



Doing Less With More
Drs Rivero and Kerr look at the Acute Care Unit at Laguna Honda **2**

Play Nice:
Henry Wong looks at the new play space for Westside kids **4**



Quentin Kopp:
Quentin' takes on the election after-math and more **3**

West of Twin Peaks Central Council:
Our neighborhood meets **3**



Taraval Crime Report
Follow our local policemen and women as they pursue the peace **4**

The Big Spill?
Steve Lawrence: Is sewer storage is sufficient for winter storms **5**

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Shuttle Squatters Vex Riders

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

Problems with the trial of “tech” shuttle buses — a.k.a., the “Google buses” — have cropped up all over the City, including on the West Side. And the “trial” may rapidly worsen if the program is made permanent by the SFMTA and Board of Supervisors.

It's now gotten personal. And I'm angry. I'm 64-½, walk using a cane, and rely on public transportation.

During the past three weeks, I've had to exit Muni buses in the middle of traffic lanes at least ten times at the northeast corner of Van Ness Avenue and California Street coming home from work at 5:30 p.m. when tech shuttle buses, sometimes two at a time, are parked in the Muni bus red zones unloading tech workers who likely don't care whether Muni riders have to disembark in the street.

The MTA and City haven't conducted a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which is desperately needed before making the shuttle bus program permanent.

Budget & Legislative Analyst Report

A report titled “Impact of Private Shuttles” was presented to the Board of Supervisors on March 31, 2014 by the Board's Budget and Legislative Analyst (BLA), who had been asked by Supervisors to analyze the impact of private shuttle buses on the City's infrastructure costs, traffic delays, pedestrian safety, and housing costs.

Notably, the March 2014 BLA report clearly indicated a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is needed for the private shuttle bus program before it is made permanent.

The MTA and the Planning Department wrongly determined that a “pilot program” allowing the tech shuttles to use some Muni bus stops for an 18-month



The SFMTA's Evaluation Report does not mention the danger for MUNI's disabled riders when riders are forced to embark and disembark buses when private buses squat idling in designated bus stops—a major fine for autos Photo: Larry Bob Roberts

trial didn't require an EIR, and that the pilot program was exempt from California's CEQA environmental review requirements because it would be an information collection and evaluation period, which is utter nonsense.

The BLA report identified many problems with the private commuter shuttle buses. In particular, it noted:

“In other words, all use of City bus zones by private shuttles to date has been in violation of the California Vehicle Code [emphasis added]. In 2014, Muni's on-time performance declined from 60% to 54%, as private shuttle buses increased.”

Elsewhere in the BLA report, troubling data was reported, including:

Seven “tech” companies that provide regional shuttle

Cont. p. 6



Coyotes are small, brownish, wild dogs, basically. They run with their non-bushy tails held down. Photo: Calvin Cardinas

Coyotes or Pets?

By George Wooding

San Franciscan's don't love coyotes, they love their pets.

As our small, seven-square-mile City grows more compact, humans and pets are forced to live in ever closer proximity to a burgeoning population of coyotes.

As coyotes become acclimated to humans, their bold behavior has led to the death of a dog named Buster, whose owner says he was killed by coyotes near the Pine Lake area of Stern Grove two weeks ago. A month earlier, another owner says he was surrounded by five coyotes before they attacked his Bichon named Eddie. All of this has dog and cat owners in the area nervous and asking what to do.

The SF Rec and Park Department (RPD) has little to offer pet owners. It has built a small barrier to keep dogs from chasing coyotes up a hill. This same barrier will not keep coyotes out of Stern Grove. The RPD has also ordered wildlife-proof trash cans in hopes of teaching coyotes not

Cont. p. 7

City Hall Overrides Lease Agreements!

By John Farrell



Riddle me this! When is a written contract not a contract? Answer: When it involves the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

You may have read recently that legislation was passed by the Board of Supervisors which changes the Rent Ordinance by making it harder for landlords to evict tenants for minor violations such as unruly behavior or improperly painting the walls. This legislation is the result of the spike in landlord notices – up 67% in five years per the Rent Board. This rise in eviction is the result of certain property owners looking for ways to get rid of low rent paying tenants for market rents.

“...tenants can bring in more roommates as permitted under the Fire Code without the consent of the landlord. Further the landlord may not impose an increase in the rent if a tenant adds an additional occupant to the existing tenancy.

This part of the legislation is reasonable. However, this legislation also provides for the overriding of any lease with a no subletting clause. Therefore, tenants can bring in more roommates as permitted under the Fire Code without the consent of the landlord. Further the landlord may not impose an increase in the rent if a tenant adds an additional occupant to the existing tenancy. This is unreasonable and unfair. I thought a written lease agreement is a legal contract. But I guess that means nothing to City Hall.

This is an important issue to many, including

Cont. p. 8

Evolving Eucalyptus Wrangle Escalates

By Jake Sigg

The response of Nancy Wuerfel et al to my article in the September Westside Observer on the dangers of the blue gum plantations in the city is rife with errors that are too numerous to correct here. I will select a few of the more egregious ones; a full rebuttal would necessitate an article longer than the editor would accept. The subject is of great import to the city, as there are issues of public safety as well as recreation. A few of the errors, in no particular order:

1. *Some people want to cut down our healthy forests simply because the trees are not “native.”*

Cutting down trees simply because they are not native has never been a part of City policy or operations, nor is it a valid reason for removing them. My article, and the City's draft management plan, calls for managing the Mount Davidson plantation, which includes selective tree removal where they constitute a problem. Their being nonnative is not especially relevant.

2. *The City's Natural Areas Program has plans to convert existing habitat (including eucalyptus forests)*

Cont. p. 18

“These sprouts are always in response to stress or injury, and the reason they are not part of the normal growth cycle... Production of these shoots is a desperation move to save the tree's life and even if successful it leaves the tree misshapen, aesthetically displeasing, and unsafe, and likely an intermediate stage on the way to ultimate death



Photo: Craig Dawson.

Disagreement about the growths at the top of these trees sparks concerned arborists

Pacific Rod & Gun Almost Cleaned-up Lake Merced Remediation Moves Forward

Since 1935 the Pacific Rod and Gun Club occupied approximately 10 acres on the southwest side of Lake Merced. The club offered recreational skeet and trap



shooting for members and the public. The many years of shooting resulted in contaminants from the lead shot and clay pigeons being deposited into the soil and the lake. The effect of the lead shot and clay targets containing poly aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) was highly elevated levels of lead, arsenic and PAHs contamination in soils on much of the site.

Investigations conducted at the site that showed

Cont. p. 11

Doing Less With More

Laguna Honda's Acute Care Slump

By Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr

According to the Controller's Office, Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH) "is one of the most expensive Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) in California, with an actual rate of approximately \$800 per patient per day." Over 95% of LHH patients are covered by Medi-Cal that pays just \$419 per day. But because LHH runs a 7-bed Acute Medical unit on its 780-bed campus, it can capture 50% of the difference between its actual costs and what Medi-Cal pays - another \$190/day. Virtually all of the remainder is absorbed by the City; hence the pressure to cut costs and increase revenues.

One way to raise revenues is to keep LHH's small Acute Medical and Acute Rehab units busy, as their reimbursement rates are several times higher than the \$800/day LHH spends per resident.

In 2009, LHH Rehabilitation Chief Dr. Lisa Pascual, and then-CEO John Kanaley, conjured a "revenue enhancement" budget proposal. In exchange for an extra \$836,000 in taxpayer funds annually, they promised to generate yearly revenues of \$1.35 million. They wanted more staffing to transform the existing 6-bed Acute Rehab unit into the new building's showcase - with 15 beds, a choice location, therapeutic pool and state-of-the-art fitness gym. Why were these costly enhancements needed in a safety-net hospital? Because they "will increase the demand for rehabilitation services," they wrote.

An "upsurge in acute rehabilitation admissions" would raise the average daily census from 1.57 patients to "a realistic goal" of 4 patients/day. The new facility, its trappings and fanfare, would draw new patients. It was a field of dreams, untrampled by market research like scoping out the competition, or asking potential patients what they wanted, and why they shunned LHH.

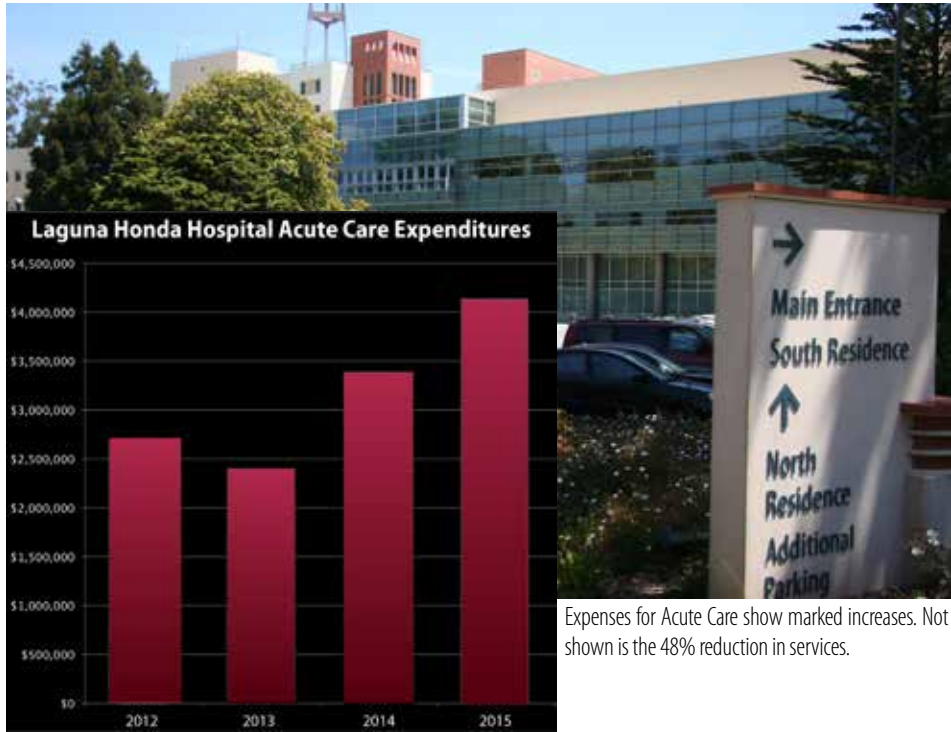
Three months after the rebranded LHH opened, the 15 mostly-empty Acute Rehab beds were cut to 7. By mid-2012 just 5 remained. The other 10 were converted to lower-paying but fillable Skilled Nursing beds. Despite sparkling amenities and frantic recruitment efforts, private pay and Medicare patients chose to go elsewhere - as before. It got worse. For 2013, the average daily census for Acute Rehab was 2.21 patients, in 2014 it fell to 1.23 and by mid-2015 it dropped to 0.89 patients per day. Rehab Director Pascual omitted this decline in her Annual Report to the Health Commission's Joint Conference Committee on 9/8/15. Instead of a root

cause analysis of the slump, she offered variants of patient recruitment strategies that hadn't worked previously. The Commissioners didn't probe, as if they didn't want to know.

Another revenue tale was spun in 2010. The Medicine Department sought \$950,000 in general funds for staffing to boost its Acute Medical census from "1.5 - 2.0 patients/day" to 5 patients per day, thereby generating \$1.7million annually. Instead, patients vaporized. Signs of fluster appeared in 2012 when LHH brass lumped the Acute Medical and Acute Rehab censuses together under "Acute" to camouflage the minuscule number of patients each unit served. When honest reporting resumed in 2013, the average daily census fell to 1.1, then to 0.75 by 2014, and to 0.72 by mid-2015. On average, less than 1 patient per day has received treatment in the 7-bed Acute Medical unit over the past 18 months. Month after month, the dwindling numbers are presented; without explanation from Medical Director Dr. Colleen Riley, and without inquiries from Health Commissioners.

Yet, inquiries are due. The City's SFOpenBook data base shows LHH spending on "Acute Care" exploding, despite its sagging census. LHH spent about \$2.4 million in 2012-13, almost \$3.4 million in 2013-14, then \$4.1 million in 2014-15. Unfortunately, corresponding revenue data isn't provided. Given the missteps and evasions by Laguna Honda executives, Health Commissioners should ask why a 73% rise in Acute Care spending accompanies a 48% reduction in service delivery.

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



Will Durst	5	Calendar	12	Interview: David Watts	14
Taxing Marijuana	7	Movies	12	Jack Kaye	15
Money Matters	8	Theater	13	Remember When / Open Late	16
Larson Playground	8	Dickens Christmas Fair.	13	Kocivar / Education	18
Around the Town	9	Theater	14	Real Travel	19

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GOLDEN GATE DOG WALKING

West Of Twin Peaks Central Council By Mitch Bull

Public safety and crime prevention was the topic of the night at the West of Twin Peaks Central Council meeting on Monday, October 26th as President **Roger Ritter** welcomed six San Francisco Police Officers to discuss the "state of crime and its prevention in SF." The officers were all long-term veterans with between 20 and 30 years of service with the SFPD.



Deputy Chief of Operations **Mike Redmond**, a 21 year veteran who oversees the operations at all of the 10 district stations, introduced the assembled speakers: Commander **Rob O'Sullivan**, Sr. Captain **John Sanford** (Park), Captain **Joe McFadden** (Ingleside), Captain **Mike Devlin**, and Lt. **Ed Del Carlo** (Taraval).

The session followed a series of questions posed by moderator **Bill Chionsini**. The first topic covered was the concept of **Community Policing**, and Redmond explained that this results when police collaborate and work with members of the community. He mentioned that he works to have selected staff at each station be very involved in each of the communities, with visits to schools and getting to know the kids and the people in the neighborhoods. In that way, the community "has a voice" at each station.

O'Sullivan further explained that the SFPD believes that *every officer* is a community policing person. He said that this mindset starts with the cadets in the 38-week academy classes, and that the SFPD Captains make it a priority to be seen at community events, interacting with and engaging the neighborhoods.

Sanford described community policing as the way in which the SFPD "connects the dots" and recognizes the needs and concerns of each individual district, which are often very different within different sections of San Francisco. He said that it is vitally important for the local police staff to understand the needs and concerns within their local community. Giving an example, he noted that at Park Station, the 14 sergeants are divided into 4 sectors, and that these "sector sergeants" are responsible for the oversight of their assigned sector patrol officers. Sanford also explained that at Park, they have a newsletter that is distributed out to the community, as well as conducting a "Merchant Monday" program to collaborate with the business community.

Mc Fadden spoke of communications being critical, as many people don't know when to use the 911 emergency call number, or when to use the alternative 415-553-0123 number, or the city services 311 dial-in feature.

The next question focused on the current state of "general crime" within the city. Redmond spoke of the **increase in violent and property crimes**, and that there is more collaboration between districts as the criminals are moving between neighborhoods and districts,

and that more of the known gang members are involved in property crimes. In fact, the SFPD has applied **gang enhancement** charges in several cases of property crimes.

Taraval's Ed Del Carlo spoke on the problem of **auto burglaries and break-ins**, which are happening all over the Sunset, and especially at Lake Merced, Fort Funston, and at Stonestown Mall. He gave an example of people leaving their garage doors open overnight, or for 4-5 hours, giving local criminal types valid crimes of opportunity.

Del Carlo also spoke of the best tool for apprehending criminals, video. A discussion followed on the benefits of having a "GoPro" type of **camera mounted to record activity at your front door**. He also stated that most home robberies occur between 10 am and 3 pm, when most people are at work.

The next topic of discussion was on the changes and challenges that the implementation of Prop 47 and AB 109 has caused. Proposition 47 (implemented in November 2014) changed many crimes formerly charged as **felonies into misdemeanors** (thus not taking convicted criminal off of the streets); while AB109 eased **crowding in jails** by releasing "non-violent" offenders from prison and placed them back into the communities. As a basic example, criminals who used to be sentenced to a 1 year minimum now get fewer than 30 days most of the time. In addition DNA evidence is not collected for most of the misdemeanors, unlike if they had been charged as felonies. As a result the DNA evidence is not being recorded and entered into the police department databases.

Other discussions focused on the challenges of the **homeless and transient** population that continually sets up encampments and structures. The SFPD is fielding and responding to over 10,000 calls per month, with over 15,000 citations being given to individuals for violating **quality of life** issues. Everyone agrees that SF cannot "build" its way out of the homeless problem, and that having a "housing first" policy is difficult to implement in counties as geographically diverse as San Mateo and San Francisco.

The next regular meeting of the WOTPCC will be on Monday, November 30th 1 at 7:30 PM at the historic Forest Hills Clubhouse. For more information see the WOTPCC website (www.westoftwinpeaks.org).

