roberts Rinehart and Avery Hopwood from February 8 through March 1, 2015. It is directed by award-winning Director Clay David and produced by Sandi Rubay. *The Bat* is a murder-mystery-thriller, originally set in 1927, but for this production it is 1954.

When wealthy Cornelia Von Gorder (Leslie Klor), along with her ditsy secretary Lizzy (Marilyn Hughes), rents an isolated mansion called Cedar Crest, having belonged to the Fleming family, she finds herself terrorized by mysterious circumstances. Lizzy is sure it's a ghost or the criminal "The Bat," and the house mistress Willa (Siobhan O'Brien) agrees with them.

The audience and houseful of suspects (who all have reasons to lie), soon learn that only Jack Brooks (played by Director Clay David on the spot) is suspected of stealing money in the house and being secretly engaged to Dale (Arden Kilzer), Cornelia's niece. Then there is discovered the body of Ashley Fleming (Alison Sacha-Ross), the founder and owner of the bank and Cedar Crest. Ashley had presumably been declared dead by Dr. Wells (Michael Walraven).



Everyone, including Fleming's friend Reginald Beresford (Sumi Narendran) is trying to find the secret room where Cornelia is sure the stolen money is hidden. Detective Anderson (John Conway) seems determined to disregard Cornelia's amateur instincts and put down poor Lizzy. Red herrings and wrong turns abound – though if you look for the not-so-obvious, you'll have the answer.

Director Clay David was able to generate great acting performances from his talented cast. This should certainly

be a feather in his cap. NTC is so lucky to have engaged such a talented Director.

The Set Designer, Michael Walraven, did a fabulous job of recreating the time-period, as did the Costume Designers Paula Aiello and Clay David. Bruce Vieira's Sound Design enhanced the performance, as did Ellen Brooks' Lighting Design. Adrienne Goff managed the stage.

Performances are at the NTC Playhouse, 5420 Nave Drive, Suite C, Novato, and are held Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. through March 1st. For tickets, call 415-883-4498 or go online at www.novatotheatercompany.org.

Coming up next at NTC will be *Fiddler on the Roof*, music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, and book by Joseph Stein, March 26 –April 26. *Flora Lynn Isaacson*



Flora Lynn Isaacson



Linda Ayres-Frederick

Pension Funds (Cont. from p. 5)

Given SFERS’ involvement with BGI, her affiliations as a Trustee of various BGI money market funds should have been thoroughly investigated — which the Board of Supervisors completely failed to do — in part because BGI was one of SFERS’ currency overlay managers that contributed to the \$60+ million in SFERS losses over eight years.

Pensions & Investments columnist Randy Diamond reported on December 17, 2014 that Huish said Paskin-Jordan had received a “threshold waiver” to invest with GMO [to get around the \$10 million minimum investment threshold]. SFERS has repeatedly claimed that she had received this “waiver” before becoming an SFERS Commissioner, trying to justify why she had waited until a year after being appointed to the SFERS Board before finally exercising her “waiver.”

Who’s Aggregating Whom?

Oddly, during a Labor Video Project interview on January 7, Paskin-Jordan belatedly claimed that her firm (Paskin Capital Advisors) had reached the \$10 million threshold by aggregating funds. She didn’t reveal any details about who she or her clients had aggregated investments with to apparently reach BGI’s \$10 million threshold.

The Board of Supervisors failed on January 7 to dig deeply enough into the question of who Paskin-Jordan had aggregated funds with, and when. Hopefully the Ethics Commission will not ignore her admission that she had aggregated funds as the Ethics complaint against her had alleged.

Board of Supervisors Rubber-Stamps

Despite all of the ethical concerns raised regarding her reappointment, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved reappointment of Paskin-Jordan

on January 7. They did so without probing into any of these questions, other than discussion of whether she needs to recuse herself in the future from voting on any of SFERS’ banking-related issues involving Northern Trust.

Unfortunately, during the Board’s January 7 hearing, not one City supervisor inquired about the allegation that she may have had aggregated investments in Northern Trust, GMO, or any of the 43 firms listed in the April 3 Ethics complaint. The Board of Supervisors should have stopped her reappointment dead in its tracks. Instead, they handed her a get-out-of-jail-free card.

When Supervisor Avalos asked Paskin-Jordan on January 7 whether she had a “relationship” with Northern Trust, she replied, “I do have a relationship with Northern Trust. I work in [Northern Trust’s] Trust Department,” explaining that is very different than SFERS’ work with Northern Trust’s custodial banking or securities areas. She appears to have used poor phrasing, since observers think she doesn’t actually work at Northern Trust, she simply works with Northern Trust.

It’s clear by her own admission that her firm, Paskin Capital Advisors, uses Northern Trust. What’s left unclear is whether she or her clients obtained “volume discounts” by way of aggregation.

Towards the end of the Board’s hearing, Deputy City Attorney Givner indicated the City Attorney’s office will work closely with SFERS to make sure she recuses herself from voting on contracts before SFERS involving Northern Trust. Oddly, Givner didn’t specify whether Paskin-Jordan would be monitored involving all recusals from matters involving BGI or other external investment managers.

Experience With Hedge Funds

Corporate-controlled Mayor Ed Lee and his billionaire financier pals want to get

their hands on the City employees’ pension funds by pushing investing in hedge funds that have obscene fees, using fee speculators and union busters who want to grab pension funds with their sticky fingers.

Surprisingly, Paskin-Jordan said at the end of the Labor Video segment: “I personally do not invest in hedge funds that we [SFERS] intend to use [invest in] ...”

This is an amazing admission, if you think about it. She said this on January 17, nearly a month before the SFERS Board voted on February 11 to approve investing in hedge funds. How could Paskin-Jordan have known in January which hedge fund managers SFERS intends to use, which wasn’t even discussed on February 11 when SFERS’ Board approved investing in hedge funds?

Paskin-Jordan’s Form 700’s on file with the Ethics Commission reveal she has had some experience with hedge funds. Her Form 700 for the period ending December 31, 2010 lists a \$100,001 to \$1 million investment in the Daedalus Qualified Partners hedge fund. Oddly, the Daedalus investment quietly vanished from her annual Form 700 for 2011 for the period ending December 31, 2011.