Ruminations From a Former Supervisor

By Quentin Kopp



Suppose you were an idiot, and suppose you were a member of Congress. But, I repeat myself. That's not my creativity; it's attributable to Mark Twain. Meanwhile, we have survived yet another municipal election, with the usual clamor (and disgust) about campaign spending and those single issue or special interests who generate most of it. My favorite example is Proposition F, an effort to tame the voracious appetite of Airbnb to forfeit integrity of our neighborhoods by motivating homeowners and tenants to become hotel owners. Another example is the contributions to the Mayor's \$310,000,000 to benefit the subsidized housing and high-rise residential developers, together with their sycophantic architects, engineers, contractors, public relations operators, and so-called nonprofit entities like SPUR, whose special interest bias has never been exposed.

It also involved the supervisorial election in North Beach, Telegraph Hill, Polk Gulch, Chinatown, and Russian Hill, contemporarily known as "District 3," between my friend, Aaron Peskin, and the Mayor's appointed and dutiful lackey, plus a perpetual neighborhood candidate. Astonishingly, more money was spent by the two major contenders for a Board of Supervisors election than ever in history, including at-large supervisorial elections in a bygone, but sorely missed era. At the end of the campaign, one of the incumbent Mayor's obedient clubs (Asian Pacific Democratic Club) claimed that the Chinatown Community

Development Center, an asserted nonprofit entity which probably couldn't exist without City Hall money, had collected under false pretenses absentee ballots from elderly Chinese-speaking voters, marked the ballots for Peskin and then deposited them illegally. The District Attorney's office declared it was "looking into" the allegation emanating from a mayoral organization political consultant. Let's contrast District Attorney George Gascon's attention to a matter in 2011 after the newly-chosen (by the Board of Supervisors) Mayor had appointed him our City and County Prosecutor. Mayoral flunkies were charged with the same acts of fraudulent activity in completing absentee ballots for elderly Chinatown voters and then delivering them to the Department of Elections. Gascon conducted a superficial investigation that led to no criminal charges being brought.

Let's contrast District Attorney George Gascon's attention to a matter in 2011 after the newly-chosen (by the Board of Supervisors) Mayor had appointed him our City and County Prosecutor. Mayoral flunkies were charged with the same acts of fraudulent activity in completing absentee ballots for elderly Chinatown voters and then delivering them to the Department of Elections. Gascon conducted a superficial investigation that led to no criminal charges being brought, which would have affected his benefactor, the Mayor, adversely. Let's see what happens now.

Despite the bumbling tactics of the campaign manager, one Michael Terris, the San Francisco Giants prevailed in persuading voters to approve Proposition D, enabling construction of hundreds of housing units, parks, and stores at Mission Creek, presently a parking lot owned by the Port of San Francisco. Political campaign managers are historically suspect in their tactics and truthfulness; the Giants happily prevailed despite their ill-advised retention of one of the worst practitioners in today's San Francisco.

Finally, one notes the eagerness of the San Francisco Department of Elections to purvey ballots in languages other than English. Simple logic informs us that a voter must be a citizen. A citizen must demonstrate proficiency in English and understanding of our governmental system. Nevertheless, the Department of Elections spends money on a mailer happily informing voters they can use three versions of the ballots, Spanish, Chinese, and now Tagalog.

Unknown to most San Franciscans, the San Francisco War Memorial Veterans' Building at Van Ness Avenue and McAllister Street no longer can be identified as a resultant of honor to our World War I veterans and thereafter World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Iraq and Afghanistan

Wars, despite the 1921 conveyance from the University of California Regents to San Francisco to honor and provide a structure for World War I veterans. Unfortunately, the War Memorial Trustees, appointed entirely by the Mayor, includes but one veteran, and he has scolded the American Legion Post for objecting to reduction of space for veterans to approximately 8% of the entire building following a renovation completed in August. The building instead is consumed by the Arts Commission and similar entities. Swords into Plowshares, founded by Vietnam War veterans for employment and other services to Vietnam War veterans, is excluded. So is the Korean

War Memorial Foundation, of which I am President. The American Legion Post, however, sued the mayoral-appointed trustees for a court order confirming entitlement of patriotic organizations to office and other related space in the War Memorial Veterans' Building. The case was heard in San Francisco Superior Court on November 2, 2015, and is under submission to the probate court judge for decision.

Two short items merit expression: (1) The City of Los Angeles is the largest employer in a population of over four million people,

with 41,000 full-time employees, averaging \$78,139 per year in salary before overtime or bonuses are added. San Francisco, with some 840,000 people, employs almost 35,000 full-time employees, without a peep from the media or almost all neighborhood associations. (2) I thought, and maybe you did too, that redevelopment agencies in California had been eliminated and there'd be no more taking of one person's private property or transfer to another entity or person for such needed works as automobile row, golf courses, or entertainment arenas. We were all wrong. Last month, Governor Jerry Brown, who had led and advocated ending redevelopment and its eminent domain powers four years ago, signed Assembly Bill No. 2, which allows cities to create new such entities and to issue bonds (at taxpayer expense) for claimed affordable housing, economic revitalization, and infrastructure, using eminent domain and thereby restoring power to destroy one person's property rights in favor of another. The new law, of course, uses soothing language such as "community revitalization investment authorities," another way to describe corporate welfare and destruction of private property rights, all under the guise of helping the poor. The law exempts any public property from acquisition for redevelopment without consent of the public entity (in helping the poor, California now treats private property as fair game, while exempting governmental property).

In 1764, the French philosopher and author Voltaire wrote: "The art of government consists of taking as much money as possible from one party of the citizens to give to the other." Or you may rely on humorist Will Rogers, who declared: "I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the acts."

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



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Where Friends Meet

Business Corner

Sold on PlayhavenSF

By Henry Wong

A very new and promising indoor children play space and learning center is now available to parents seeking a fun and educational experience for their kids, aptly called playhavensf. It recently opened its doors for the first time early in October in the Forest Hill area and is a great alternative for parents here in the City.

Playhavensf was created by San Francisco resident Sheryl Tecson, a preschool teacher with 12 years experience and a mother of two daughters of her own. Playhavensf is also co-owned and operated by her husband, Daniel, who tells me that he handles more of the marketing stuff for the business. They told us at the *Westside Observer* that they have dreamed of opening a children’s learning center to create a gathering place for families where children’s open-ended play is valued. They will provide a variety of children’s enrichment classes, and even a separate workspace and lounge for the parents to relax and enjoy some free time together. Since opening their doors they have been constantly retooling to meet the needs of families. Their continual efforts and hard work have not gone unnoticed by the families, who have responded with an outpouring of appreciation and support which encourages them even further. Their dedication is repaid when families tend to linger around together with happy smiles well beyond closing time.

In order for all of this to become reality, they realized that they needed an environment that inspires youthful imagination, along with extended playtime to give the kids a carefree childhood experience. So when they were searching for a good location and found this secluded area in the Forest Hill neighborhood, they felt it was a perfect fit for fulfilling this dream. Once they saw the play area in the back of the site, Daniel mentioned to Sheryl that it resembles a “haven” hidden within this concrete jungle of a city. Hence, the moniker ‘Playhavensf’ was born.

Their website, playhavensf.com, gives you some more details and general information about their location and services, as well as descriptions of the physical activities, staff, academics, and even a daily schedule. They have an art studio, sensory activities, imaginative games, dramatic play areas, and even a rock-climbing wall. playhavensf will also have a fully-equipped kitchen with microwave, refrigerator,

toaster oven, tea and coffee.

And, of course, there are always the costs to think about. Playhavensf has daily rates of \$12.00 and unlimited monthly memberships for \$79.00. Compare that with other learning centers like Kumon, which charges something over \$100.00 for a monthly membership. Aside from all the activities they provide for the family, playhavensf will also have free WIFI throughout the center, and even has a private party room which can accommodate up to 35 people for special occasions. In another area of the learning center, they will also feature an outdoor patio for the kids and parents to cool off from all the creative adrenaline and mental gymnastics.

So for parents who are interested, Playhavensf is centrally located at 254 Laguna Honda Blvd., just around the corner and down the block from the Forest Hill BART station. There is also lots of free parking for those drivers that would rather not circle these city blocks like a predatory



“... at 254 Laguna Honda Blvd., just around the corner and down the block from the Forest Hill BART station. There is also lots of free parking for those drivers that would rather not circle these city blocks like a predatory falcon when delivering or picking up the kids.

falcon when delivering or picking up the kids.

Playhavensf owners, Sheryl & Daniel Tecson, have embarked on a very idealistic approach that seems to resonate with their many clients. They seem to be very genuine with their passion and they are certainly motivated for all the right reasons.

They have spent a considerable amount of personal time and resources to build a nice foundation to start a dream from scratch and I am really excited to see them succeed with playhavensf in the near future.

Henry Wong is a freelance reporter and a father living on the Westside.





The People’s Palace

San Francisco City Hall Documentary Screening

Wednesday, November 18, 2015

7:00 pm ~ 8:00 pm

City Hall

This is the showing of the documentary about San Francisco City Hall as part of the City Hall Centennial Celebration. The documentary is produced by Emmy-Award winning director Jim Yager.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free and is open to the public. Seating is limited with required registration. For more information, please visit:

www.sfcityhall100.com

thepeoplespalace.eventbrite.com

Commentary

Sewer Spills and the Sand Solution

By Steve Lawrence

San Francisco has a combined sewer system. This means that both home sewage and storm water combine together and need to be treated. In summer months little flows. During winter when it rains, an awful lot flows. Problems flow, too.

To deal with extreme variation in flow, storage containers are employed. Combined wastewater and stormwater fills the container. If the container fills completely, the top liquids flow off untreated; the bad stuff tends to settle. Such releases of untreated wastewater are spills. Spills are limited in number by regulation.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Oceanside treatment plant was built next to the Zoo to improve treatment and reduce spills of untreated wastewater. Along with the treatment plant, which treats wastewater and discharges it through an outfall into the ocean, a storage facility was buried under the Great Highway. This storage facility is called the LMT, Lake Merced Tunnel. It is not really a tunnel, though were you in it, it would feel like one.

It is a large diameter concrete pipe. The pipe is located too close to the ocean. It is vulnerable to rising seas, and to intense storms which can batter the coast. Coastal erosion has become a real problem; as it happens, it is worst just to the west of the LMT.

At present, at the closest, there is 59 feet between the beach and the buried LMT.

To support the LMT and keep it from bursting, experts say that ten feet of soil providing lateral soil support is required. Otherwise the pipe is liable to burst.

Why would such a pipe burst? After a large storm it is filled with liquid. This is heavy. It places a downward and outward force. Imagine a balloon over-filling with water; it expands, hangs lower, and bursts. Same with the LMT, unless there is resistance (soil) to counteract the liquid's force.

With 49 feet of excess soil at present, you might imagine all is well. But during the 2009-10 year, reports were that the coast eroded 40 feet; one report claimed seventy feet.

So what if the storage pipe collapses? It would be a very big deal. Not only would the city pollute the ocean and beach with wastewater, but also it would lack storage and spill in each subsequent storm. That would be intolerable to regulators, and to residents. Emergency measures would need to be mobilized, and the cost might

run into the tens of millions, maybe more.

A couple of years ago a plan was devised to deal with rising seas at Ocean Beach. Called the Ocean Beach Master Plan, it did address the need to protect the vulnerable LMT from rising seas. Some steps have been taken. But they are baby steps. Sand has been transported to the beach west of the LMT.

But sand is scoured away by a stormy ocean very quickly. The sand placed is fine sand, which goes more easily. Under the influence of high tides and a typical southwest El Nino storm, the ocean can rise up and scour from south to north, pulling beach sand north and west. Once the sand is eroded away, the cliffs may slide and break off, and this erosion leaves less lateral support for the LMT.

In 2009-10 the ocean took part of Great Highway, and it did so very quickly. This winter could be as bad, or worse.

Despite the risk, which seems serious, better protection for the LMT may not come in time.

Plans call for an inverted L shaped hard barrier is to be installed. The idea is to drill piers west of the LMT, and then cover it with a top, or partial top. The piers form a vertical wall; the top is horizontal.

Experts opine that all is well so long as a thirty year storm does not strike. A thirty year storm is one large enough so that it strikes only on average once in every thirty years.

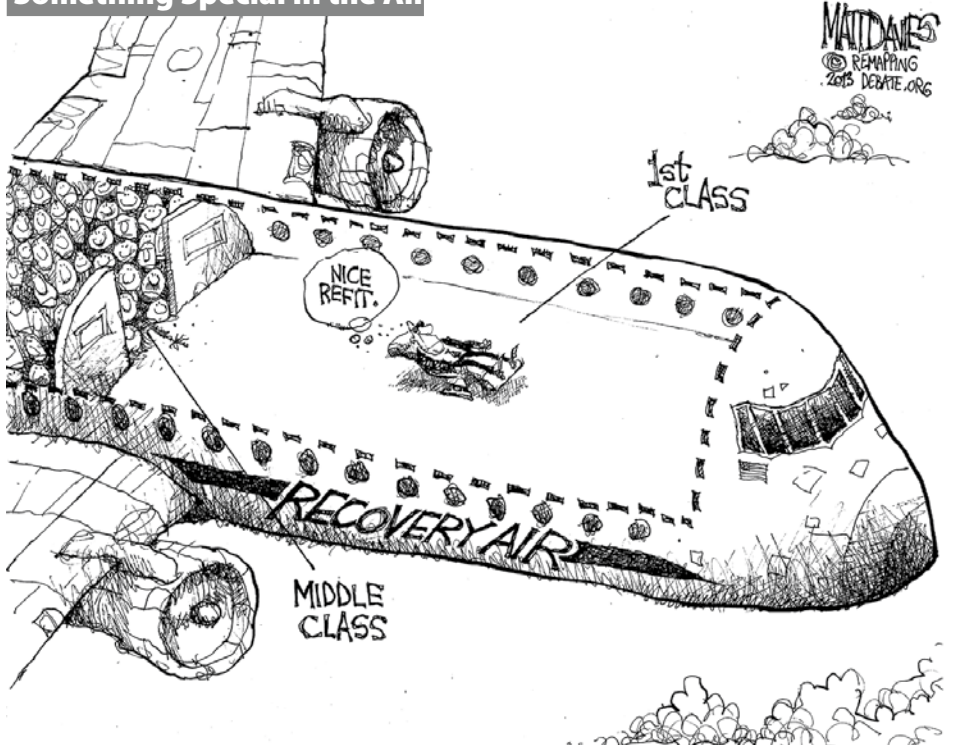
So when is this inverted L protection to be installed? Until recently, eight to fifteen years out was the plan. That was the time-frame coincident with the Ocean Beach Master Plan of 2012. With the prospect of a severe El Nino, plans have assumed more urgency. But there is zero chance for that hard protection to be in place this winter, or next.

While it is always possible that emergency measures (in the past dumping large rocks) can be accomplished in time to save the LMT, is the risk of LMT failure one the city can afford?

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



Something Special In the Air



My 2¢ • Will Durst © 2015

Red Meat vs. Creme Brulee.

If the disappointment of everyone expecting fireworks at the first Democratic debate exhibited itself as perspiration, we could declare the California drought over. A few soggy matches might have been lit but that was it. Heavy on the smoke, non-existent on the flame.

This initial gathering of liberal presidential wannabees did highlight the differing styles of the 2 parties. Both may be big on giving away government money, but Democrats prefer ladling it out to poor people, while the Republicans want to slip it to the rich. Republicans live in Potterville, and the Dems call Bedford Falls home.

Even their debating styles are as different as rocket-propelled grenades and rainbow-streamer pinwheels. During their recent spate of infernal internal face-offs, the GOP demonstrated a penchant for biting off big chunks of red meat which they spat into each other's faces, while Democrats barely summoned the energy to crack the crust of their creme brulee.

the GOP demonstrated a penchant for biting off big chunks of red meat which they spat into each other's faces, while Democrats barely summoned the energy to crack the crust of their creme brulee.

At Democratic family functions everybody sits at the kids' table. With the adults, (Bernie & Hillary) on one side and the three other guys crammed together on the other. They sat up straight and affected nonchalance, but it was clear they were confused by their forks. Overall, civility reigned, with no one pointing out Lincoln Chafee's eerie resemblance to Grandpa Munster.

Martin O'Malley, languishing in the low single digits in polls with margins of error of mid- single digits, squandered his big chance to secure a passport to Legitimate Contender Ville, by putting the shill in shilly-shally. All the vision and energy of chilled molasses. Uncaptivating crowds by calling for the reinstatement of Glass-Steagall which sounds like a Vegas high roller knick-knack.

Jim Webb approached the whole thing as an audition for a Democratic John McCain tribute band, going so far as to creepily grin while recounting the killing of a Communist. Quick, get his opinion on

mark," which surprised a significant portion of the audience who had passed the Eiffel Tower on the way there. But the signature moment was when the Vermont Senator handed the former Secretary of State a political gift the size of Ted Cruz's ego by saying "the American people are sick and tired of hearing about your damn emails." His graciousness was trumped only by her insincere laughter.