Her Form 700’s for the years ending in December 2011, 2012 and 2013 list another \$100,001 to \$1 million investment in Harvest Growth Capital’s alternative investments, which may or may not include investments in hedge funds. And her form 700 for 2013 lists a private equity investment in emerging hedge fund firms via an investment in the Harvest Fund.

Form 700 instructions for Schedule A-1 stipulate that the disposal of personal investments must be reported, including the date disposed of. There’s no record in Paskin-Jordan’s Form 700’s indicating when she disposed of the Daedalus investment. Why Paskin-Jordan failed to report the date on which she appears to have

finally disposed of the Daedalus hedge fund investment is another symptom of how she games the system and flouts disclosure rules.

This begs the question: Which oversight body will seriously consider and dispose of the ethics allegations against Paskin-Jordan? The Board of Supervisors? The Ethics Commission? The Retirement Board?

Clearly it’s not the Board of Supervisors, which failed miserably to conduct a meaningful investigation. The Ethics Commission, for its part, will undoubtedly drag its feet investigating the two ethics complaints filed against her, and it will take a year or longer for Ethics to rule on the two complaints.

That leaves the Retirement Board. Under Roberts Rules of Order, and various codes of ethics that apply to SFERS Commissioners, the Retirement Board could mount its own investigation under provisions to censure Board members. Since her behavior reflects so negatively on SFERS’ Board, a reasonable person would assume the Board would have conducted its own investigation by now, open to members of the public. Why hasn’t SFERS’ Board moved to protect its own reputation?

It is time to protect the City’s pension fund by eliminating all conflicts of interest. Paskin-Jordan could help out by doing the only ethical thing: She should resign from SFERS’ Board, immediately.

Monette-Shaw is an open-government accountability advocate, a patient advocate, and a member of California’s First Amendment Coalition. He received the Society of Professional Journalists–Northern California Chapter’s James Madison Freedom of Information Award in the Advocacy category in March 2012. Feedback: <mailto:monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com>.

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Second Thoughts / By Jack Kaye



Free Speech

They say that talk is cheap, but is our speech actually free? Lately, this freedom here and abroad has been tested.

Several weeks ago a French paper, known for being at the edge of free speech, published cartoons that were much more offensive than they were funny. They ridiculed Islam by showing depictions of the prophet being vulgar. They knew that some of the five million Muslims living in France might be offended but did it anyway because they were free to do so. Free speech was described by France's President as being at the very core of French culture, along with equality and fraternity. Everyone must be free to say or write whatever they want. The French people gathered to demonstrate their support for this freedom with an estimated 3.7 million in attendance.

A few days later, a black French Muslim comedian posted some remarks on Facebook that were sympathetic to the Muslim terrorists who killed 17 people in response to the cartoons. The Muslim comedian was arrested. Apparently, in France, some speech is more free than other speech. His comments on his Facebook page were not free but came with a cost - jail.

Then the Pope, believed to be infallible, denounced the vicious, murderous attacks but also reminded us that there are limits to free speech. It is not acceptable to use free speech to insult someone else's religion. Then he went on to say that if an acquaintance said something bad about the Pope's mother, now long gone, Il Papa would hit him in the face. The Pope would punch someone in the face for exercising his free speech? The Pope? But aren't we taught to turn the other cheek when offended? Is he saying that if someone offends us that we have a right to strike out violently? Really?

We see the mainstream media selectively showing and telling us the news, unwilling to tell the whole story for fear of losing a share of the audience and, therefore, advertising revenue, the life blood of the media, by fully exercising their free speech. This selective, sensational, superficial and subjective reporting of controversial issues like illegal immigration, poverty, violence, homelessness, inequality, race relations, religion and terrorism squanders their gift of free speech, resulting in less meaningful presentation, discussion and understanding. This makes those of us dependent on a free press in order to better understand the world, and perhaps help improve it, deprived of information and insight, and less able to think deeply about important issues. It makes us tend to be more selective, sensational, superficial and subjective as well, and less willing or able to find solutions to these important issues. And I think it also makes us more violent.

So maybe speech isn't really free but has a price.

When an old, somewhat demented man exercised his free speech in a private conversation in his own home with his young assistant/mistress by telling her that he objected to the people she was hanging out with and didn't want them coming to his basketball team's home games, he was outed and vilified. Never mind that his

privacy was violated by taping and then selling the private conversation to a sensation - hungry media. He was sanctioned by the NBA, fined and forced to sell his team. His privacy was not private and his free speech was not free.

When we learned that a famous Southern cooking maven had once testified during a deposition to using a word the begins with the letter between M and O, we rose up as one and insisted that she be punished severely for that one use of a forbidden word, a word we are not free to speak. It cost her millions of dollars as once-loyal sponsors dropped her as though she was on fire.

When we learned that a recently-hired CEO of a large internet server company had used his free speech to make a campaign contribution of \$1,000 to a California initiative that won majority support but not ours, we wanted him fired. How dare he use his constitutionally guaranteed right to support something many of us are against? He resigned. His speech wasn't free.

At the 50th anniversary of the free speech movement on college campuses which began at our own U.C. Berkeley, some of its students wanted to deny a famous liberal comedian the right to speak at their commencement ceremony because, although he is the champion of liberal causes, he had spoken out against religion and Islam in particular. They did not agree with his views on one subject, and so these young, liberal college students decided him to be unfit to address them. He disregarded their objections and came and gave a speech about being a liberal to a group who knew liberal all too well.

So perhaps we can say it's like *The Animal Farm*, in which all were equal but some were more equal than others. We believe in free speech even when it is offensive to some, as long as we are not offended by it and are not at risk of paying a price for it. Say something that many don't want to hear, even if true, and you find that your words will have a real cost. And those who most adamantly defend free speech and tolerance will restrict it if it seems in opposition to their position, by giving the free speakers a label making them seem intolerable and without authority.

How much will your free speech cost?

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

Captain's News: Preliminary Statistics for 2014

In the Taraval Police District all of the Part 1 Crimes, such as homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault were down in 2014 when compared to 2013.

I also compared the last 5 years, 2010 to 2014's statistical data. In 2014, there were no homicides in the Taraval Police District. This is the first time in the last 5 years that this has occurred. The Taraval Police District also had the lowest number of robberies and aggravated assault in 2014 than in the previous 4 years.

The Taraval Police District had the lowest Part 1 crime rate in 2014.

Unfortunately, burglaries, vehicle theft, and burglary theft from vehicles rose. This means that we need to do better. We have conducted numerous operations with officers in uniform and in plainclothes to try to catch these criminals, but it very difficult as the district is so large.

It's better if these crimes never happen. To review crime prevention measures, please visit www.taraval.org

Fell/Oak Bicycle Safety Project

Plan for delays — crews have mobilized to install bicycle- buffers. These bike buffers will complete the Fell and Oak Pedestrian and Bike Safety Project. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact sfpublicworks.org or 437-7018.

Senior Smarts By Anise J. Matteson

Let's Talk Boomer Legal and Advance Care Planning

By Anise J. Matteson

The *Patient Self-Determination Act (PSDA)* is a 1991 act of U.S. Congress that preserves individual rights to decisions related to personal survival. There are several methods for preserving autonomy: filing appropriating for durable power of attorney for health care, making a living will, or giving a directive to the physician (Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary).

Elder law attorney refers to an attorney who specializes in providing legal services for the elderly, especially in the areas of Estate Planning and Medicaid Planning. They handle general estate planning issues and counsel clients about planning for the management of assets and health care with alternative decision-making documents to prepare for the possibility of becoming incapacitated. *Elder law* is a specialized area of legal practice, covering estate planning, wills, trusts, arrangements for care, social security and retirement benefits, protection against elder abuse (physical, emotional and financial) and other involving older people (<http://definitions.uslegal.com/e/elder-law-attorney/>)

Citing a radio talk show host on Saturday evening, February 19, 2012, devoting an hour of his show to "How prepared are you?" and encouraging listeners to think about getting their documents in order: Advance Directives, Durable Power of Attorney (health care, financial) and a will, I asked an elder law attorney to write a few pages for my Caring Boomers Newsletter, ©April 2012. Helene V. Wenzel, a solo practitioner in Estate Planning and Elder Law provided the following information in the article "Boomer Legal."

BOOMER LEGAL

Getting your "powers of attorney" completed — the Advance Health Care Directive and the Durable Powers of Attorney — is probably more important than executing your Will or your Trust. Why? Because, as is discussed below, the Executor of your Will is only authorized to distribute your "stuff" when you are dead; an Executor has no authority to do anything while you are alive; and nothing to say about your health or finances. While a trust can have effect in your lifetime as well as after your death (if you cannot manage your affairs, the trustee can "step up to the plate" to handle only those assets which are in the trust), again, it is limited in its scope. Meanwhile, should you have an accident or stroke, or should you lose your ability to make health and financial decisions for any reason for any period of time, your agent whom you named in your Advance Health Care Directive will have the authority — in writing — to discuss your situation with your doctors, ask for and receive medical reports, relate your concerns to the doctors and hospital personnel and make the kinds of decisions you would want made about your health care, including end of life care, nutrition, hydration and hospice care. And, the agent whom you named in the Durable Power of Attorney for Property and Finances will have authority, again, in writing, to handle those matters for you at your bank, brokerage, with your government benefits, with your property. If you have not prepared these two documents in advance, had them witnessed or notarized (a DPAP must be notarized because it controls property and finances), you could well find yourself in a CONSERVATORSHIP of your PERSON, your ESTATE or both. You do not want to be in any type of conservatorship.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: THE IMPORTANCE AND TYPES OF DESIGNEE

A *Power of Attorney* is a document that authorizes someone of your choosing, your "agent" or "attorney in fact" to make financial and property decisions for you should you be unable or incapable of making them. There are several types of powers of attorney: a *Durable Power of Attorney* means that the power you have authorized will endure after you are incapacitated. You could sign a durable power

of attorney now that is immediately effective, meaning that your agent may act tomorrow, even though you are still competent to act.

You may want to execute a "*springing*" *Power of Attorney*, which means the Person you authorize to act must wait for an event to take place before s/he may act. You may want your power of attorney to come into effect on a specific date, say, your 80th birthday. Most people want a power of attorney to come into effect when your primary doctor has determined that you are no longer able to make financial decisions in your best interest. This determination requires a doctor's intervention and medical examination.

There are "*general*" *Powers of Attorney* which can be short range or specific to a particular event. For example, you will be out of the country when the escrow on your house closes and you authorize a trusted person to complete the necessary paperwork for the sale. Or you authorize your accountant to make inquiry into your bank accounts.

These must be signed and notarized powers of attorney; they may have a limited time period: "From January 1, 2012 to April 15, 2012, from today to the sale closing".

There is a short (3 page), Uniform Statutory Form Power of Attorney available on line; as well as longer, more complex DPAPs drafted by attorneys. Please be advised that a Durable Power of Attorney is a very powerful legal document and can be very dangerous if misused. You want your agent to have the widest scope of powers available. However, it is just such a broad set of authorities that presents the greatest risks of abuse. Choose your agent(s) wisely. If your DPAP is effective immediately, your agent should have a copy. If not, your primary agent should at least know where to find the document should it become necessary to use it.

ADVANCE HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE: HOW TO MAKE IT A LEGAL DOCUMENT AND WHO SHOULD HAVE A COPY

Only a few years ago, Advance Care Health Directives were not considered important, if they were even known about. You may or may not recall the Terri Schiavo story which was all over the news for a period of time until she died on March 31, 2005.

Basically, Terri had been in what is known as a "persistent vegetative state" for about five years following some medical event. Her husband repeatedly stated that Terri and he had discussed the possibility of either of them being unable to communicate their wishes about healthcare and life saving measures, and that Terri had expressed her wish that she not be kept on life-saving procedures. However, Terri's parents argued forcefully that she should be kept alive. The bottom line was that TERRI DID NOT HAVE A SIGNED HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE. Everyone got involved, including the President of the country. We cannot say for certain that had Terri had a written advance health care directive, things would have gone more smoothly with fewer participants. However, what became clear was that a signed writing was the minimum necessary for a hospital or a court to acknowledge a person's end of life wishes.