Although Bill's wife's command of the room and the facts made her look, dare we say... presidential, progressives feel the Bern. First a charismatic young black guy, now a charismatic old white guy. Throw in a beret wearing bimbo and Hamlet waiting in the wings and people are starting to misquote Shakespeare... "2nd Place, thy name is Hillary."

Will Durst is an award-winning, nationally acclaimed columnist and comedian. Go to willdurst.com for info about personal appearances, and the documentary "3 Still Standing" premiering soon at a theater near you.



Harvesting the Cannabis Taxes

With Governor Jerry Brown's signatures on AB 266, AB 243 and SB 643, California took historic and progressive steps to collect taxes and provide a regulatory framework for California's 20 year-old medicinal Cannabis Industry, bringing an underground economy out of the shadows.

Local control will be the basic component of the new regulations that state and county officials will now begin to consider in public meetings and legislative research.

The core effect of the new laws will be to strengthen the rights of local officials to levy taxes, regulate land use and zoning, and specify rules of cultivation and sales.

Despite the current federal administration's hands-off policy toward marijuana, it is still classified as a Schedule I Controlled Substance and banks or credits unions face the threat of criminal prosecution if they provide banking services to medicinal (or recreational) cannabis operations. This remains true even if financial institutions follow the federal guidance of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) issued by the Justice Department and Treasury, as well as the money laundering provisions of the Bank Secrecy Act of 1970.

Job one: get Medicinal Cannabis Dispensaries (MCDs) banked. This is the first step because that would allow California to get back the taxes it is owed. In 2014, according to Fiona Ma, Member of the State Board of Equalization (SBOE), \$28 million of sales tax was collected from licensed dispensaries—only about 35% of the MCDs in operation in the state. That leaves about \$73 million uncollected from the Medical Cannabis Dispensaries that are not paying sales taxes.

During a Presidential election year it is unlikely that the federal government will address the conflict between federal and state laws. The state needs to step up and find a creative proposal to bank this well-established industry. Assemblymember Jim Wood, D-Healdsburg, has introduced AB 1549 to create a credit union within the SBOE. Keep an eye on this next year when the Legislature reconvenes.

California needs to provide leadership to resolve this legal roadblock. What this state adopts will force the federal government into action, let's hope they get it right.





Tech Buses Devour Muni Bus Stops

Tech Buses (Cont. from p. 1)

for their employees are responsible for approximately 131 shuttle busses in the City each weekday, they make at least 273 runs each day that involve approximately 9,030 boardings daily for an estimated 4,105 individual employees. But the BLA noted the actual number of shuttles, trips, boardings, and passengers is probably much higher, since not all shuttle providers have been willing to share this information with public agencies. I have to wonder if tech companies are taking Airbnb's lead in refusing to provide data to San Francisco city officials.

The 45-foot long regional shuttle buses — which typically have 52 to 81 seats, and weigh between 54,000 pounds to 62,000 pounds (27 tons to 31 tons) when fully loaded — cause more wear and tear on our roadways than even 18-wheel semi-trailers. A typical bus (whether Muni's or private shuttles) place 7,774 times more stress per trip on our roadways than an SUV places. This means street damage caused by one, large shuttle bus driving along a hypothetical one-mile-long lane is equivalent to 4,700 passenger vehicles driving over the same lane. Clearly, heavier shuttle buses contribute to faster roadway deterioration, and shorten the lifetime of roadways.

No comprehensive formal study has been performed on the impact of shuttles on pedestrian and bicycle safety or Muni passengers with disabilities, including Muni passengers forced to board in traffic lanes when shuttle buses are parked in red zones, shuttles parking in bike lanes, shuttles not yielding to pedestrians, or blocking traffic lanes for ambulances or fire engines, among other issues.

The BLA report noted a February 2014 analysis by graduate students at UC-Berkeley found that 40% of shuttle riders would move closer to their Peninsula jobs if shuttle bus services were discontinued, suggesting the shuttle buses have a major impact on the demand for San Francisco's housing stock and the displacement caused by our housing crisis. Another Berkeley graduate student determined that rental prices within a half-mile radius of Goggle shuttle stops increased at a faster rate than rental prices elsewhere.

Between June 2014 and July 2015, the number of shuttle bus stop events in San Francisco increased by 46%, from 2,032 to 2,978. According to the SFMTA, there are now 203 shuttles in operation in San Francisco, traveling 118 routes.

CEQA Appeal Rejected by Board of Supervisors

After the Planning Department and SFMTA decided to exempt the shuttle bus program from California's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) processes to determine impacts and explore potential mitigation measures, an appeal was filed with San Francisco's Board of Supervisors.

On February 21, 2014 Tim Redmond published an article on 48Hills.org indicating that a group of activists had filed the appeal with the Board of Supervisors regarding MTA's proposal to allow tech buses to use Muni's red zones, with a \$1 per stop fee. Redmond's article explored the "wink-and-nod policy" the MTA had with "tech firms to allow them — and nobody else — to break the law [against stopping in Muni red zones] with impunity."

Redmond's article reported that Bauer's vice president for sales and marketing, Michael Watson, e-mailed Muni in January 2014 asking that bus-zone tickets be dismissed because "as I assume you know, we have had a 'handshake agreement' [a.k.a., 'wink-wink'] with SFMTA for many years that allowed [Bauer] to use the stops under a 'Muni first' condition."

Watson asked Muni's Shuttle Pilot Program manager Carli Paine in January 2014 how Bauer should go about getting future citations waived and a refund for citations it had already paid. Redmond reported Google goes beyond what Bauer is doing, since Google had hired Barbary Coast Consulting, a prominent lobbying firm [founded by San Francisco political operative and registered lobbyist Alex Clemens in 2003], to try to get the City and the Police Department to stop issuing parking tickets to Bauer.

The Board of Supervisors foolishly and ironically rejected the CEQA appeal on April 1, 2014, April Fool's day, in an 8-to-2 vote to approve an 18-month pilot project trial period, with only Supervisors David Campos and John Avalos against it. **The Superior Court Lawsuit for Full CEQA Review**

Within a month following the Board of Supervisors denial of the appeal, the Coalition for Fair, Legal, and Environmental Transit filed a lawsuit in San Francisco Superior Court on May 1, 2014 in Superior Court, case #CPF-14513627 (Coalition for Fair, Legal and Environmental Transit vs. CCSF).

City Attorney Dennis Herrera and his underlings must know that our Charter City cannot adopt a change like this in conflict with State law. Obviously, the Shuttle project will contribute to pedestrian and bicyclist safety risks, since the intensity of transit services is a well-known, established spatial risk factor for pedestrian injuries. One San Francisco pedestrian has died from a shuttle bus accident.

The lawsuit also notes that substantial numbers of people will face displacement, since rents are rising much faster near private stops than elsewhere in the City. Even the BLA report in March 2014 noted commuter shuttle buses are impacting displacement, and causing rents to soar.

On-Going Media Coverage

On June 2, 2014, Adrian Covert published an Op-Ed in the *San Francisco Examiner*, wrongly asserting that a group of activists who had filed a lawsuit in Superior Court calling for a full environmental impact report on the 18-month trial period were "anti-tech."

A few weeks later, Susan Vaughan, who is among the "Coalition for Fair, Legal, and Environmental Transit," that filed the lawsuit against Apple, Inc. and others, including the SFMTA named as a real party in interest, published a rebuttal to Covert's nonsense in the *Examiner* on June 18, 2014. She noted the plaintiffs in the lawsuit are not "anti-tech." Vaughan, also chair of the San Francisco Group of the San Francisco Bay Chapter Sierra Club, wrote:

"For one thing, it is illegal for the private shuttles to pull into public bus stops. Case law also indicates that you cannot base a California Environmental Quality Act pilot program on an illegal activity. Furthermore, there is a fair argument

— the CEQA standard for triggering an environmental impact report — that the shuttles pose environmental impacts that must be assessed and mitigated."

On March 5, 2015, Vaughan and Bruce Oka — a former member of the MTA Board of Directors until Mayor Ed Lee unceremoniously removed him from MTA's board without any prior notice or thanks for Oka's many years of service — published a joint Op-Ed in the *Examiner*, noting Muni drivers will tell you shuttle vehicles pull illegally into public bus stops, obstructing service for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

The pair noted illegal stops in Muni bus zones could also be hindering Muni's on-time performance. They also noted that people who are disabled are excluded from the private shuttles, because the charter buses rarely have wheelchair lifts. Have you ever seen a wheelchair-user board a Bauer or Google bus?

On June 19, 2015, Dan Raile published a report on Pando.com that the list of defendants named in the shuttle bus lawsuit filed in May 2014 by the Coalition for Fair, Legal, and Environmental Transit had been narrowed to the City, the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Department, the SFMTA and Mayor Ed Lee, since Apple, Genentech, Google, and various shuttle operator companies had successfully argued in the court that they should be removed from the case entirely, and were. Raile noted the pilot program is set to end on January 31, 2016, at which point it may be made a permanent program.

On September 9, 2015 Joe Fitzgerald-Rodriguez reported in the *San Francisco Examiner* that filings from SFMTA show the commuter shuttle pilot program is now approaching permanency.

In response to public records requests Vaughan had placed, e-mail records received reveal City planners repeatedly referred to making the program permanent on a "tight schedule," and that in an effort of adhere to the tight schedule, some data of the program were made on an "educated guess" basis by planners, rather than relying on real data. SFMTA claimed it disagreed that the program was being "fast tracked."

Questionable Preliminary SFMTA "Evaluation Report"

On October 5, 2015 SFMTA released a premature Evaluation Report regarding the shuttle program trial period. The 18-month program is scheduled to run through the end of January 2016, so why a premature and preliminary report was released four months early is not known, but some suspect the report is designed to squash the lawsuit in Superior Court demanding a full EIR before the shuttle program is made permanent.

There's plenty of questionable data in it. The report claims on page 25 that of 28 shuttles an hour using the Muni bus stop at Van Ness and California Street, that there were **zero** blocked Muni buses per hour. That claim is either an outright lie, or simply false information, as I can attest from my daily experience. If it's not an outright lie, I have to wonder if this is one of many "educated guesses" Muni admitted to making in their e-mails.

SFMTA's new report appears to directly contradict the BLA and Harvey Rose's initial estimates in 2014.

The discrepancy between the two reports may be due to the methodology for data collection Muni used during the pilot study: Muni admits field data collection efforts during the trial period observed shuttle and Muni activity at just 20 shuttle zone locations — 10 in the morning

(between 6:45 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.) and 10 in the evening (between 5:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.) during commute periods.

Muni claimed on page 18 of the report to have used this small sample size to develop a "reasonable sample of total stop-events made by commuter shuttles on a typical day." From there, Muni staff may have extrapolated on an "educated guess" basis.

Not too surprisingly, on October 8, just three days after the preliminary Evaluation Report was published, the lawyer representing the Mayor and other City defendants in the lawsuit — Deputy City Attorney Audrey Pearson — presented the Evaluation Report to the Superior Court during her deposition. The report shows that 12 months into the pilot project, the City still doesn't have real-time data flowing from shuttle operators, shuttle operators have failed to provide data regularly and accurately, and SFMTA staff may have naively expected a more concerted compliance from by the shuttle providers to ensure data was submitted properly. It's hard to justify a project's exemption from CEQA when more than a year into the program, data is still not being collected. Maybe that's why SFMTA staff continue to make "educated guesses" about the shuttle program's adverse impacts.

Take Action: Attend Meetings, Lodge Complaints, and Take Photos!

Part of the preliminary Evaluation Report released on October 5 included data concerning the number and types of complaints MTA has received regarding the shuttle bus program. The report pooh-poohed the small number of complaints filed so far. You can file complaints by either calling the MTA, or calling the City's 3-1-1 call center.

Photos of the tech shuttle buses blocking Muni access to the red zone bus stops are especially, and urgently, needed. If you can help document blocking of bus stops, the more photos that can be submitted showing passengers boarding and disembarking Muni buses in the street, while the tech shuttles are idling in bus zones, the better! It would be helpful to note the date, time, and location of any such photos.

Two important meetings are scheduled before the SFMTA:

A hearing on MTA's preliminary Evaluation Report will be heard by SFMTA's CAC (Community Advisory Committee) on November 5 at 5:30 p.m. in the 7th floor conference room at One South Van Ness.

The permanent shuttle bus program will reportedly be on the agenda for the SFMTA Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 400 at City Hall.

The trial of the lawsuit filed by the Coalition for Fair, Legal, and Environmental Transit is scheduled for November 13, 2015 in Department 608 at 9:00 a.m. in the Courthouse at McAllister and Polk streets.

The City's pretense that "Google buses" are **not** contributing to the displacement of residents and the loss of affordable housing in San Francisco, and are **not** worsening pedestrian and Muni passenger safety, needs to stop! That's magical thinking on the part of the City, albeit untrue.

An expanded version of this article will appear on www.stopLHHdownsize.com.

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-James Madison Freedom of Information Award in the Advocacy category. Feedback: monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.

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Coyotes (Cont. from p. 1)

to associate food with parks. The coyotes live in the parks and will not be fooled. Last, the RPD has posted warning signs in Stern Grove.

Coyotes do not have state protection, but hunting is not allowed in City parks, and City policy specifies co-existence with wildlife. Certainly the Stern Grove coyotes should be relocated for their own benefit. If their predation of cats and dogs goes unpunished, the coyotes' behavior will certainly become more aggressive.

The City's lack of policies on coyotes is ridiculous and calculated. No matter how many pets are killed or attacked, it is completely the pet owners' fault/responsibility for not being vigilant. It is solely up to the pet owner to modify the coyote's behavior.

It goes unsaid, but most convenient for the RPD, California Department of Fish and Game (CDFW), and Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), that all three departments really don't want dogs running off-leash. In fact, they would prefer to not even have dogs on public property. All three agencies appear to want the coyotes more than they want the dogs.

Sally Stephens, the Chair of San Francisco Dog Owners Group (SFDOG) explains,

"There is a huge demand for off-leash access in San Francisco. Given the threats to the legal off-leash dog play areas (DPAs) -- the GGNRA wants to cut access to 90% of current areas, RPD's Natural Areas Program will cut access in city parks by 15% -- losing any legal off-leash space because of coyotes is not acceptable. But it may not be necessary because we can co-exist."

Sadly, a September 24 Facebook post by Peggy Lo reported:

"Today, we lost our seven pound Malti-poo, Buster. We were at Stern Grove and a Coyote was waiting for him behind a tree approximately 20 feet above the walking path across from the lake. Buster heard a noise, and began to run up the hill and then we heard him squeal. My husband (Johnny Lo) chased the Coyote who had the dog in his mouth. A second Coyote appeared. Johnny searched for two hours but couldn't find our Buster."

Sarah Lo continued:

"We feel responsible for not having him on a leash but he usually walks right next to us. We are heartbroken and don't want anyone else to go through this. The coyotes are getting too comfortable and are so close to the path, it might not have mattered if Buster was on a leash. We will contact Fish and Game tomorrow but it seems futile since the City,

and Park and Rec, don't have any will to relocate the animals or exterminate them, if necessary."

A group called Project Coyote has started giving seminars to pet owners called "Coyote Hazing Field Training." Instructor Gina Farr gives the following advice: Make eye contact with the coyote, keep your dog on a leash, wave your arms over your head, continue to shout "go away coyote," carry a noisemaker, and advance on the coyote.

Project Coyote's objective is to modify pet owners' behavior so that they can co-exist with coyotes.

Sara Roma, another dog owner was recently quoted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*:

"We're now at the point where it isn't going to help to say 'Go away coyote.' I am not convinced that given what has already taken place that calling on park users to haze the coyotes will necessarily give us a definitive solution."

Suzanne Dumont, a local resident and dog owner who attended an October 22nd meeting on coyotes commented:

"Children's safety and the well-used BBQ pits at Stern Grove right near a coyote den were never discussed by the RPD representatives, who seemed not to have done their homework. Much to the frustration of those attending the meeting, a RPD manager told the crowd it was illegal to haze coyotes in city parks, oblivious to the Rec & Park sponsored Hazing Training that took place at Stern Grove just a few weeks ago."

The City, RPD, and California Fish and Wildlife Department (CDFW) have no plan for the growing coyote problem. CDFW spokesman Kevin Hugman states:

"It's not a coyote problem. It's a people problem, and ... dogs and cats are going to be taken. We have calls all the time of dogs taken right off their leash. It's going to happen, so you have to be the best dog owner you can be."

The coyotes that live among us have become domesticated and do not fear people. With no predators and no restrictions on their behavior, coyotes are free to do whatever they want, without any punishment.