An *Advance Health Care Directive* is a document which authorizes someone of your choosing, your "agent" or "attorney in fact" to make health care decisions for you should you be unable, incapable,

Cont. p. 18

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|---------------------|------------------|------|-------|----|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 62 Castenada Ave | Forest Hill | 2 | 1.5 | 1 | 1,635,000 | 1,750,000 | 117.06 |
| 159 Castenada Ave | Forest Hill | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1,495,000 | 1,850,000 | 123.75 |
| 55 San Benito Way | St. Francis Wood | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2,150,000 | 2,430,000 | 113.02 |
| 135 San Leandro Way | St. Francis Wood | 4 | 2.5 | 2 | 2,475,000 | 2,908,000 | 117.49 |
| 225 San Anselmo Ave | St. Francis Wood | 5 | 4.5 | 2 | 2,995,000 | 3,817,000 | 127.45 |
| 14 Southwood Dr | Westwood Park | 2 | 1 | 2 | 798,000 | 1,085,000 | 135.96 |
| 2730 15th Ave | West Portal | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1,189,000 | 1,354,000 | 113.88 |

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Then & Now



Top: Undated Photo in the West Portal Collection. Titled "Homebuilding following completion of Twin Peaks Tunnel, by permission, SF History Collection, SF Public Library

Then & Now Identified An Astute Reader Responds:

I was browsing the web site of the Westside Observer, looking at old photos and I can identify the location of a photo captioned West Portal, it is also listed under Mysterious Photo of West Portal.

This I believe is not West Portal but the view north-east from the hillside above Grafton, around where Orizaba and Ashton Sts. are now, looking over Ingleside to Mt Davidson. Ocean Ave runs from side to side at the bottom of the picture. The large building in the photo at the bottom right is the old Farragut Elementary School on Holloway between Faxon and Capital. The street with the dark edges running diagonally is Miramar Ave in Westwood Park. The large empty fields in the right hand side of the photo is where the reservoirs used to be.

I hope this helps.

Andrew Mihailovsky, General Contractor AMGCB - Building, Remodeling, & Repairing

Thanks Andrew! We think you are right, and we will share your evidence with the SF History Collection. We also have a reward for you, \$500 worth of free advertising, so please send us your business card so we can start giving you some free publicity.

OPEN LATE



Julie Casson

BRAIN FÜD

An Anagram Riddle:

I am a set of three words, all with the same six letters.
First I am a kingdom, though not royally so.
Then spell me backwards, and I become a thin plate.
Now rearrange my consonants, leaving my vowels in place ...
I am now a type of paper.
What are the words?

Answer
animal = a kingdom, not royal, but biological
lamina = a thin plate
manila = a type of paper

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

Sudoku-fun!

Rules:
Each puzzle is a 9 by 9 grid of squares divided into nine 3 by 3 square blocks, with some of the numbers filled in for you.

The Object:
Fill in the blank squares so that each of the numbers 1 to 9 appears exactly once in each row, column and block.

Answer:
The answer appears below.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 4 |
| 9 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 2 |
| 5 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| 4 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| 8 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| 2 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 8 |
| 4 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 4 |
| 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 5 |
| 1 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 5 |

We're On The Web!



westsideobserver.com

Education

Great Student Musicals in March

By Carol Kocivar ©2015

You can add another item to your “Only in San Francisco” list: The chance to see great student musical performances.

Take a moment to mark your calendars. Don’t miss these upcoming events at our local high schools!



WEST SIDE STORY

March 12-14, 2015 | 7:30 PM
March 15 | 2 PM

Lowell High School
1101 Eucalyptus Dr, SF
Ticket Info: (415) 759-2730
vpalowell.com/accomplishments

The Bernstein and Sondheim score is considered to be one of Broadway’s finest. Among the songs: “Something’s Coming,” “Tonight,” “America,” “I Feel Pretty” and “Somewhere.”

VIVA EL MARIACHI!

March 19, 2015 | 7:30 PM

Mission High School
3750 18th Street, SF
Ticket Info: (415) 241-6240
eventbrite.com ~ *viva el mariachi* This special concert of mariachi and ballet folklórico celebrates the inauguration of the mariachi program in San Francisco Unified School District. Guest artists

include the premier youth mariachi from Tucson, Arizona, Mariachi Aztlán de Pueblo High School as well as local favorites Mariachi Nueva Generación and Ballet Folklórico Cuicacalli. Tickets are free and seating is open and limited. For more information, contact Vikki Araiza at (415) 379-7786.

THE MUSIC MAN!

March 12-14 / 19-21 | 7:30 PM
March 14 & 21 Matinee | 2 PM

Ruth Asawa SF School of The Arts
555 Portola Dr. SF
Ticket Info: (415) 695-5700
sfsota.org/musicman

THE MUSIC MAN! tells the story of River City, Iowa and the day Professor

Harold Hill came to town, changing the town and replacing their pool hall with a marching band. Among the songs: “Gary, Indiana,”

“Goodnight, My Someone,” “Pick-A-Little Talk-A-Little,” “Goodnight Ladies,” “Seventy Six Trombones,” “Till There Was You,” “Ya Got Trouble.”

March is Arts Education Month and these performances highlight just a few of the benefits of arts education for all children.

Reading Tip:

A newly released report—*A Blueprint for Creative Schools: A Report to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson by the Arts Education Task Force*—highlights strategies to help bring the arts to more California children.

Carol Kocivar is former President of the California Parent Teachers Assn. and lives in the Westside. Feedback: kocivar@westsideobserver.com

Brinegate(Cont. from p. 7)

Hetch Hetchy system on average 86 MGD (35.5%) and the peninsula customers 163 MGD (65.5%). These totals amounted to a system average of 249 MGD. The peninsula customers (BAWUA) and SFPUC, in a joint research project in 2000, estimated the long-term sustainable average of the Hetch Hetchy system, based on historic hydrology and expected system reliability, is 239 MGD.

Mr. Ritchie makes two statements: one of 4 MGD of recycled brine, and then alludes to a diversity for the San Francisco service-area of fifteen percent recycled brine for San Francisco. Fifteen percent of San Francisco’s historic takes of 86 MGD equals approximately 13 MGD. Fifteen percent of San Francisco’s assured volumes of 81 MGD equal 12.15 MGD. It appears the end-game for brine required to meet full expropriation levels is well in excess of 4 MGD.

Let me re-ask the question I asked as a member of the RBOC – will San Francisco still pay its apportionment of total system costs as a function of 81/265 or 78/265, or approximately 69/265 of Hetch Hetchy total costs? Many activists, and rightly so, I believe, want Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) to subsidize part of the additional costs associated with integrating well water into our system, in that our assurances of Hetch Hetchy supplies, under the 2009 Agreement, were decreased by approximately 6 MGD from our historic takes and BAWSCA’s ad infinitum assurances increased by approximately 21 MGD over their historic takes. Our historic supplies of Hetch Hetchy water under this Agreement are being diverted to the BAWSCA wholesalers.

The 2009 Agreement used two methods for setting wholesale rates: utility and cost. The utility approach sets an allowable rate on what rate makers call the “rate base.” The rate base is differently defined, but usually includes historic capital costs less accumulated depreciation plus a small allowance for working capital. This amount is then multiplied by a weighted return on capital (debt and equity) to assess a capital charge.

It appears BAWSCA paid off the rate base and thus avoided future charges. The rate base is an accounting number. The capital charges were largely in 1920, 1930, etc. nominal (not inflated) dollars. The depreciation schedule is artificially contrived in that water systems last for centuries. Witness the ancient systems around the world still supplying modern cities. If this is indeed the final link in the regionalization process, which I forecast in 2004, we should have charged them replacement costs. This would be multiple billions, not the paltry millions they paid.

The hit piece against me was less than honorable, not unexpected from the caliber of folks (overpaid) I have met at the SFPUC. I am, however, truly disappointed that Mr. Harlan Kelly, SFPUC GM, allowed such a spurious piece of GIGO (garbage in – garbage out) to see the light of day. He has always had my respect and I have long-supported his elevation in the SFPUC hierarchy. It appears SFPUC is no longer the owner operator of the Hetch Hetchy system, but only the operator and serving at the pleasure of their regional masters BAWSCA.

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

We’re On The Web!

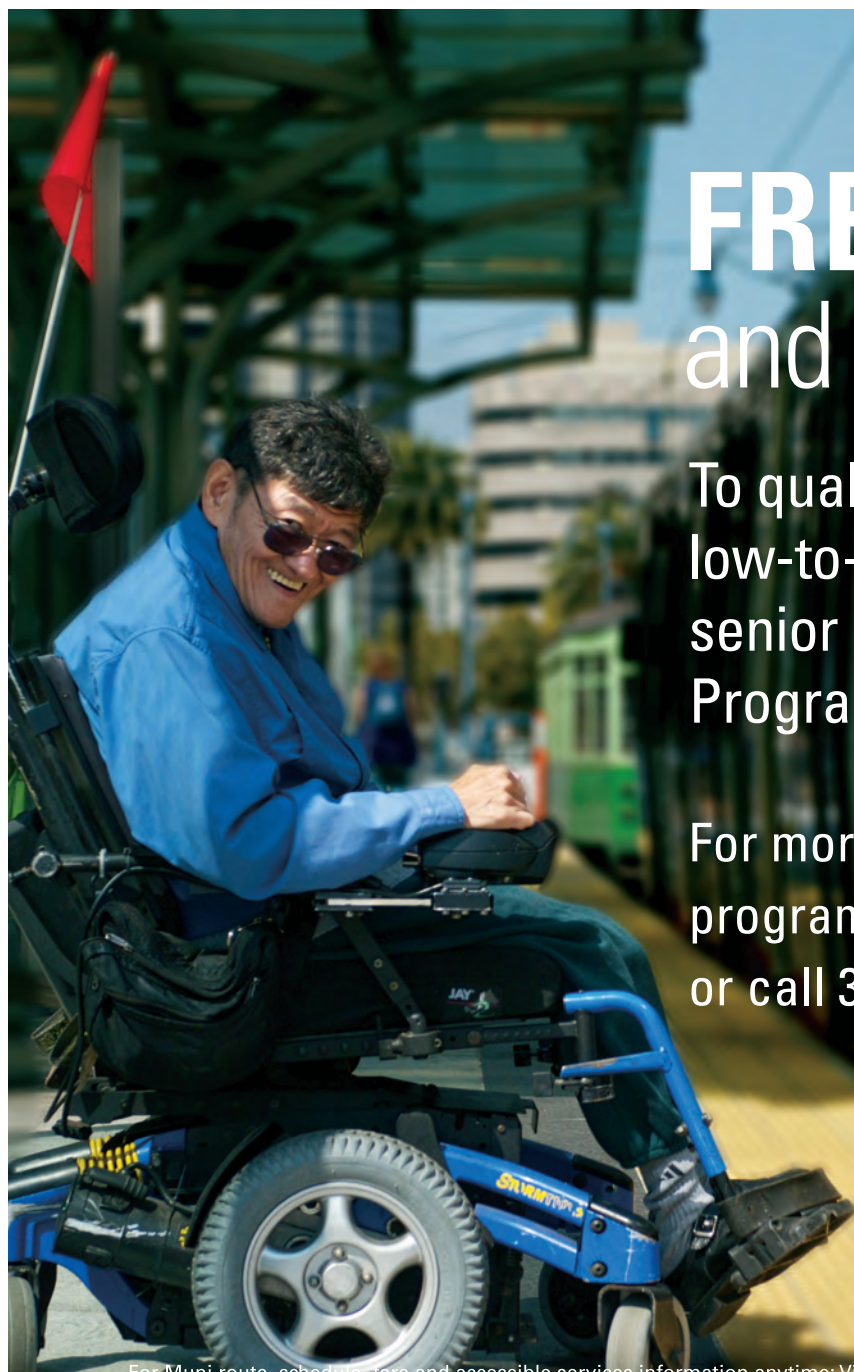


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FREE MUNI for Seniors and People with Disabilities

To qualify for free Muni rides, you must be low-to-moderate income and either be a senior or person with a disability. Program begins March 1, 2015.

For more information and to apply for the program visit www.sfmta.com/freemuni or call 311 (415.701.2311).