In San Francisco, if a dog attacks another animal, health code Section 41.5(ii) sets out the process:

"In the event that a biting dog causes severe injuries to a person or other animal the Director of Public Health may recommend that such dog be declared a menace to the public health and safety and he shall so inform the District Attorney by a written complaint. The District Attorney shall then bring said written complaint to the Municipal Court for a finding that the dog is a menace to the public health and safety. If the Court finds the dog to be a menace to the public health and safety, the owner thereof shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph (c) of this Section, and



James Corrigan, Forest Hill Extension, snapped this picture of a Coyote at Vazquez and Laguna Honda Blvd. on July 4, 2015.

"We feel responsible for not having him on a leash but he usually walks right next to us. We are heartbroken and don't want anyone else to go through this.

upon order of the Court, the Animal Control Officer or a Police Officer shall impound, hold, and humanely destroy the dog in accordance with the procedures of paragraph (c) of this Section."

Why are dogs who attack dogs, cats, and people considered a menace, and coyotes are not?

For the politically-correct citizens of San Francisco, the thought of punishing a coyote for its behavior is too harsh. We cannot stand the thought of hurting a "wild animal," yet many of us think nothing of walking by a homeless person, Starbucks in hand.

Certainly the Stern Grove coyotes should be relocated for their own benefit. If their predation of cats and dogs goes unpunished, the coyotes' behavior will certainly become more aggressive and they will become overpopulated.

The coyote is a medium-sized member of the dog family that includes wolves and foxes. With pointed ears, a slender muzzle, and a drooping bushy tail, the coyote often resembles a German shepherd or collie. Coyotes are usually a grayish brown with reddish tinges behind the ears and around the face, but coloration can vary from a silver-gray to black. The tail usually has a black tip. Eyes are yellow, rather than brown like many domestic dogs. Most adult coyotes weigh between 25 and 35 pounds, with a few larger animals weighing up to 42 pounds.

Although coyotes are predators, they are also

Cont. p. 8

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Money Matters By Brandon Miller



Take a Day to Organize Your Finances

If you're like most people, you periodically set aside time to clean out your home, garage or closets. It's equally as important to take time to organize your finances. The following checklist can help you get started:

Cancel unused credit cards — If you're paying an annual fee on a credit card or other account that you don't use, you're throwing money away. So, cash in any rewards points you have earned and then cancel the account. Of course, take into consideration whether canceling the card will negatively affect your credit rating.

When it comes to credit, you may also earn more rewards if you stick to one or two cards.

Cancel unused memberships — If a new at-home exercise routine has replaced your trips to the health club or gym, or if you're no longer playing golf at a course you belong to, consider canceling your membership. Even if you have to pay a fee, you may quickly recoup your financial losses.

Consolidate accounts — You don't necessarily need multiple checking, savings, investment, retirement or credit card accounts, yet many people maintain them — often because it takes extra time up-front to consolidate. Maintaining numerous accounts can increase the amount of time you spend opening mail, reconciling statements, keeping records and paying bills. When it comes to credit, you may also earn more rewards if you stick to one or two cards.

Negotiate better deals with your service providers — Whether it's your cable, Internet or waste removal company, chances are you can negotiate a better rate. Simply take time to get quotes from competitors. If they are offering lower rates for the same services, go back to your service provider to see if they will price match to keep your business. If not, switch to someone new.

Update your financial records — Make a list of your current financial accounts, contacts and passwords. Keep this information in a safe and secure place.

Update your beneficiary designations — Your beneficiary designations override your will. So, if you've experienced a marriage, divorce, birth, adoption or death, make sure your beneficiary designations reflect your wishes.

Review your home and auto insurance coverage — Make sure your coverage reflects your present needs. Also, price shop the same coverage with different providers. Whether you switch to a new provider or use this information to strike a deal with your current provider, you could save a significant amount.

Simplify your investments — If tracking various investments is stressing you out, consider asset allocation or managed accounts. Attempting to manage and track too many investment accounts can require a great deal of time and, if you're not on top of the details, can prevent you making the best investment choices for your portfolio. Consider working with a financial professional to help you organize your finances and help you determine what kinds of investments might work best for you.

Consult your financial advisor for more ideas and strategies on ways you can save.

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.

Larson Playground to Reopen Saturday Nov. 21st

After many months of planning, the Larson Playground is scheduled for opening on November 21st with an opening celebration to take place from 11–1 pm at Vicente Street, between 19th and 20th Ave.

After a design contract snafu early this spring the team managing the project concluded that the artist originally selected to design and fabricate the plane structure could not meet the specifications in the contract. As a result, GameTime, a well-known playground equipment manufacturer is working to design something as similar as possible to what was originally envisioned — a plane structure with a climbing net that is safe, fun and exciting for children to experience.



Photo Credit: The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

Coyotes (Cont. from p. 7)

opportunistic feeders and shift their diets to take advantage of the most available prey. Coyotes are generally scavengers and predators of small prey, but occasionally shift to large prey. They prefer small rodents, and human garbage. Interestingly, about 25% of their diet consists of fruit.

San Francisco's coyote population — estimated to be between 100 and 200 coyotes — are no more wild animals than San Francisco's raccoons are wild. These animals are living in residential areas and have adapted to surviving in them. The next time your garbage can is knocked over by a "wild raccoon," think about what a raccoon in the woods would be eating.

San Francisco's coyote problem began in 2007. Coyotes started colonizing the Presidio. The coyote population has spread rapidly throughout City's open spaces. DNA testing on some of the original coyotes in the City showed that they came from Marin County. With no known predators and ample amounts of food, the coyote population in San Francisco appears to be growing rapidly.

There have been only two fatal coyote attacks recorded in modern history: In 1981, a three-year-old girl in Southern California died of injuries sustained from a coyote attack, and most recently in 2009, a 19-year-old female was fatally attacked by a group of eastern coyotes while hiking alone in Cape Breton Highlands National Park, Nova Scotia.

According to a recent report on coyote diseases developed by the Urban Coyote Ecology and Management Research Team in Cook County, Illinois:

"Wildlife disease is of great importance to the health and safety of humans and

domestic animals because 73% of emerging and re-emerging pathogens are known to be zoonotic (transmitted from animals to people). There is increasing evidence suggesting that urbanization and resultant land-use changes contribute to the emergence of wildlife diseases through multiple mechanisms, with consequences for human and pet health."

Through serological testing (using blood to identify disease), the Cook County Coyote Project looked primarily for the presence of these diseases in the coyote population: Canine parvo, canine distemper, toxoplasmosis, Lyme, and Leptospirosis. These diseases are important to study because they can affect people or pets. While these diseases may occur in fairly high rates in coyotes, they are rarely transmitted to people or pets because of low pathogen survival rates in the environment, or because the coyote may be a "dead-end" host. Coyotes are also known carriers of mange, heartworm, and rabies.

The Cook County Urban Coyote Research Team study located accounts of 142 coyote attack incidents, resulting in 159 human victims. These attacks took place over a wide geographic area, including 14 states in the U.S. and four provinces in Canada. Most attacks, however, occurred in the western U.S., with almost half of the attacks occurring in California and another large portion (14%) occurring in Arizona.

San Francisco's coyote population is getting out of hand. It is time for citizens to contact their district Board of Supervisors representative to develop a workable plan to protect people and their pets from coyotes.

George Wooding, Midtown Terrace Homeowners Association

Leases (Cont. from p. 1)

owners, property managers and all other real estate professionals. It is so important that the Chronicle's article "New tenants' rights allowed to become law" appeared on the bottom of the fourth page in small print in the October 10, 2015 Bay Area Section. Shame on you.

The article reported, "Earlier in the week, it looked like the mayor, a former tenants' rights lawyer, might veto the legislation. While allowing it to become a law, Lee wrote to the Board of Supervisors that he was troubled by a provision allowing tenants to take on more roommates than their lease allows. Tenants still could not take on more than allowed by the city's fire code." It further noted, "Lee also criticized how the legislation was drafted, saying the process didn't take into account the concerns of the property owners." He was so concerned that he looked the other way and let it pass.

Keep in mind this is the same Ed Lee who stated in an interview on November 17, 2013 with the New York Times, "I used to brag that I can hold up an eviction — even if the landlord had legal rights, I could hold it up for a year."

As you read in many newspapers such as the Chronicle, the District 3 Supervisory

race will determine the balance of power on the Board of Supervisors. If the current District 3 Supervisor Julie Christensen, appointed by Mayor Lee, wins, then moderates maintain control. But if former Supervisor Aaron Peskin wins, then the progressives, including our District 7 Supervisor, will control the Board.

The good news is, our District 7 Supervisor voted against this legislation. The bad news is he is still part of the progressive vote which primarily votes against the voice of our neighborhood. For example, he voted against an increase in police as the neighborhood wanted. You are the voice of the neighborhood Mr. Yee, so speak on behalf of District 7, not on behalf of Supervisors Mar, Kim, Campos and Avalos.

The provision to allow tenants to add roommates at will is bad legislation which doesn't take into account the property owners, property managers, or the effect on other tenants in the buildings. Not to mention it is illegal if there is a written lease agreement.

For a group of educated legislators, as a whole, you look really dumb on this one.

John Farrell Broker/Realtor® — Farrell Real Estate, MBA, Former City Assistant Assessor-Budget and Special Projects, 5th Generation San Franciscan, Westside resident

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November 2015

On the lookout for El Nino...with the promise of a strong El Nino, we are all keeping our fingers crossed for heavy doses of rain and a good snowpack in the Sierra this year. The effort led by SPUR to plan for a changing San Francisco coastline could face a major test this winter if predictions of heavy El-Nino-driven storms come to pass. That would protect threatened beach and strengthening the previous big storm seasons, the others, called revetments, to armor the beach and can even act — dismayed environmentalists the ire of the California Coastal Commission. With a plan in place, the city is looking to weather the coming winter with less intrusive measures, and is now seeking the commission's approval on possible emergency measures in advance.

When last year's El Nino fizzled, Ocean Beach and other eroding coastlines were (generally) spared the kind of punishing coastal storms that drove dramatic erosion in 1997 and 2010. This year, a strong El Nino has developed, and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration is putting the chances of it persisting through this winter at greater than 95 percent. Press has generally focused on the high likelihood of a badly-needed wet winter in California, as well as the potential for flooding and mudslides, as the parched and fire-ravaged state is subjected to downpours. Less has been written about the potential for coastal erosion that can accompany winter storms. At Ocean Beach, the prospect of a stormy winter puts coastal managers on notice as they work to enact the new, more adaptive approach recommended by the Ocean Beach Master Plan. The City of San Francisco has submitted a coastal development permit application to the California Coastal Commission for a series of softer coastal protection measures, including sand placement and sandbags, should winter storms result in rapid erosion. Both measures have been used before but have never been cleared in advance as a toolkit for adaptive action.

SPUR, the city, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Coastal Commission staff all agree that these softer measures are far preferable to the boulder revetments placed after previous storms. The goal is to prepare proactively instead of waiting until damage is occurring and then using an emergency permit, the kind of reactive approach that was typical a decade ago.

Unfortunately the existing revetments are not properly permitted, and without resolving that compliance issue, it's tough for the Coastal Commission to issue any permit to the city — even for actions it supports. The permit proposed for this winter tackles this issue by committing the city to a timetable for returning with a permit for a longer-term solution that was introduced in the Ocean Beach Master Plan, but is still several years from being fully engineered. City and Coastal Commission staff members are busy preparing the permit for review at the commission's November meeting. If all goes well, this permit would put the city and the Coastal Commission on a new, collaborative footing, ready to tackle the challenge of a changing coast in time for this year's storm events.

(Be sure to read Steve Lawrence's opinion piece on the coming storm and the outlook for major damage on page 5.)

Lemonade of West Portal - as reported last month as an "interest," it has been confirmed that Los Angeles-based Lemonade, a fast casual chain that, in the words of its marketing department, is "part lemonade stand, part grade-school cafeteria," is going to set up shop in the former La Boulange space at 16 West Portal Avenue. In fact, a community meeting was held on November 5th at the West Portal Playground Community Room about the proposal. (Too late for this issue.)



Manor Coffee Shop... the venerated Manor Coffee Shop has been sold to new ownership and is slated to be closed in the near future for renovation and transformation into "The Manor." The new owners, The Manor Social Club LLC, have applied for the transfer of the alcoholic beverage license and will be undertaking the remodel in the near future.



tion and transformation into "The Manor." The new owners, The Manor Social Club LLC, have applied for the transfer of the alcoholic beverage license and will be undertaking the remodel in the near future.

Paradise Pizza and Pasta... we have also heard that Sal Alioto, the long-time proprietor of Paradise Pizza and Pasta, is retiring and is entertaining multiple offers for the site. The pizzas are wonderful, and claim to have "the best crust in the city...and possible the world," but the pasta is simply the best outside of Rome... Get there while you can!

Soon to open... there is good news on the horizon, as long time favorite Vin Debut is moving ever closer to its reopening after the devastating fire. And it also looks like the long-drawn-out remodel and renovation of Joe's of Westlake is in the home stretch as the new date for re-opening is set for January 2016.

Playground redux... SF Rec and Parks has reached out to many people and groups in trying to "re-vision and re-imagine" the parks across the City. One of the conceptual portfolios is from NatureScapes and shows the broad scope of multi stages of play areas that can be incorporated into a re-visioned and revitalized West Portal Playground. Hopefully, everyone can come together to make this design (or a similar one) a reality. Take a look at the layout and it demonstrates how "something for everyone" can be realized in the park: www.westportalplayground.com/



Do you have any information, news, or other tidbits that you would like to share with the neighborhood? Just drop a line to me at: mitch@westsideobserver.com



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TARAVAL STATION Crime Report

Fall is here and we are all approaching the time of year when everything seems to get really busy. Once Halloween is over, we all shift very quickly into the holidays. During this time, please take the time to plan out your days. I know we can all sometimes find ourselves in a rush and this can cause serious traffic collisions within our community. We ask that you please slow down when driving and pedestrians please travel safely through our district as well. With the holidays, comes a high increase of package deliveries to your homes. We also see a high increase of criminals who will steal your packages off your front steps. We recommend when ordering on line, that you request a signature when packages are being delivered. Also be good neighbors. Talk to your neighbors if you are expecting a package. Let them be your eyes when you are not home to receive a package. It is common that a criminal we follow a block or two behind delivery trucks and pick up the packages after they are delivered and left unattended. If you witness this type of criminal activity, call 911.

When utilizing 911 or the non emergency 415-553-0123, please take the time to describe to the call taker the incident you are experiencing. The call taker has not experienced the incident you are calling about and the more information you can give, the better the officers of Taraval Station can serve you. In cases when an incident may change and has become more urgent, call again. For lower priority calls, i.e noise complaints, homeless concerns, if you feel there has not been a response by officers in a reasonable amount of time, call again. Finally, when making a complaint for a quality of life issue, if you wish to speak with an officer, let the call taker know. This will ensure the responding officers make contact with you before clearing the call for service. Finally, if you have an ongoing complaint or concern within your neighborhood, please contact Sgt Kevin Mannix or myself. This will allow us to evaluate the situation and develop an enforcement plan specific to you concern.

Recently, the City and County of San Francisco launched the SF311 Mobile App. “The SF311 Mobile app lets you submit a number of service requests quickly and on the go where ever you happen to be in San Francisco.”

The SF311 app lets you submit the following types of service request:

- Abandoned Vehicles • Graffiti
- Illegal Postings
- Street and Sidewalk cleaning
- Streetlight Repair
- Blocked Sidewalk or Space
- Damaged Public Property
- Litter Receptacles
- Sign Repair • Street/Sidewalk Defects
- Tree Maintenance.

To get started download the SF311 app to your smart phone and click the “New Request” icon.

Last month Taraval Station experienced significant member movement during promotions of Sergeants and Lieutenants, as well as a number of officers. We are thankful to have increased our officer staffing by 10 percent and also increased our number of sergeants assigned to Taraval Station. With this increase in staffing came an increase in the number of officers deployed to work at night. We also gained



Sgt Ryan Crosby to lead our TNT unit. I am very pleased to welcome the below members to Taraval Station:

Lt. Martha Juarez, Lt. Richard Goss, Lt. Ed Delcarlo, Sgt. Mark Yesitis, Sgt. Wagganmann, Sgt. Ryan Crosby, Sgt. Rene Nielsen, Sgt. Eric Lau, Sgt. Oscar Barcena, Off. Sean Cody, Off. Dennis Hoang, Off. Eric Berreneche, Off. Lars Nelson, Off. Anthony Gomez, Off. Nathan Lim, Off. Ricardo Ramirez

In closing, as always, please join in the conversation and my monthly Captain’s Community Meeting which takes place on the third Wednesday of each month.
NOTE: Not all crimes are reported in the weekly reports—this is a truncated version.

Tuesday 9/1
Battery – Cited
2:41 pm |100 West Portal Ave
A victim stated that she was walking down the street when suddenly a suspect hit her once behind the head and continued walking. The victim pointed out to where the suspect was. The suspect was cited.