For Muni route, schedule, fare and accessible services information anytime: Visit www.sfmta.com or contact 311
[311 Free language assistance / 免費語言協助 / Ayuda gratis con el idioma / Бесплатная помощь переводчиков / Trợ giúp Thông dịch Miễn phí / Assistance linguistique gratuite / 無料の言語支援 / 무료 언어 지원 / Libreng tulong para sa wikang Tagalog / ความช่วยเหลือทางภาษาฟรี / 由來不取費的協助]



SFMTA
Municipal
Transportation
Agency



Boomer Legal (Cont. from p. 15)

of making them. You may write in your own words or simply initial choices presented on a printed form. The agent named on this form has authorities you give her/him: about where you want to live if you become too ill to live at home; who may visit you in a hospital; about kinds of end-of-life care you may wish or not want; about any kinds of religious or spiritual services; about burial, cremation; and the person named in this document has the authority to claim your body at the hospital.

There are short forms and long forms. You can contact the California Medical Association to get an Advance Health Care Kit in several different languages (www.cmanet.org); there is an Aging with Dignity: Five Wishes booklet available which includes an advance health care directive.

You'll want to be sure that your agents agree with your end-of-life decisions and will represent them to your doctors. As with a Durable Power of Attorney, you may give your agent immediate authority to handle your health care even though you are still capable of making decisions. Or, you may choose to have the document effective only after your doctor or doctors, in consultation with your agent, have determined that you lack the capacity to manage your health care. Which kind of document you choose is important; but making that decision is NOT an excuse for not executing a document as soon as possible. As long as you are competent, you may always amend it, replace it. But if you do not have one, chances that you will need a conservatorship of your person are great, too great to wait.

PHYSICIAN ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT

Like the Advance Health Care Directive, but narrower in its scope, a California state POLST as it is known, is a document which sets forth your wishes for end-of-life care: do you want CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation); kinds of comfort care; nutrition.

However, this form is signed by your doctor with whom you have discussed your situation, and your doctor has effectively agreed to treat you as you wish. There are endorsed POLST programs and developing POLST programs throughout the states.

The California form is a bright pink form which is made to stand out among your papers accompanying you to a hospital. You can find the document on the internet

at www.polst.org. This is a newer form; its use is not widespread. For many people, it may be too specific; but you should check it out.

LIVING WILL

A "living will" is basically a statement about the kinds of end-of-life care that you want your physicians to perform. It speaks directly to the physician, eliminating the need for an agent to act as an intermediary. For many people who do not have anyone they would trust, or want to burden, with making health care decisions, this document makes his or her wishes known to the physician. Even without designating an agent, the AHCD can also direct a physician to provide the kinds of medical care or end-of-life care that the principal wants when he or she is no longer capable of explaining them to anyone. This form effectively skips to the chase: it is about not wanting to be kept on artificial life support. As with the Advance Health Care Directive, it must be completed and executed by the principal while he or she has legal capacity to know what is being signed. It should be given to your medical provider to keep with your medical files.

WILL

Your "will," what used to be known as a "Last Will and Testament", basically is a document that has no effect until you die. You may change it during your life, but must execute a codicil and have it witnessed with the same formalities as the original will. If you change the will too often there can be complications at your death regarding the "correct" or "last" distribution plan. At your death, the person you nominate as your Executor will distribute your property according to the Will. However, your will may have to be probated; see below.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A "LIVING WILL" AND A "WILL"

OK, that's easy; but it's one of the most misunderstood differences. A "will" is about property when you die. A 'living' will is about your health: keep me alive; pull the plugs. There used to be a separate form in California for a living will. Now, that form is rolled into the Advance Health Care Directive

Next Month: Living Trust

What Happens to the estate if the deceased does not have a will? If a person chooses to have an attorney prepare documents, how should they prepare for the appointment? The difference between "revocable" and "irrevocable" living trust

Helene V. Wenzel is a solo practitioner in Estate Planning

and Elder Law. Her estate planning practice includes the preparation of wills, trusts, durable powers of attorney and advance health care directives; trust administration; and probate. Her Elder Law practice focuses on planning for incapacity; conservatorships; long-term and Nursing Home care; asset management and Medi-Cal eligibility.

Helene is past President of the Northern California Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (www.NAELA.org), the largest elder law association of attorneys in the country. Helene regularly addresses community meetings, attorneys and other concerned professionals about estate planning and elder law concerns.

RESOURCES: ADVANCE DIRECTIVE

California Health Care Association. www.cmanet.org/resource-library/detail?item=advance-health-care-directive-kit-english. See website for cost of Advance Health Care Directive Kit (English).

California Hospital Association. www.calhospital.org/resource/advance-health-care-directive. Download FREE Form 3-1: Advance Health Care Directive (English/Spanish).

Five Wishes – Aging with Dignity. <http://www.aging-withdignity.org/five-wishes.php>

Who you want to make health care decisions for you when you can't make them. The kind of medical treatment you want or don't want. How comfortable you want to be. How you want people to treat you. What you want your loved ones to know.

Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment. To download "POLST FOR Patients and Loved Ones," visit <http://capolst.org>.

State Bar of California educational guide **Seniors and the Law: A Guide for Maturing Californians** section titled "PLANNING AHEAD." To request publications contact 1-888-875-5297 or visit www.calbar.gov.

RESOURCES: WILLS

Write Your Will Workshop, Write Your Will Seminar, and Introductory to Wills & Trusts are held at various branches of the San Francisco Public Library. You can find information on upcoming sessions at sfpl.org

SAVE THE DATE: April 16 – National Healthcare Decisions Day!

Anise Matteson is an elder care consultant, retired Registered Health Information Technician and writer of reference books for seniors—*Elder Diary: Starter Kit*, ©2007, is available for your care planning needs—mattesonecs@yahoo.com





My life here

Richard Willets, resident since 2013

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Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi



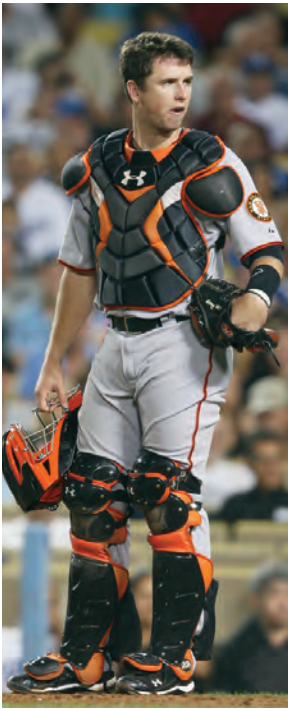
From Pitches to Putts

What better way to kick off the baseball season than to follow Buster Posey at the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am.

Buster’s 15 handicap doesn’t quite match up with his three World Series championships, Rookie of the Year, MVP and a batting title, all accomplished by the tender age of 27, but you can be sure the spectators enjoyed every stroke of his first appearance at Pebble, all the while admitting that he’d never taken a professional golf lesson. Matched with professional golfer Nick Watney, he managed to out-distance his good friend and team mate, Matt Cain.

With 156 professionals and as many amateurs, the list is peppered with a host of very well-known players, and memories from past champions such as Jack Nicklaus, Tom Watson, Mark O’Meara, Vijay Singh, and of course our very own Tiger Woods. This year’s winner was Brandt Snedeker with a very respectful 22 under par, under beautifully clear skies, as the record breaking crowd enjoyed the Scottsdale-type weather. But as impressive as his last minute win was, how many in the crowd knew that much about Snedeker? But ask about Buster and there was no doubt about whom he is or what he does.

As in the past, the celebrities broke up the seriousness of the game trying to keep the \$1,224,000 first place purse on a lighter note while a total of \$6,800,000 was spread out amongst the professional field. Ray Romano, Andy Garcia, Huey Lewis and of course the perpetual crowd pleaser



and funnyman Bill Murray are always there to entertain and add a lighter note to one of the most famous golf tournaments on the PGA tour. One of the best known celebrities was the late actor Jack Lemmon, who played in the tournament for 35 times but never made the cut to tee it up on Sunday for the final round. Condoleezza Rice was one of the 156, and although she did quite well on the greens she certainly was no amateur when it came to putting her political face on, adding a few strokes to her chances for a run for State Senate should she so decide.

So now the Pro-Am is history and the fans have headed home, the private jets have flown off, and 2015 has once again provided generously for the local charities that have benefitted since 1937 when Bing Crosby invited a group of friends to get together for some golf, a clambake and some friendly fun. Since then that innocent gathering has raised over 120 million dollars.

For us the next stop is Scottsdale, where we’ll be in a few weeks to spend a long weekend in the desert sun, catch a game or two, enjoy a few ribs at Don and Charlie’s and cheer on our San Francisco Giants as they head for a fourth World Series championship in October...a nice way to start the year, a nice way to end the year. Go Giants!!!

Police Report (Cont. from p. 10)

Suspicious Occurrence 11:04 pm • 900 Lawton St

An elderly woman was outrageously overbilled for work on a furnace done by an unauthorized service provider. Her son-in-law indicated the woman was suffering from early stages of dementia. The woman was in her open garage earlier in the day when a truck pulled-up and its two occupants asked her if any work needed to be done on her furnace. She replied the filter needed to be replaced. The workers claimed they did extra work. However none of the extra work appeared to have been completed.

Suspect #1 – White male :: 30-35 years :: 5’6” tall :: 200 lbs :: black hair :: LSW blue jacket
Suspect #2 – White male :: 50-55 years :: 5’6” tall :: 200 lbs :: white hair :: LSW blue jeans

Vehicle – truck :: sign on side “Professional Air Duct Cleaning Company, SE, Greet St.”

Daily Crime Report :: Sun – Feb 15, 2015 Residential Burglary Reported 9:35 pm / 100 Font Blvd / entry through unlocked window. Reported 3:09 pm / 2400 37th Ave / forced entry through front gate

Suspect #1 – Black male :: 20-30 years :: 5’7” tall :: 190 lbs :: LSW gray hooded sweatshirt, black gloves
Suspect #2 – 5’8” tall / 180 lbs :: LSW gray hooded sweatshirt, black gloves

Daily Crime Report :: Mon – Feb 16, 2015 Transporting Controlled Substance 11:30 am • 2300 Noriega St

An officer responded to a report of a suspicious package containing a controlled substance. A suspect dropped off a package containing suspected controlled substance at a delivery service. The suspect paid for shipping and left.

Suspect – Asian male :: 20-30 years :: 5’7” tall :: LSW white T-shirt :: muscular build, clean shaven

Aggravated Assault 1:38 pm • 2400 33rd

A victim-who lived with a family

member, was beaten by the family member and suffered visible injuries. Paramedics arrived and treated the victim. Officers found and detained the suspect. The victim placed the suspect under citizen’s arrest. Officers took custody of the suspect.

Daily Crime Report :: Tues – Feb 17, 2015 Theft 1:54 pm • 1500 Sloat Blvd

An employee saw a shoplifter on a surveillance footage conceal a merchandise. The employee confronted the shoplifter and demanded he pay for the item. The shoplifter walked past her and exited without paying.

Suspect – Black male :: 40-45 years :: LSW black fedora hat, black hooded jacket, black & white striped shirt, dark pants

Daily Crime Report :: Thur – Feb 19, 2015 Theft of Bicycle 3:40 pm • 19th & Taraval

A man called the Taraval Station to report his stolen bicycle. The victim stated that he boarded a bus and placed his bicycle on the front bike rack of the bus. When he exited on his destination, he noticed his bicycle to be missing. An officer requested MUNI for the bus’s video surveillance to acquire the suspect’s physical features.

Daily Crime Report :: Fri – Feb 20, 2015 Theft 11:48 am • 2000 San Jose Ave

Officers were flagged down by a woman who wanted to report a shoplifting that occurred on 02/13/15. Two suspects walked into a store, took merchandise items, and fled in a getaway vehicle.

Suspect #1 – Black male :: 35-40 years :: 5’8” tall :: 160 lbs :: black hair :: brown eyes :: LSW red & gray striped shirt, blue jeans
Suspect #2 – Black male :: 35-40 years :: 6’00” tall :: 200 lbs :: black hair :: brown eyes :: LSW red shirt, black jeans
Vehicle – green 4 door sedan

Robbery 8:53 pm • 29th Ave & Kirkham St

Officers responded to a report of a robbery. Two suspects confronted a victim on foot and pulled him down to the ground. They took the victim’s belongings and fled.

Suspect #1 – White male :: 18-20 years ::

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5’10” :: 200 lbs :: LSW red hooded jacket :: “5 o’clock shadow,” mustache
Suspect #2 – White male :: 18-20 years :: LSW white hooded sweatshirt
Attempted Robbery 9:52 pm • Harold Ave & Grafton Ave

Two suspects exited a car and approached a victim. One of them pointed a gun and demanded the victim’s phone. The victim refused and the suspects fled in their getaway car.