Thursday 10/1
Battery
7:17 am |15th Ave & Kirkham St
A victim was walking on the steps of 15th Ave, when the suspect, who was working out, told the victim to move over. When his dog yelped in pain an argument ensued and the suspect grabbed the victim by his neck. The suspect eventually ran up the stairs and fled the scene.
Suspect – white male :: 55-60 years :: 5’10” tall :: 200 lbs :: brown hair
Exhibiting a weapon – No Drivers License Issued – Methamphetamine Offense
9:42 pm | 1200 19th Ave
A victim said that he was getting gas when the suspect backed into his vehicle. The victim caught up to the suspect’s vehicle and knocked on the passengers window. The passenger then took out a gun. When officers were called, they located the vehicle, its driver, and the suspect. It was only a BB gun, but a computer check revealed the driver had no license but did have methamphetamine. both the driver and passenger were cited.

Wednesday 10/7
Robbery – Possession of Stolen Property
12:20 pm | 800 Head St
A vehicle pulled up next to a victim walking on the street. The suspect got out of the passenger seat and pointed a knife at him. When officers broadcast a description, officers from the Bayview Police station detained matching suspects, located the victims’ property. The suspect was arrested. One suspect is still outstanding.

Friday 10/9
Assault
11:59 pm | 46th Ave & Judah St
An employee said that the suspect walked into the store while yelling nonsense. The victim escorted the suspect out of the store. Suspect tried to punch the victim but missed. Victim punched the suspect in self-defense, who picked the victim up and threw him, head first, on to the ground.
Suspect – white male :: 35-45 years :: 6’00” tall :: brown hair.

Sunday 10/11
Robbery – Vandalism
5:39 pm | 1200 9th Ave
The victim was trying to park in his garage but a suspect blocked him. After a heated argument the victim started to film the suspect, who grabbed the phone and threw

it on the ground before driving away.
Suspect – Hispanic male :: 20-25 years :: 5’9” tall :: 190 lbs :: brown hair
Burglary – Shooting
8:04 am | 100 Broad St
Officers responded to a report of a shooting. Officers arrived on scene and determined a business had been burglarized and a shooting had occurred.

Monday 10/12
Attempted Robbery
2:59 am | 1600 Lincoln Way
The intoxicated victim told officers he refused to comply with suspects who wanted his car and was struck by a suspect’s bb gun. Then all the suspects fled into the park.

Tuesday 10/13
Robbery
5:18 am | 1200 Ocean Avenue
An employee said the suspect came from the back door, pointed a gun at the victim and demanded money. The victim gave the suspect some money and the suspect exited the store to an unknown location.
Suspect – Black male :: 30-40 years :: 6’1” tall :: 180 lbs :: black hair

Burglary – Opiates – Arrested
8:36 pm | 1200 21st Ave
The victims were taking the garbage out and noticed the suspect inside their storage area. They saw that many of the storage area’s cabinet doors were standing open and numerous items strewn on the floor. Searching the suspect, officers found opiates on his person. He was arrested.

Sunday 10/18
Theft – Battery
9:35 pm | 19th Ave & Winston Dr
The victim felt her cell phone being tugged at. As she turned around she noticed the suspect who said she tripped—wasn’t trying to steal the phone. The victim took a photo of the suspect. The suspect punched the victim a several times in the head.

Monday 10/19
Carrying Concealed Weapons – Lost Property – Probation Violation
12:50 pm | 100 Majestic Ave
A witness observed a possible auto burglary. The responding officer recognized the suspect from previous police contacts inside a white Honda

that was identified as stolen. The suspect carried items used for burglary or stealing cars and a concealed steak knife. The suspect was arrested.

Friday 10/23
Indecent Exposure
12:53 PM | Holloway Ave
An officer was flagged down by a party who identified an indecent exposor. The suspect who denied any act of Indecent Exposure. A computer check later revealed previous counts of Indecent Exposure violations. The officer then took the suspect under arrest.

Monday 10/26
Possession for Sale – Arrest
4:35 PM | 147 Victoria St
An officer was on patrol in the area when he observed the rear light lamp of the vehicle next to him was out. The officer conducted a traffic stop and a computer check revealed that the driver was on probation. After a search of the individual and the vehicle; the officer found what was later determined to be narcotics which seemed to be intended for sale. **The driver was arrested and taken into custody.**

Thursday 10/29
Robbery
12:38 pm |200 Winston Dr
Officers responded to a report of a robbery. The victim told the officers that she had just deposited the business’ money when the suspect came towards her. The suspect pointed a pocket knife at her, grabbed the deposit bag and ran away.
Suspect – Black male :: 29 – 31 years :: 5’4” tall :: 150 lbs :: black hair.

Friday 10/30
Robbery
11:49 am | Buckingham Way & 19th Ave
The victim said that he had his wallet out and was trying to put a card in when the suspect came from behind, pushed him onto the ground and stole the wallet.
More reports: taraval.org



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<i>Driscoll’s Valencia St. Serra Mortuary, SF</i>	415 970-8801	<i>FD1665</i>
<i>Sullivan’s Funeral Home, SF</i>	415 621-4567	<i>FD 228</i>



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**Next Taraval Community Meeting: Wednesday, Nov 18, 2015 7 pm – 8 pm
at Taraval Station Community Room / 2345 24th Ave SF**

Lake Merced Remediation (Cont. from p. 1)

the high levels of contamination led to lead shot being banned for use, replace by steel shot. Eventually, the City of San Francisco moved to close the facility and negotiated a remediation plan to scrub the site of contaminants. When lease expired on April 8, 2015, the site was closed as a shooting range and the cleanup process was started. On October 21, the SF Public Utilities Commission and Recreation and Parks Department held a joint meeting to provide the community with an update on the site construction and remediation at the location previously occupied by the Pacific Rod and Gun Club, and discuss potential uses for the site.

The site is under the oversight of the San Francisco

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Currently the removal of contaminated soils and back-filling of excavated areas with clean fill material is underway and will entail the excavation and appropriate offsite disposal of up to 46,500 cubic yards of waste and is expected to take up to 15 months. The remediation project was assigned in June 2013, when the RWQCB issued Cleanup Order No. R2-2013-0023, requiring the remediation/cleanup of upland soils and additional investigation of in-lake sediments. The SFPUC completed the required environmental review on the soil Remedial Action Plan and adopted the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration in the fall of 2014. Following a bid and award process, the construction contract was awarded to the ERRG Inc. Site remediation work began in May 2015 and is targeted to be completed by February 2016. As of October 2015, cleanup work at this site is approximately 70% complete. Due to the discovery of additional buried contaminated soils, clay target debris onsite and in excess of previously anticipated amounts, excavations in some portions of the site have extended up to 11.5 feet below the surface. The site remediation is expected to achieve the highest cleanup standards to minimize the risk of human exposure to elevated concentrations of the contaminants



in compliance with the SFPUC Remedial Action Plan, which was approved by the RWQCB in October 2014. When it is completed unrestricted use of the site would be allowed. No additional ongoing monitoring and maintenance would be required and the potential for the leaching of contaminants into Lake Merced will be reduced. A Request for Proposals (RFP) is expected to be issued in early 2016 by the Recreation and Park Department to help determine future uses for the site. All proposals for future uses are subject to Environmental Review and must meet a recreational purpose and protect the watershed. A final lease will be subject to approval by the Recreation and Park Department and potentially the Board of Supervisors. For more information about Lake Merced West and to keep apprised of updates, please visit bit.ly/1MrBanH.



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November CALENDAR

CIRQUE DU SOLIEL / ODYSSEO • THU NOV 19 - SUN DEC 13 • AT&T PARK

Odysseo - a veritable revolution in live performance—touring under the world's largest big top since fall 2011.

The world's largest touring production, Odysseo marries the equestrian arts, stage arts and high-tech theatrical effects at never-before-seen levels. It is a feast for the eyes that succeeds in delivering the spectacular with soul. Audiences of all ages are rediscovering with emotions the century-old relationship between human and horse. **TICKETS - Tickets are priced from \$44.50 to \$154.50 + tax now on sale online at www.cavalialia.net or by calling 1-866-999-8111.**

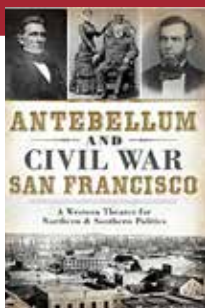


POLITICS IN CIVIL WAR SAN FRANCISCO • TUE NOV 24 • 7PM

In the late 1840s, San Francisco's population skyrocketed from 800 to 30,000 mainly tent-dwellers. Theaters abounded, attracting John Wilkes Booth's famous family. Southerners increased as war threatened, bringing daily dramas, duels, political rivalries and heated disagreements over slavery, statehood, and the coming war.

Monika Trobitts' illustrated talk will discuss the lingering presence in San Francisco of the antebellum and Civil War eras. She is the author of *Antebellum and Civil War San Francisco* and will have books available for sale.

St. Philip's Church • 725 Diamond Street (Elizabeth Street / 24th Street)



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 | Get help setting up email accounts, word processing & basic computer related tasks. Most Tuesdays at this time. 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. deyoung.famsf.org/deyoung/fridays

FRIDAYS @ OFF THE GRID/FT. MASON

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

TUE • DE YOUNG FREE DAY

Tue Nov 3 | 9:30 am - 5:15 pm | Art from the 17th -20th centuries, and native Americas, Africa, & Pacific. 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive. Free first Tuesdays.

TUE • LEGION OF HONOR FREE DAY

Tue Nov 3 | 9:30 am - 5:15 pm | 4000 years of ancient and European art in the exquisite Beaux-Arts building in an unforgettable setting overlooking Golden Gate Bridge. 100 34th Ave. Free first Tues.

WED • HOLIDAY ICE RINK

Wed Nov 4 - Jan 3 | 10 am - 9:30 pm | The Holiday Ice Rink at Embarcadero Center opens each winter for nine weeks. Skate under the sun and stars along the waterfront at the largest outdoor rink in SF. Justin Herman Plaza, 4 Embarcadero Center/Ferry Bldg., \$11, Skate rental \$5. embarcaderocenter.com.

THU • AUTHOR DAVID TALBOT

Thu Nov 5 | 7 pm | The Devil's Chessboard: Allen Dulles, the CIA, and the Rise of America's Secret Government from the founder of Salon and the author of the NY Times bestseller *Season of the Witch*. Allen Dulles, who transformed the CIA into the most powerful and secretive colossus in Washington reveals the rise of the security state and the battle for America's soul. Bookshop West Portal, 80 W Portal Ave.

WED • GWPNA MEETING

Wed Nov 4 | 6:30 pm | Greater West Portal Neighborhood Assn meetings are open to all members and to the public, first Wed each Month. Playground Clubhouse, 131 Lenox Way. GWPNA.org.

THU • AUTHOR SIDNEY CHAN

Thu Nov 4 | 6:30 pm | The author talks about his new

PANAMA PACIFIC EXPO: FILM AND THE FAIR • TUE NOV 10 • 7:30 PM

Film Historian Miguel Pendás

The 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition was one of the earliest events of its kind to be immortalized on film. The PPIE also took place at a time when the movie business was thriving in the Bay Area. Miguel Pendás will show us newsreel footage of the PPIE showing nighttime light shows, daredevil airborne acrobatics, and celebrities and officials making their pilgrimages to the grand event to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal and the rebirth of the city that had suffered the greatest urban catastrophe in the nation's history. We'll see San Francisco Mayor James Rolph taking comedy stars Fatty Arbuckle and Mabel Normand on a tour of the fabulous new City Hall then under construction, as well as Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp filming in Golden Gate Park. Film historian Miguel Pendás will provide anecdotes with the film clips and will test the audience's knowledge of PPIE history with trivia questions.

Milton Marks Auditorium • 455 Golden Gate Avenue

Miguel Pendás is the historian of the San Francisco International Film Festival and a member of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society's board of directors.



Fatty Arbuckle, James Rolph, Mabel Normand

book, *Lord of Ten Thousand Years* on at the West Portal Branch Library. Light refreshments and book signing follows. 190 Lenox

SAT • 39TH ANNUAL SF OPEN STUDIOS

Sat-Sun Nov 7-8 | 11 am-6 pm | Last chance to visit artists in their studios during this citywide event, which is the oldest & largest open studios event in the country. Free, Various sites -861-9838, artspan.org

TUE • AUTHOR JULIE CHECKOWAY

Tue Nov 10 | 7 pm | The inspirational, untold story of impoverished children who transformed themselves into world-class swimmers in 1937. A schoolteacher on the island of Maui challenges a group of poverty-stricken kids to swim upstream against the current of their circumstance. The goal? To become Olympians. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave

SUN • VETERAN'S DAY PARADE

Sun Nov 8 | 11 am | Cessation of hostilities for WWI went into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. For that reason, Nov. 11, 1918, was the end of "the war to end all wars." The parade will be held on Sunday at Fisherman's Wharf, on Jefferson St., North Point to Leavenworth.

FRI-SUN • 15TH SF GREEN EXPO

Sat - Sun Nov 13-15 | 12 - 6 pm | Interested in living a more sustainable and healthier life? Wide selection of products and services to work green, play green and live green - from food, fashion and health, etc., live music and entertainment. Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave, Daly City.

SAT • CHINESE SHRIMP CAMPS

Sat Nov 14 | Chinese Whispers: Bay Chronicles: at one time a thriving industry with 26 camps ringing SF Bay, the Chinese shrimp fishery disappeared by the mid-twentieth century. The buried past and the concrete present poetically evoke a chapter of oppression and erasure in the historic Chinese immigrant experience in America. Fort Mason, Bldg E

SUN • 6TH ANNUAL CHOCOLATE SALON

Sun Nov 15 | 10 am - 5 pm | Discover and taste the finest chocolatiers and confectioners products. 6th annual Fall Chocolate Salon. Gourmet & premium chocolate in one of the world's great culinary metropolitan areas Fort Mason Center: The General's Residence. Info-Tickets www.fallchocolatesalon.com

WED • WRITE AN HISTORICAL NOVEL

Wed Nov 18 | 7 pm | Spinning Facts into Fiction: Writing the Historical Novel. Where does the writer draw the line between truth and story? Patricia Bracewell, *Shadow on the Crown* and *The Price of Blood* explains. Merced Branch Library 155 Winston (at 19th).

WED • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

Wed Nov 18 | 7 pm | Meet with Captain Denise Flaherty. 3rd Wed of the month. Taraval Station Community Room / 2345 24th Ave. 759-3100.

WED • MARCH OF THE PENGUINS

Wed Nov 18 | 6:30 pm | Follow an emperor penguin couple through a year of travel over ice documents their brave struggle to survive, as well as the close emotional bonds between the penguin families. West Portal Library - 190 Lenox Way- Popcorn!

THU • URBAN BICYCLING 101

Thu Nov 19 | 6:30 pm | The basics of biking in SF in partnership with Bike Share, a 1-hour course on rules

of the road, route planning and check out a Bike Share bike. Get \$10 off Bike Share membership, and a free helmet (while supplies last). No bike or experience - OK. Register: sfbike.org/edu. 1720 Market St.

SAT • INTERNATIONAL GAME DAY

Sat Nov 21 | 3 pm | Celebrati & play old-fashioned board games. Merced Branch, 155 Winston Dr.

SAT • INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW

Sat Nov 21 - Sun Nov 29 | 10 am - 9 pm | The 58th Annual Auto Show will offer an opportunity to see the new 2016 model vehicles from the world's major manufacturers, all in one place. Moscone Convention Center, Howard at 3rd St. \$10. sfautoshow.com

'WED • TIS THE SEASON FOR SCIENCE

Wed Nov 25 - Jan 3 | From fast-growing antlers to dynamic diets and amazing migrations, reindeer adapt and thrive in Arctic environments. Live reindeer, indoor snow flurries, the Snowman & more programs & performances. Academy of Sciences, 55 Music Concourse - GGPark 379-8000. calacademy.org.

WED • SCROOGE IN LOVE!

Nov 25 - Dec 13 | 42nd St. Moon presents a world premier. What happens after A Christmas Carol? A year later, Ebenezer Scrooge's life takes a turn for the romantic - finding his lost love, Belle. Info & Tickets: 255-8207 / 42ndstmoon.org

FRI-SUN • WOMEN'S CRAFTS FAIR

Fri - Sun Nov 27-29 | 10 am - 5 pm | The 37th Annual Celebration of Craftswomen benefits The Women's Building, a multi-cultural community center serving women and girls. Over 150-juried artists. A unique opportunity to find gorgeous, one-of-a-kind holiday gifts, fine crafts, and contemporary art. Fort Mason Center, \$10/\$8 seniors. Kids Free. Info: 415-350-3729 or craftswomen@gmail.com

MON • CENTRAL COUNCIL

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

MON • S.H.A.R.P / DR. JOHN MCQUAID

Mon Nov 30 | 7 pm | Thanks to researcher-practitioners like John McQuaid, PhD., medical science understands and treats depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) better than ever. He co-authored a guide for laypersons: *Peaceful Mind: Using Mindfulness and Cognitive Behavioral Psychology to Overcome Depression*. 1736 9th Ave (Moraga / Noriega).