Suspect #1 – Hispanic male :: 20-25 years :: 6’0” tall :: 150 lbs :: black hair :: LSW red hooded sweater, blue jeans, armed with black semi automatic pistol

Suspect #2 – Hispanic male :: 20-25 years :: black hair :: LSW white hooded sweatshirt
Vehicle – white 2000 Honda 4-door sedan
Robbery 10:30 pm • 400 De Long St

Two victims were sitting in a vehicle when three suspects approached them on foot. One of the suspects pointed a gun and demanded the victims surrender their belongings. After the victims complied the suspects fled on foot.

Suspect #1 – Black male :: 20-25 years :: 5’3” tall :: 130 lbs :: black hair :: LSW black camouflaged hoodie, dark pants, black scarf covering face

Suspect #2 – Black male :: 20-25 years :: 5’10” tall :: 160 lbs :: black hair :: LSW black scarf covering face

Suspect #3 – Black male :: 20-25 years :: 5’07” tall :: 140 lbs :: black hair :: LSW green camouflaged sweater, dark pants

Daily Crime Report :: Sat – Feb 21, 2015 Possession of Controlled Substance for Sale 5:03 pm • 9th Ave & Irving St

An officer saw a man attempt to give another man a baggy of suspected controlled substance. The officer arrested the man for possession of a controlled substance. An arrest search revealed more controlled substances individually packaged. The man was then arrested.

Daily Crime Report :: Sun – Feb 22, 2015 Aggravated Assault 5:32 pm • 2000 32nd

A victim was hosing down her driveway when a skateboarder and a young woman yelled at her for causing the water to drip down on the sidewalk. The suspects then get into a van. As they drove by, the young woman yelled and threw a glass bottle at the woman. The bottle shattered on the ground. A glass piece hit the woman.

Suspect #1 – White male :: 20-25 years :: 5’7” tall :: 150 lbs :: blond hair :: LSW green wool cap, camouflaged shirt.

Suspect #2 – White female :: 20-25 years :: 5’5” tall :: 130 lbs :: blond hair :: Vehicle – white camper van

Robbery 8:51 pm • 2000 Ocean Ave

Officers responded to a report of two possible robbers in the area. They detained one suspect while the second suspect fled away on foot. Just then a convenience store called to say a robbery occurred. The detained suspect was positively identified as one of the armed robbers and therefore arrested.

Suspect – Black male :: 20-25 years :: 5’8” :: 150 lbs :: dark gray hooded sweatshirt, dark gray pants

Daily Crime Report :: Tues – Feb 24, 2015

Robbery 1:51 pm • 31st Ave & Santiago St

A victim was on foot when a suspect approached her with a gun aimed at her and demanded her bag. She complied and the suspect fled in a getaway vehicle driven by a second suspect.

Suspect #1 – Hispanic male :: 20-25 years :: 5’10” tall :: 180 lbs :: black hair :: LSW gray jacket, blue jeans

Suspect #2 – Hispanic male :: 20-25 years :: black hair

Vehicle – blue Honda 4-door sedan
Battery-Theft 2:56 pm • 1400 19th Ave

A victim pulled into a gas station on his motorcycle when a suspect ran up to him and accused him of “cutting” the suspect off. The suspect tried to tip the victim’s motorcycle over. A fight ensued. The suspect then stole the ignition key to the victim’s motorcycle and fled.

Suspect – White male :: 45-55 years :: 6’0” tall :: 180 lbs :: brown hair :: gray beard :: LSW green or khaki baseball cap, red plaid shirt, blue jeans

Arson 9:37 pm • 1200 30th Ave

Officers responded to a report of a pickup truck on fire. Firefighters extinguished the fire and they believed it was intentionally set. The truck had been parked and left unattended.

Daily Crime Report :: Wed – Feb 25, 2015 Robbery 11:19 am • Grafton Ave & Capitol

On a MUNI bus, one suspect pulled on a victim’s backpack while a second suspect snatched the victim’s cellular phone out of his hand. They exited the bus with a third suspect and fled.

Suspect #1 – Black male :: 19-23 years :: 5’8” tall :: 150 lbs :: LSW all black clothes

Suspect #2 – Black male :: 19-23 years :: 5’8” tall :: 150 lbs :: braided hair :: LSW black & gray coat, black pants

Suspect #3 – Black male :: 19-23 years :: 5’8” tall

Theft 12:45 pm • 26th Ave & Vicente St

A man walked into Taraval Station to report a theft. He parked and left his boat on a trailer unattended. Upon return the boat’s engine was gone.

Daily Crime Report :: Thur – Feb 26, 2015 Attempted Robbery 3:09 pm • 200 Winston

Officers responded to a report of a person with a knife. A shoplifter attempted to steal a concealed merchandise item when he was confronted by an employee. The shoplifter threw down the merchandise and then pulled out a weapon. The suspect threatened the employee and the employee backed away. The suspect got into a vehicle. Another suspect was seen getting into the same vehicle. They fled the scene.

Suspect #1 – male :: 30 years :: 5’7” tall :: 150 lbs :: brown hair :: LSW black jacket, white T-shirt, blue jeans, white shoes
Suspect #2 – Hispanic male :: 27-33 years :: 5’10” tall :: 170 lbs :: LSW gray jacket with black sleeves, black shirt, dark pants
Vehicle – black 2007 Toyota Corolla

Note: This is not a complete report, some have been shortened in the interest of space. Visit: taraval.org for more details.

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MUNI TRACKWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Twin Peaks Tunnel Community Meeting

Please join us to discuss the Twin Peaks Tunnel Trackway Improvements project on Tuesday, March 24 at 7 p.m. The meeting will take place in the West Portal Playground Clubhouse at 131 Lenox Way.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) will provide further information and address your questions and concerns at the meeting.

For more information and updates in the meantime, please visit www.sfmta.com/twinpeaks.

Summary:

SFMTA, which operates Muni, is replacing the light rail tracks along the entirety of the Twin Peaks Tunnel in an effort to keep the Muni system in a state of good repair, allowing trains to move faster through the tunnel and improve travel times. Additional work to the tunnel’s infrastructure will take place at the same time as the track replacement.

The tunnel connects Castro Station to West Portal Station and carries a number of the light rail lines, including the K, L and M.