THU • GLIDE HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

Thu Dec 3 | 5:30/7 pm Concert | LOVE MATTERS, the GLIDE Ensemble and Change Band, Valerie Simpson, Justin Vivian Bond, Youth Speaks and other special guest appearances. Proceeds to Mo's Kitchen and Glide programs. Pre-concert/intermission hors d'oeuvres and libations from finest SF restaurants and beverage companies. Warfield Theater, 982 Market St.

SUN • ASIAN ART MUSEUM FREE DAY

Sun Dec 6 | 10 am-5 pm | Every first Sunday is free at the Asian Art Museum (save \$12) -17,000 artworks spanning 6 thousand years. 200 Larkin St.

Local event? editor@westsideobserver.com
Priority: Westside Events



A Bit of Ol' England

Victorian London returns to the Cow Palace: Great Dickens Christmas Fair

Are you ready for some tea and crumpets? Or perhaps something a bit livelier? Get ready, as a beloved Bay Area holiday tradition, the **Great Dickens Christmas Fair & Victorian Holiday Party** returns to San Francisco's Cow Palace (2600 Geneva Ave.) on **November 21** and **continues for five weekends through Sunday, December 20, 2015**, including the Friday after Thanksgiving from 10 AM to 7 PM.

The **Great Dickens Christmas Fair** magically transforms over three acres of exhibition halls into the marvelous rollicking world of Charles Dickens' London. Lively calls of street vendors ring out above the crowd and mingle with the voices of holiday carolers; tempting aromas of roasted chestnuts and hearty foods fill the air; enticing shops overflow with one-of-a-kind Christmas gifts.

Originally conceived and created by Ron & Phyllis Patterson, the fair is now produced by **Kevin and Leslie Patterson** and **Red Barn Productions**, with this next generation continuing the family tradition of theatrical excellence, historical authenticity, and environmental theater. And now the third generation of Pattersons, Kevin and Leslie's sons **Andrew and Michael**, work together running Mr. Punch's Pasta, Maclaren's Cookies, and inventive games and rides. A true family affair!

Fair goers can wander the lanes of Victorian London, as the glow of twilight settles upon the city, the scent of pine boughs & freshly baked scones floats in the air, and the music and sounds of holiday merrymaking accompany your stroll. From highborn royalty to denizens of the street, the Fair teems with over 700 colorful & iconic characters from the imagination of Charles Dickens and the pages of history!

"Our cast members are essentially the moving parts of our magical time machine," says Kevin Patterson, who, with his wife Leslie Patterson, co-produces the Fair. "It will sweep you, heart and soul, into a tradition of lively historical celebration that brings laughter, dance and delight to all who enter its gates."

Seven stages will offer all types of entertainment, ranging from the family-friendly to the decidedly daring. Proper ladies and gentlemen may choose to enjoy an opera gala, children's shows, melodramas, music and dance. The more raffish might prefer to carouse with can-can dancers and salty sailors, or join the bawdy chorus at the infamous Broadside Music Hall Revue.

Eating and drinking was a staple of the Victorian times, and so it is again today! Bring your appetite when you visit The Great

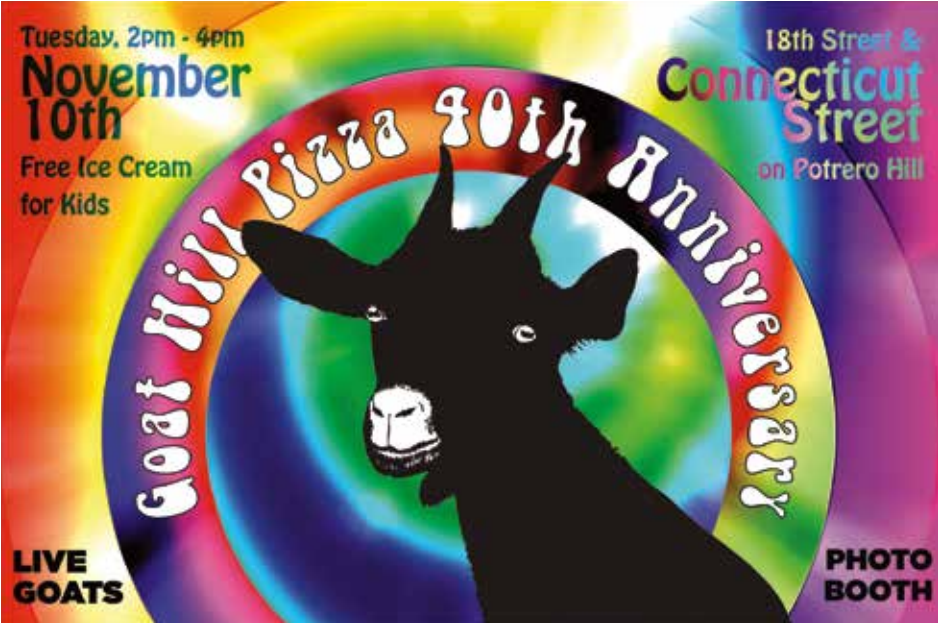
Dickens Christmas Fair—there is ever so much to eat and drink. Feast on delicious foods from the British Empire and beyond, from scrumptious savories to tempting handcrafted sweets. Then visit one of the five traditional pubs to enjoy draft ales, wine, and champagne, or wrap your hands around a hot buttered rum, Irish coffee, or hot toddy. You can also, enjoy a traditional English high tea with scones and finger sandwiches—anytime is teatime at the Dickens Fair!

The Great Dickens Christmas Fair offers special activities, games, and holiday entertainment opportunities for everyone. Younger guests will enjoy meeting Old Father Christmas; riding on a hand-powered Adventure Carousel; cheering and jeering at Punch & Judy puppet shows; marveling at the Mother Goose Parade, and taking tea with Alice of Wonderland. As well, there's the chance to meet characters from *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*—and even to encounter the great Charles Dickens himself! In addition, youngsters can create their very own Fairy Houses, try their hands at being "printer's devils" with an actual 1860s printing press, learn to tie intricate knots, sing sea chanteys, have their hair French-braided, or create their own holiday gifts such as rolled beeswax candles and hand-painted ceramic ornaments.

Find the perfect holiday gift and revel in a wonderland of one-of-a-kind artisan treasures. Over 100 beautiful shops will offer fine crafts, romantic clothing and accessories, ceramics, handsome drinkware, dazzling jewelry, toys, antiquarian books, and more.

The adult patrons will love to gather in the Bohemian absinthe bar for lively conversation, or at Mad Sal's Dockside Ale House to join in the singing of rowdy favorites and watch high-kicking dancers take to the stage for the wicked "Can-Can Bijou." The immensely popular and scandalous "**Saucy French Postcard Tableaux Revue**" returns to the Victoria & Albert Bijou Music Hall—with an all-new risqué exhibition of beauty unveiled! This immensely popular Twilight-Hour entertainment is sure to beguile and delight the adults in the audience. **Admission to this**

Cont. p. 14



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Now At the Movies • By Don Lee Miller

BRIDGE OF SPIES

Back to the Cold War era of the Berlin Wall! Brooklyn attorney James Donovan: Tom Hanks is chosen by the CIA to negotiate a prisoner exchange with East Berlin. The US will return Soviet spy Rudolf Abel: Mark Rylance (brilliant support which is receiving Oscar buzz), recently sentenced to 45 years, for US pilot Francis Gary Powers: Austin Stowell, who was taking photos from 70,000 feet above Russian defenses, and an unlucky student trapped in East Berlin. (Powers' interesting story is underdeveloped.) Donovan cleverly keeps slipping in just one more little conciliation. His wife Mary: Amy Ryan supports him, even if she's not clear on his latest involvement. Attorney Thomas Watters Jr.: Alan Alda pops in and out as Donovan knocks one out of the ball park with his defense of Abel. ACT aficionados will recognize Judge Byers: Dakin Matthews. It's Spielberg's best directing in years! The screenplay by Matt Chapman with brothers Joel and Ethan Coen tightly follows Donovan and his various encounters. Definitely one of the top pictures this year! Some violence. Brief strong profanity.

BURNT

As Adam: Bradley Cooper tackles familiar territory; a decade ago he played a no-holds barred, volatile celebrity chef on the short-lived TV series *Kitchen Confidential* based on the memoir by celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain.

In *Burnt*, Cooper plays a no-holds barred, volatile celebrity chef attempting a comeback. Directed by John Wells and written by Steven Knight (*The Hundred-Foot Walk*) and Michael Kalesniko, they strive to examine Adam's egomaniacal a-hole psyche, while showing his meticulous dedication, obsession for his trade. Starting in New Orleans, after being driven from Paris where he earned a couple of Michelin stars before becoming an *enfant terrible*, Adam is shucking oysters in a fish house. He convinces a restaurant in an upscale London hotel, run by an old pal Tony: Daniel Bruhl, to hire him as manager. He manipulates single mom-chef Helene: Sienna Miller (reteaming from *American Sniper*) with pulling all-nighters. Adam flings food and tools while yelling and screaming. Dr. Rosshilde: Emma Thompson, his therapist, delves in to get to his demons and gives him weekly drug tests. Adam best relates to Helene's daughter Lily: Lexi Benbow-Hart. *Burnt* gets distracted by petty subplots, ignoring the opportunity to examine the psychological aspects and the control problems of the kitchen. Beautiful photography and exceptional editing score well. Profanity throughout.

PAN

Who knew that Peter Pan needed a prequel?

Or that it could be so badly done? The major spark of life is Blackbeard: Hugh Jackman in an oxygen-supplying performance when it's needed most. His life force is pixie dust. Wendy: Saoirse Ronan forgot everything she was exposed to on

The Grand Budapest Hotel by director Wes Anderson who supplied SR with the pink cupcake role (or is it roll?) of Agatha. Wendy follows Hook: handsome two-fisted young Garrett Hedlund around with a love-sick countenance. The colorful sets and costumes provide the background for the story (forced through the blender!) with dialog, e.g., "So the boy is lost?" "Yes, he is a lost boy." Peter: Levi Miller is a refreshing youth, full of wonderment. The musical highlight for most will be Nirvana's dorky *Smells Like Teen Spirit* sung by a chorus of dozens of boy slaves. Only 111 minutes, it seemed like an hour longer. Fantasy action violence. Some thematic material. Profanity.

SICARIO

FBI agents, Kate: Emily Blunt, her partner Reggie: Daniel Kaluuya, and a SWAT team enter a Chandler, Arizona home and are sickened by a stench in the walls stuffed with tens of bodies, all with a plastic bag over the head. Rushing outside, they throw up. After two new men join the team, mysterious Alejandro: Benicio Del Toro and Matt: Josh Brolin, Kate is also invited. Expecting to find hostages of Diaz, the Mexican cartel leader, when they invade Juarez, Mexico, the bags of money they unwrap is bound by pink-blue wristbands. That night, some agents go to a western dance bar. Kate goes to the motel room of a guy she's just met. He's strangling her when Alejandro saves the dame. Kate starts smoking again when she discovers she and Reggie are being used to acquire the drugs. Her boss Dave: Victor Garber shows up in a few scenes. That's enough storyline of this action-filled drama with a high body count. Director Denis Villeneuve keeps the pace taut and fast in Taylor Sheridan's screenplay. Strong violence. Grisly images. Profanity.

STEVE JOBS

The first of several proposed biopics and books about Steve Jobs hits the screen simply titled *Steve Jobs*. Both sides of his persona are presented by Oscar-winning director Danny Boyle (*Slumdog Millionaire*) as a dual-sided portrait, both narcissist bully to his employees and brilliant mind behind major inventions and innovations to the business world. Aaron Sorkin has adapted Walter Isaacson's 2011 biography, concentrating on product launches of three that are considered his most important: the Macintosh in 1984, the calamitous NeXT computer in 1988, and, lastly, the first iMac in 1998, this time returning to the company he co-founded with his friend from youth, Steve Wozniak: Seth Rogen. Boyle indulges his playful nature, using different film stocks (16mm, 35mm, and digital) to further entice the audience. Jobs: Michael Fassbinder (a sure Oscar nod) takes on the same six subords: his confidante/marketing exec Joanna: Kate Winslet (without glamour), Wozniak, weary of being No. Two, the chief programmer Andy: Michael Stuhlbarg, former Apple chairman John: Jeff Daniels, Jobs' ex Chrisann: Katherine Waterston, whose

At the Theater • Flora Lynn Isaacson

Into The Woods

Under Kim Bromley’s brilliant direction, the Novato Theater Company branches out with the Tony Award-Winning James Lapine’s excellent book and Stephen Sondheim’s exciting music and lyrics with *Into The Woods*. This musical interweaves the plots of several of *The Grimms’ Fairy Tales*, and follows them to explore the consequences of the characters’ wishes and quests. The main characters are taken from *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Jack in the Beanstalk*, *Rapunzel*, and *Cinderella*. This is tied together by an original story involving a childless couple (the Baker and his wife), their quest to begin a family, and their interactions with other story-book characters during their journey.

Kim Bromley guides her large and talented cast of 16 actors deftly through the overlapping story line of *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Jack in the Beanstalk*, *Rapunzel*, *Cinderella* and the childless couple, who must undo a witch’s curse.

Each player has shining moments. Exceptional performances come from Daniela Innocenti Beem as the Witch who undergoes an amazing transformation into a beautiful woman; Alison Peltz as the Baker’s Wife; Julianne Thompson Bretan as Cinderella; Susan Zelinsky as Cinderella’s Step-Mother; Johnny DeBernard, as the narrator and the mysterious man; Robert Nelson, as Jack; and Anthony Martinez as the Wolf and Cinderella’s Prince.

Musical direction by Andrew Klein, from his deep understanding of Sondheim’s music and the characters, gives this production a depth almost never seen by Director Kim Bromley with this material. Associate Musical Director Debra Chambliss also made a significant contribution to the interpretation of the score. The evocative set design by David Shirk, and innovative costumes by Janice Deneau and Marie Meier create just the right tone of both whimsy and mystery. Alison Peltz (the Baker’s Wife) was also responsible for the exceptional choreography, which made it possible to appreciate every word of the cast’s nimble delivery of Sondheim’s crisp lyrics and Andrew Klein’s outstanding music direction of the rich score.

Into The Woods continues through November 22nd at Novato Theater Company Playhouse, 5420 Nave Drive, Suite C, Novato 94949.

Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. Order tickets online up to two hours before performance times at www.NovatoTheaterCompany.org (print out your ticket from the confirmation email). If you are unable to print out your ticket, your name will be on a list at the Box Office at your scheduled time. The Box Office opens at 7:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday; and at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. Info: 415-883-4498

You may purchase your ticket at the Box Office by cash or check on the date you attend. Credit cards are not accepted at the Box Office.

Coming up next at Novato Theater Company will be *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare, adapted and directed by Clay David from Jan 29 – Feb 21.

Movies (Cont. from p. 13)

daughter Lisa (at 5, 9 and 19) gains prominence with Jobs’ acknowledgment of his paternity. Don’t expect full enlightenment, be happy with great entertainment. Profanity.

TRUTH

Dan Rather: Robert Redford reports the scoop in 2004 on George W. Bush’s rushed acceptance into the Texas Air National Guard to keep him from serving in the Korean War in 1954. There was immediate criticism of the authenticity of the source documents. As the fiery producer of *60 Minutes II*, Mary Mapes: Cate Blanchett turns in her second Oscar-worthy performance this year (the other being as *Carol*). The large cast includes: Mike Smith: Topher Grace, Lt. Col. Roger Charles: Dennis Quaid, Lucy: Elisabeth Moss, Lt. Col. Bill Burkett: Stacy Keach, Andrew: Bruce Greenwood, and Lawrence: Durmot Mulroney. Rather and Mapes are both fired by CBS. Her book is the basis for this film. Profanity. A brief nude photo.

Dickens Fair (Cont. from p. 13)

attraction is free, but you must request tickets upon arrival at the Fair; they go quickly. Guests must be 18 or older.

The Great Dickens Christmas Fair has been directed and produced each year by the Patterson family, for more than three decades creators and producers of the world’s original Renaissance Faires at Black Point Forest in Marin County and in Southern California. Ticketing: General Admission tickets (age 13 and up) are available at the Box Office for \$25 for the

first 3 weekends and \$30 for the final 2 weekends; at \$12 for Children ages 5-12; and wee ones under 5 are free. Tickets are fully transferable.

A Tip from Scrooge: Print-at-home discount tickets are available at www.dickensfair.com Season Passes are available online for \$90 (a \$295 value!); and Twilight Special tickets (good after 3:00 pm daily, available only at the Box Office) are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children ages 5-12. Group rates available online for 20-29; for parties of 30 or more, info:

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Interview

Dr. David Watts

A New SF Based Mystery!

By Linda Ayres-Frederick



It isn’t often that you get a page turner that will tempt you to keep reading even while sitting in traffic--not since Shogun first came out.

If you like to read mysteries (and who doesn’t?), local writer Dr. David Watts has so succeeded in his first venture in the medical mystery genre, it makes you want him to write a sequel right now and get them both on screen as soon as possible. The *Lucifer Connection* is set in San Francisco during the 1967 Summer of Love. And suddenly there’s a murder so ingenious it just looks like an unfortunate outcome of a common malady. And that’s how Jack Barnasone, an unsuspecting doctor, gets caught in a web of evil that threatens to take him down before he can solve the mystery.

Protagonist Barnasone makes use of Watts’ own medical background with all the truth and wisdom of that experience. *The Lucifer Connection* is not just historically accurate, but rich in poetic detail that takes the reader back to the era without sticky nostalgia as it twists and turns like the best scenes in a great noir film. It’s such a blast to know the streets Watts describes in rich visceral detail, and walk down them with the variety of strongly drawn characters that you are hoping and wondering will escape their dangerous challenges. In the interview below Dr. Watts talks about the writing of the novel and other life experiences.

LAF: What inspired you to write this novel?

David Watts: I had a little chunk of time in an impossible schedule one August and I decided if I ever was going to write a novel it would be now. I asked myself what would excite me most and came up with 1. A mystery novel, 2. San Francisco, 3. The Summer of Love and 4. an outside the box, renegade doctor who gets caught up in a web of evil and has to work his way out. It had all the elements I love most and, I thought, might be appealing to a wide audience. I pictured it mentally as a visual experience filled with images that would be suitable for the big screen just in case it was successful enough. After I finished the first draft in a six-week all-out effort, I just couldn’t stop tinkering. I knew there was a pretty good story hidden in there somewhere and I had to tease it out, had to get it to the point where I, myself, would want sit down and read it. That’s the acid test right there.

LAF: What do you love most about writing?

DW: Discovery. You learn so, so, much. Here’s the deal. You pick a setting and a time you love and put characters into it that are quirky, interesting, full of surprises, have strengths and weaknesses and then. . . you throw something really awful at them. Only by forcing them out of their comfort zone do you learn what makes them tick, what makes humans in general tick. That’s when you learn about human nature, its resourcefulness, its flexibility, its ability to fail and start over to innovate something that works for the situation at hand.

I got to know my characters really, really well. I even felt I could ask them what they would do in this situation they were facing and get a pretty good answer.

LAF: When did you first begin writing?

DW: Writing seriously? In the mid-eighties. I was going through some tough times and instinctively thought that writing would teach me what was affecting me so. It was poetry I started with and although I wrote mostly schlock that no one would dare publish, the process worked to give me more insight, more understanding. I was hooked. I moved from poetry (which I still consider my epicenter in the writing world) to radio commentary, to short stories, to essays (which I never in this world thought I would write), and then finally to a novel. The writing eventually did get better. Sharon Olds says if you love poetry long enough it will love you back.

LAF: What do you consider to be your strengths as a writer?

DW: Insight. I’ve done the dues work: writing courses at San Francisco State, attendance at the Squaw Valley

Community of Writers. Teaching poetry to students at the Fromm Institute. Etc. Etc. When I first started writing I thought I could just sit down and spew out a good piece of literature. How naïve. I was missing the tools. So I went back and got some. What the craft allows (if I’m right about this) is not to think so much about that aspect of the process but to concentrate on peeling away the disguise, the cloaking we all wear and revealing the mysterious movements of the human spirit. It’s all about people. Getting into what makes them so interesting and getting it on the page.

LAF: What of your professional accomplishments are you most proud of?

DW: Balance. Maybe it’s a bit bizarre but I feel so centered being able to have a really great practice of medicine and at the same time play music in a first-rate orchestra, teach poetry to an enthusiastic audience, invent a medical instrument for gastroenterologists, and raise a really wonderful family. Upon that wide base of experience I am able to see more clearly into the kinds of interesting personalities that make for good literature. As you may suspect, this knowledge also works well in the efforts to help patients find their personal path to health and healing.

LAF: What have been the most challenging experiences you’ve had in your career?

DW: Trusting my instincts. Being able to move my career from straight academic medicine to clinical medicine where my talents were better suited. Being unafraid to be a television and radio host while I kept my practice going, all things which raised a few eyebrows but by then I knew that to “follow your bliss” meant having the courage to take a few chances.

LAF: When you run out of ideas, if ever, where do you seek inspiration?

DW: Never run out. Stafford said he never got writer’s block, he just lowered his standards. What that means to me is to shut down the “editor,” the internal, critical voice that says, “you can’t do that.” We are all creative but most of us keep it under wraps. For me, if things get slow I just move into a nonlinear zone in my head and let surface whatever will. That’s when creativity of the kind that seems wild but strangely authentic comes to the page. That’s the best stuff.

LAF: Who would you say has helped you the most professionally? Personally?

DW: My wife, Joan. Without her unflinching support I would be confined as a clam.

LAF: Who are your heroes?

DW: The ones who keep writing good work without much recognition.

LAF: If you were to give advice to someone wanting to be a writer today what words of encouragement and/or warning would you offer him/her?

DW: Get your craft in place. Then reach deep into yourself for the hard truths. Have the courage to say what you think and keep pushing when the resistance to your work inevitably comes up.

LAF: If there were one thing you would want to be remembered for, what would that be?

DW: Adding a human touch to this complicated life we lead.

LAF: If you weren’t a writer/physician, what

Second Thoughts • By Jack Kaye



Making Lives Matter

There has been talk lately about making lives matter. Community members outside St. Louis rioted for more than four months when a young man was killed while attacking a police officer who had stopped him for committing a strong-arm robbery. The people were mad and showed their displeasure by looting and destroying local businesses. They began a campaign saying black lives matter.

So how do we make lives matter?
I think that it starts before the beginning - family planning. Today, half of all pregnancies in America are accidental and 40% of them are aborted. This is no way to make lives matter. Children should be planned by couples who are committed to each other and are willing and able to raise their children responsibly together.

Parents need to display positive role models for their children by living lives that reflect integrity and consideration - lives that matter. Parents are responsible for providing a clean, safe and nurturing environment, ensuring that each child gets the best education at school and at home. Any health issues that arise should be dealt with immediately and not allowed to worsen.

Society is also responsible for ensuring that our children get the education they need and deserve. Teachers should know their students' strengths and weaknesses, and students should have the help they need to get the very most out of their educational experience, which in turn will help them develop throughout their meaningful lives. Society is also needed to provide adequate and available medical coverage and facilities to prevent or deal with the onset of potentially serious conditions.

The idea introduced by the President to extend public education to community college, adding two years to the K-12 series, could be a great benefit. It would give students more applied knowledge and skills that could lead to meaningful careers which provide needed revenue for a comfortable life, and help make life matter for the individual and for all those affected by the graduate's work. This idea has been practiced in Europe for more than a century.

For those who want to go to a four year college, the extra two years of public school could also be used to take all the general education courses required by four year colleges. Students could then enter college as juniors with only two years until graduation, taking mainly courses for their major and minor, plus courses they take as electives. This would greatly reduce college costs, enable students to graduate sooner, and would probably enable more students to actually complete college.

Life matters when we know what our special talents are and can find ways to apply them for personal and public good. This helps us feel a part of our community, society, culture and world, not apart from it. People who feel a part of their environment don't riot to destroy it. They work to improve it.

The Jewish belief is that we were created in an unfinished, seemingly imperfect, world so that we could live our lives to heal the world (tikkun olam). This pursuit gives our lives meaning.

The challenge according to Eastern religion is to overcome the negative effects of past karma, what we experience as entropy, without creating more. So destroying lives and property to protest loss of life or property is to only prolong

and deepen the problem leading to the suffering by creating more disorder/ disorganization/ karma/ entropy. Rioting for months and destroying businesses does not make life matter. It makes life seem to have little or no meaning.

I believe that it also is important to raise our children with an accepted value system which includes being honest, con-

...the news media have a significant role to play in making our lives meaningful. We need to be told the whole story as clearly and concisely as possible without editorializing it, embellishing it, sensationalizing it, or leaving out important parts. Reports should be objective and be presented without emotion.

sidering the needs of others, being dependable, maintaining a clean and neat appearance, being non-violent, treating figures of authority with respect, and perhaps, most importantly, doing everything and treating everyone not only as a means, but also as an end.

Society has an obligation to provide a safe and just environment for all of its people. This includes ensuring that all police officers are well-trained in de-escalating potentially violent situations; that they refrain from targeting certain groups; and that they use deadly force rarely, and only as a last resort. A just environment includes efficiently and effectively enforcing laws, and prosecuting violations fairly and without bias.

I think that the news media have a significant role to play in making our lives meaningful. We need to be told the whole story as clearly and concisely as possible without editorializing it, embellishing it, sensationalizing it, or leaving out important parts. Reports should be objective and be presented without emotion. This kind of coverage would not only provide us with needed information about what is happening around us, but it also could provide us a model for viewing, understanding and describing our environment - our context. This would help us make life matter.

As adults, we can make our lives matter by being more concerned about being able to take pride in our efforts rather than in our ancestry, affiliation, or preferences. What we do is a better reflection of who we are than our names, group memberships, or labels.

Society has a role to play to ensure that there are enough jobs for people who need them, and that working people are paid a fair, living wage. Not earning enough to enjoy the fruits of our labor can make us question whether or how much our lives matter.

I think that life matters when we feel free to express ourselves, and also free to keep certain information to ourselves. Our private lives should remain private and not be exposed to invasion or exploitation. When we choose to express ourselves, we can do so thoughtfully and with consideration for the audience. Why waste words on someone who clearly does not care? Why say things that would hurt the listeners by making them feel inadequate? Why bear false witness only to make truth and life have less meaning?

If life is to matter, we need the individual, the family, and the community to take responsibility for its maintenance and refinement.

All lives matter as long as we each behave as though they do.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

Do you have a pinched nerve? We can help.

Dear friend,

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Many people are beginning to

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

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

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

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

Here is what some of your neighbors have said:

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

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

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

Now...Find out for yourself and benefit from an AMAZING OFFER- Look, It should not cost you an arm and a leg to correct your health. You are going to write a check to someone for your health expenses, you may as well write a lesser one for chiropractic. Anil know you're smart. You want to get to the cause of the problem, and not just cover it up with drugs. When you are one of the first 20 people to call and schedule a new patient exam (by August 15th) you will receive that entire exam for **\$37**. That's with a consultation with the doctor, examination and x-rays... the whole ball of wax, and there are no hidden fees. But call right away because we expect to be flooded with calls as this exam costs \$437. Again there are only 20 of these slots so don't miss out. I hope that there's no misunderstanding about the quality of care just because I have a lower exam fee. You'll get great care at a great fee. I just offer that low exam fee to help more people who need care.

My qualifications:

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

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

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

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

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



www.westsideobserver.com

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS PROPERTIES SOLD SINCE 9/1/15

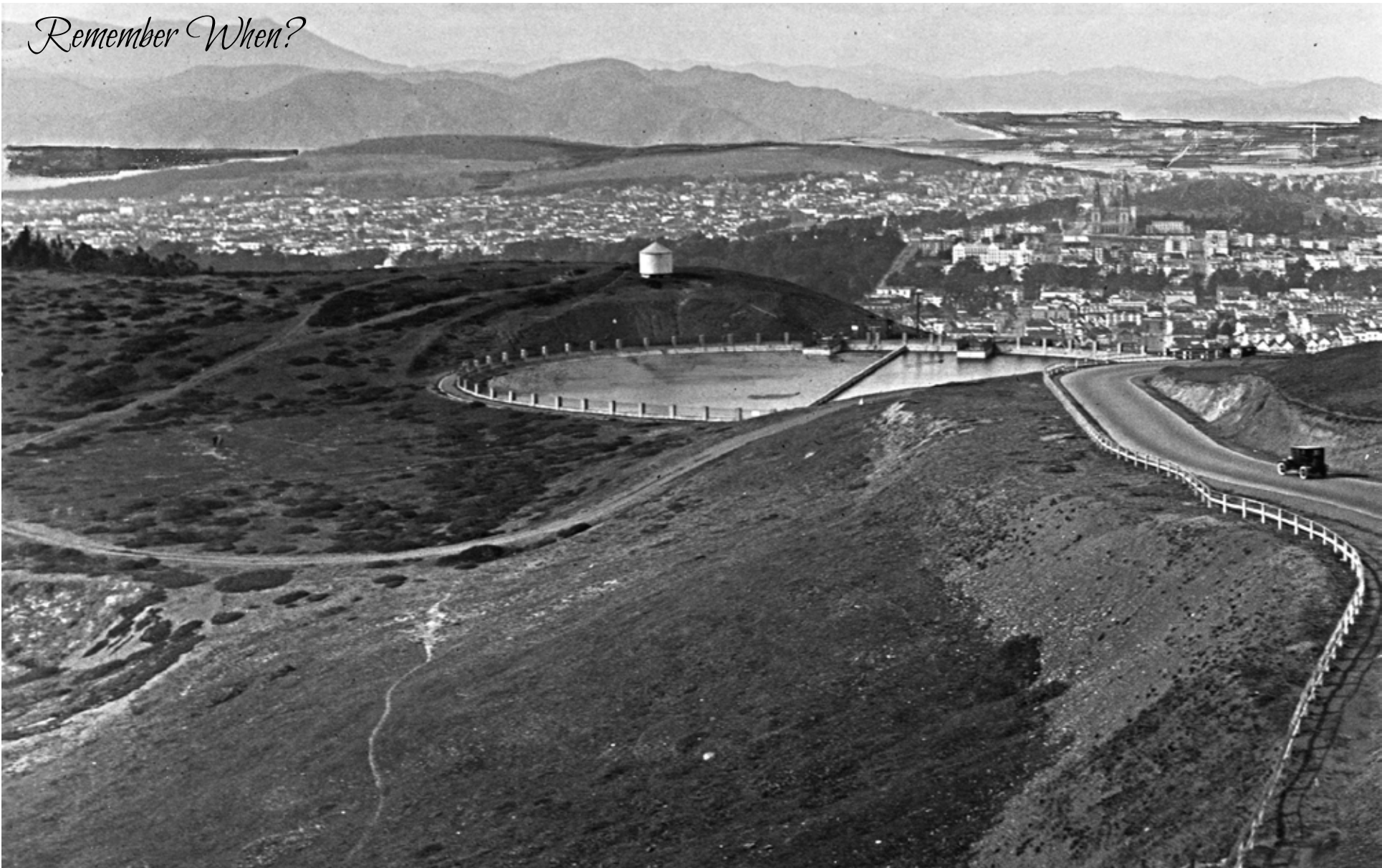
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ADDRESS	TYPE	BEDS	BATHS	PK	ASKING	SOLD	%OF ASKING
533 Wildwood Way	Westwood Park	2	1	2	699,000	875,000	125.1
220 San Marcos Ave	Forest Hill	4	4	2	2,295,000	2,338,000	101.87
129 Dellbrook Ave	Midtown Terrace	2	1	1	899,000	1,225,000	136.26
80 Terrace Dr	St. Francis Wood	4	3	1	2,198,000	2,830,000	128.75
661 Laguna Honda Blvd	Forest Hill Extensio	3	2	2	1,195,000	1,480,000	123.85
40 St Elmo Way	Monterey Heights	3	2.5	2	1,750,000	1,805,000	103.14
370 Valdez Ave	Westwood Highlands	3	2	1	1,500,000	1,500,000	100

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View from Twin Peaks,1924 Mar. 26. Permission: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

OPEN LATE



BRAIN FUD

A Rose By Any Other Name

All the words in Group A have something in common. The words in Group B share a different characteristic. Which word in Group B actually belongs in Group A?

GROUP A
Lily
Petunia
Rose
Veronica

GROUP B
Aster
Black-Eyed Susan
Chrysanthemum
Daffodil
Poppy
Yarrow

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

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.

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

We're On The Web!



westsideobserver.com

Aging: Glaucoma and its Effects on the Eyes

Part 2 – Detecting Glaucoma
By Anise Matteson

Eye examination and eye care are important for maintaining vision during the senior years for safe and fulfilling senior years. The Glaucoma Research Foundation recommends that “people at high-risk for glaucoma and those over age 60 receive an eye examination through dilated pupils every one to two years.” If not diagnosed timely and treated, glaucoma can lead to blindness.

For resources addressing eye exams and glaucoma specialists see Part 1.¹⁵

ROUTINE EYE EXAMS Tonometry [1]

Tonometry measures the pressure inside the eye [intraocular pressure (IOP)] by recording the resistance of the cornea to pressure (indentation).



Tonometry Diaton

Appalanation (Goldman) tonometry uses a small probe to gently flattened part of the cornea to measure eye pressure and a microscope (a slit lamp) to look at the eye. The pressure in the eye is measured by how much force is needed to flatten the cornea. USE: To measure IOP after a simple screening test (e.g., air-puff tonometry) finds an increased IOP.

Using **electronic indentation tonometry**, the rounded tip of a tool that looks like a pen is gently placed directly on the cornea. The IOP reading shows on a small computer panel.

Noncontact tonometry (pneumotonometry) is used in determining intraocular pressure by measuring the degree of indentation of the cornea produced by a puff of air.[2]

Reason for exam: 1) As part of a regular eye exam to check for increased IOP. 2) To check the treatment for glaucoma—to see if medicine is keeping the IOP below a certain target pressure set by your doctor.

Normal pressure range: 13-22 mm Hg.[3]

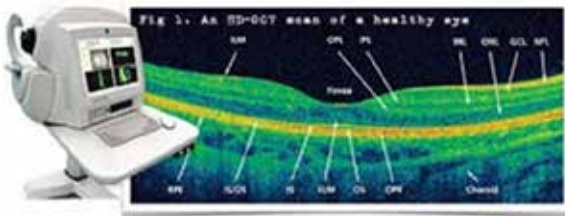
Ophthalmoscopy

Ophthalmoscopy is the examination of the interior of the eye.[4]

Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT)[5] is a non-invasive imaging test that uses light waves to take cross-section pictures of the retina.

The **retina** is a light-sensitive tissue lining the back of the eye.

OCT allows the ophthalmologist to map and measure the thickness of each of the retina's distinctive layers seen.



Cirrus Optical Coherence Tomography

Purpose: The measurements help with early detection, diagnosis and treatment guidance for retinal diseases and conditions.

Nerve Fiber Analyzer GDX[6] detects earlier changes and more sensitive objective changes. It is able to determine if you have glaucoma prior to your experiencing any visual loss.

Heidelberg Retinal Tomography[7] is a diagnostic procedure used for precise observation and documentation of the optic nerve head. A special laser is used to take 3-dimensional photographs of the optic nerve and surrounding retina. The image is captured by the laser focused on the surface of the optic nerve.

Optic nerve[8] is the nerve in the back of the eye.

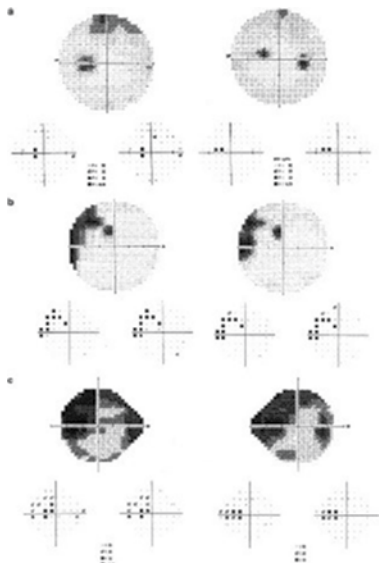
Cupping[9] is typical nerve damage that occurs in glaucoma. As the cells making up the nerve die, due at least in part to increased pressure inside the eye, they die and disappear. When a sufficient number of these cells are gone, they leave behind a small “cup” in the nerve.

What doctors look for when examining the optic nerve: 1) The presence and extent of the “cup.” 2) How deep. 3) How wide. USE: To compute (e.g., the area of the optic nerve, the volume of the cup, the area of the rim around the cup).

DIAGNOSTIC EXAMS

Perimetry Perimetry (campimetry) is a method of testing the perimeter of the visual field; Maps and qualifies the visual field, especially at the extreme periphery of the visual field; The systemic measurement of different light sensitivity in the visual field by the detection of the presence of test targets on a defined background.[10]

White-on-white perimetry[11] [automated perimetry] is the use of a white background and lights of incremental brightness. The computer



White-on-white Perimetry



Perimetry Machine



Heidelberg Retina Tomography II (HRT)

maps and calculates the patient's visual field.

Purpose: 1) Used in clinical practice, and in research trials where loss of visual field must be measured. 2) Used for blind spots.

Gonioscopy is an eye examination to look at the front part of the eye (anterior chamber) between the cornea and the iris to see if the drainage angle is open or closed. It also can find scarring or other damage to the drainage angle[12]—signs of abnormality (new blood vessels or torn places from past injury) causing secondary glaucoma.[13]

Pachymetry[14] **Corneal pachymetry** is the process of measuring the thickness of the cornea. It is an important test in the early detection of glaucoma.

Method: Ultrasonic or optical.

Ultrasound Technology: **Corneal Waveform**



Gonioscope

(CWF) [A-scan], an echogram scan that provides the ability to: more accurately measure the corneal thickness, measure changes in corneal thickness over time, and measure structures within the cornea.

Optical: Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT, e.g., Vistane) and online Optical Coherence Pachymetry (OCP), e.g., ORBSCAN).

Purpose: Used by glaucoma researchers and glaucoma specialists to better diagnose and detect early cases.

1,8. www.webmd.com/eye-health/tonometry

2,3,4. Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary

5. www.geteyesmart.org/eyesmart/diseases/optical-coherence-tomography.cfm

6. www.eyecentral.net/services/gdx-nerve-fiber-analyzer.html

7,9. <http://ophthalmology.med.ucb.ca/patient-care/ophthalmic-photography/heidelberg-retinal-tomography>

10, 11. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/visual_field_test

12. www.webmd.com/children/gonioscopy

13. www.hopkinsmedicine.org/wilmer/glaucoma_center_excellence/book/ch06s02.html

14. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corneal_pachymetry

15. westsideobserver.com/health.html#sep15

Next Month: Nonoperative Treatment

Anise Matteson is an elder care consultant, retired Registered Health Information Technician and writer of reference books for seniors. Information is for educational purposes. For specific questions and care, consult an ophthalmologist. mattesonecs@yahoo.com



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Education

Teachable Moments: Election Day

Bet you don't think of yourself as a civics teacher. **WRONG!** Parents and families are the first and BEST civics teachers. Ever.

I am not talking about lectures on the separation of powers among the judicial, legislative and executive branches.

I am talking about "teachable" moments."

- Election Day.
- Dinnertime discussions.
- Helping with a food drive.
- Volunteering at your school.
- Asking kids what they think.

With election-day moments away, here are some tips on how to use those moments. (Note: If you are reading this after Nov. 3, great news: You can start preparing NOW for 2016. **Discuss Election Issues With The Kids.**

We are not lacking for hot topics: For the younger kids, how about a discussion about paid parental leave? Should parents have paid time off to help take care of a new baby?

For the older kids, affordable housing, clean energy, neighborhood rentals...these all can be items to talk about.

Let your kids see the political mailers. Compare the messages with them. See what they think.

Share the voter pamphlet. Ask it they would like to help you do your homework for Election Day.

But don't limit the discussion to deciding how to vote. Encourage children to read about current events. Ask their opinions. Help them think through an issue. Even if they come to a different conclusion than you, this is good preparation for decisions they will have to make in school and life.

Take Your Kids With You To Vote.

Kids are more involved if you are involved. If you are eligible to vote, taking kids to the polling booth models great civic engagement.

Younger kids enjoy wearing stickers. The "I voted" sticker counts. High school students can act as poll workers. Here is where you can find an application¹.

Students, teachers and principals also can participate in the My Vote California Student Mock Election. For more information².

Encourage Your Kids To Help In Their Schools And In The Community

Local communities now have a greater say in deciding how education dollars are spent. This is a new and important area for student involvement. Ask your kids to tell you what they think is important. Encourage them to go to PTA and community meetings and let grownups know their top issues. School districts are now required to ask how we should invest in our schools. Encourage the kids to make their voices heard.

Also, invite students to your PTA meeting to share ideas and suggestions on how to improve your school. One good resource to learn more about education issues is www.ED100.org.

From the YMCA to the SF SPCA to the SF Marin Food Bank, there are volunteer opportunities for kids throughout San Francisco. What are you kids interested in?

Volunteering is one of the best ways for kids to learn about how we can help build a better world.

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

1. sos.ca.gov/elections/student-mock-election/student-poll-worker/

2. os.ca.gov/elections/studentmockelection.htm



Eucalyptus (Cont. from p. 1)

in one-quarter of the city's parkland to native plant gardens, and that it would cut 18,000 healthy, mature trees to accomplish this.

No such conversion is proposed by the City. The Natural Areas Program works to preserve the biological systems surviving on the pieces of original landscape (those which have never been plowed, bladed, or built on). Most of the world's cities have similar programs to accomplish just this, as people recognize their heritage is something worth saving.

3. Sometimes epicormic sprouts are a response to stress, but other times they're just part of the normal growth cycle.

These sprouts are always in response to stress or injury, and the reason they are not part of the normal growth cycle and why they are a danger was clearly explained in my September article. Production of these shoots is a desperation move to save the tree's life and even if successful it leaves the tree misshapen, aesthetically displeasing, and unsafe, and likely an intermediate stage on the way to ultimate death.

The prodigious sprouting of these stricken trees has been mistakenly interpreted as evidence of vigorous recovery. The dying tops are the result of the breaking of the hundreds of capillary water columns resulting from the trees' inability to supply sufficient water to keep the water columns intact. Sprouting in this case is a desperation move by the tree to keep the lower part of the column intact. If sufficient water becomes available it may have a precarious hold on life for awhile, but even the best scenario would leave us with a bunch of short, leafy, weakly-attached sprouts clothing what was formerly a smooth, clean bole—one of the traits that endears the tree to us. Those sprouts are subject to coming loose in winds, and will always be there because they lack the deep anchoring of naturally-formed limbs.

4. Mount Davidson is half covered in a eucalyptus forest.

The thousands of trees on Mount Davidson do not constitute a forest; it is a plantation, and the difference is important.

Inappropriate language creates confusion and obscures proper management. A forest is a self-managing biological community which appears similar over time; a plantation is essentially a garden. This is not playing with words—it cuts to the core of the matter.

To manage, we need to understand the difference between a forest and a plantation. To illustrate, let's take a glance at a forest: When you drive across the Sierra Nevada the scene you see is similar to what the American Indians saw 500 years ago: forests of pines and firs punctuated by grassy wildflower meadows, lakes, and bogs. You see a community of plants and animals, as well as organisms from other kingdoms that are used to living with each other, as they have for thousands of years, tightly-knit into a fabric. That scene is stable and doesn't change much over time.

A plantation, on the other hand, is artificially imposed on a land that didn't normally support those plants and it is in a constant state of disruption as the plants are forced to compete with others they are not accustomed to, and lacking the animals and other components that serve to keep the system in balance. The result is chaotic, with usually two or three species eventually predominating. Ivy and blackberry have claimed the understory to the exclusion of other species—and they account for the dreary monotony of large stretches. They even prevent regeneration of the blue gums, something that never happens in forests. The plantation, therefore, contains the seeds of its own destruction because smothering blankets of ivy and blackberry prevent germination of blue gum seeds. Ivy crawls 150-200 feet into the crowns and deprives the trees of light needed to photosynthesize. The results are visible today with trees dying and toppling from light deprivation and the heavy burden of tons of ivy. This tangled mess does not require expertise to diagnose; it is obvious even to a layperson. In fact the plantation's problems are horticultural, and academic expertise is of little use.

5. I am personally identified as "a native plant advocate [who] has called for cutting down blue gum eucalyptus in city parks for over a decade."

Not so. I love blue gums and ask for removal only when there is compelling reason. I do advocate for preservation of our indigenous plants and encourage their use in gardens as a means of attracting and supporting wildlife, many of which are dependent on native plants, with which they co-evolved. Because nature has served notice that this tree is not suited to our changing climate, this represents an opportunity to diversify the overstory to make it more friendly to wildlife—part of the mission of the City's Natural Areas Program. At present it is a biological wasteland, with only generalist species present.

About 50 years ago I became smitten with the genus Eucalyptus, and in 1977 toured Australia for six weeks specifically to learn more about this huge genus—at the time considered to contain over 600 species. Part of that time was in the field in the company of the world's top eucalyptologists. In 1979 I wrote my first article in praise of the Tasmanian blue gum, and have written several since, including in the February 2014 Miraloma Life. I love this tree and have been in conversation with the Recreation and Park Department to plant them in our irrigated parks, where they can thrive. Did you know that it has abandoned planting blue gums and hasn't planted them for several decades? The grand old specimens in the eastern end of Golden Gate Park and its Panhandle—a de facto arboretum that should be declared a heritage site—are over 130 years old and won't live forever. That means there will be a period of several decades when park visitors will be unable to be inspired by these majestic, clean-limbed behemoths.

In 1990, long before the City created a Natural Areas Program, I talked to the Miraloma Park Improvement Club about the state of the Mt Davidson plantation; there are some who remember that event. My aim was to save the "forest", as most called it. I loved its atmosphere—especially in fog or rain—evocative of the mood created in redwood forests, and as a gardener I knew that ivy and blackberry could destroy it. In addition—and of great concern to me—was that the understory, consisting mostly of native plants that were able to survive the shade and extra moisture from fog drip, would be decimated, and with it the wildlife community. It was primarily the understory that concerned me at the time. Alas, nothing was done and the health and attractiveness of the grove continued to deteriorate, and we see the result in the present unruly tangle and dead and dying trees.

I see this unfortunate situation as bordering on the tragic. A potentially prize area that can enrich the city is left to stagnate, is yearly becoming less attractive to humans, is of little use to wildlife, and is a safety hazard to not just

Cont. p. 19

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Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi



Holy Moly

Imagine for just a moment if the City of St. Francis had hosted Pope Francis during his recent visit to the United States. You think that the ongoing preparations for Super Bowl 50 are hectic? Imagine the crowds along Market Street. Would the Giants feel slighted with their iconic Cable Car being upstaged by a Fiat named Popemobile? And now that Candlestick Park no longer exists, where would that “Mass” of humanity assemble? At least the homeless wouldn’t be a problem; Francis would go and visit them all, possibly sharing a tent with them in the United Nations Plaza, and with all the tech companies in the neighborhood he could certainly raise some real coin of the realm for those less fortunate. Even I would be willing to take up that second collection. And let’s make sure that he doesn’t decide to relieve himself on one of those newly painted repellant walls lest his red shoes get splashed with some real “holy water.”

Perhaps thousands of the faithful could congregate at Levi Stadium; God only knows that the 49ers need all the divine intervention that they can get. Can you just imagine Colin Kaepernick throwing a desperation pass towards the end zone in the final seconds hoping to avert yet another loss? Now that’s what you call a real “Hail Mary Pass.”

Fortunately Pope Francis won’t have to motor down to Carmel because the newly-minted Saint Junipero Serra has already been canonized, but there is one dedication that he could do right here in our beautiful city. A project that has long been talked

about and has the attention of the North Beach locals is the creation of a Piazza in front of the National Shrine of Saint Francis, the old St. Francis Church.....how appropriate is that? Known as the Piazza Saint Francis, the Poet’s Plaza, it has been in the making for many years, and with Angela Alioto’s enthusiasm and determination this project is close to fruition. The endeavor is endorsed by many local business and civic organizations, along with support from the Mayor and the City Planning Department and a diverse group of the Board of Supervisors. Once completed, the paving around the Piazza will have



quotations from some 20 great poets and peacemakers from around the world, and beautifully- designed relaxing areas for all to enjoy along with retail establishments featuring food, drinks, and pastries.

The size of the Piazza will not rival the splendor of Saint Peter’s or the grandeur of Saint Mark’s, but it’s anxiously awaited by its many supporters. What a great place to gather, visit, read, and enjoy poetry. But regardless of its size and location, every city needs a poet laureate, and for us what better choice than a Pope Laureate? Perhaps we should consider yet another visit by Pope Francis. 2016 would be great;

we could celebrate the Giants winning the World Series once again along with a Papal visit. The question is who would lead the parade, the Popemobile or the Cable Car?



Piazza Saint Francis/The Poets Plaza
Public Meeting • December 2 • 6 pm
Italian-American Athletic Club, Washington Square
1630 Stockton St

Eucalyptus (Cont. from p. 15)

visitors but to the entire city. Urgent action is called for.

These trees can never assume a “tree” shape again even if they should live, as they may for two-three years should they get the promised heavy rain this winter. Scenes like this are common in the blue gum plantations throughout the city, including Mount Davidson.

Ms Wuerfel et al have tried to comfort

the public on a subject that is dangerous and needs full exposure and debate. That debate of necessity would be contentious because it is about a subject that is very expensive and that stirs strong emotions. Facts must trump emotions if the public is to be served.

In December I plan to write about the City’s proposed draft management plan.

Jake Sigg is an unabashed tree-hugger who lives on the Westside

Interview (Cont. from p. 14)

do you think you would have enjoyed doing?

DW: Most anything. It’s all terrifying and wonderful.

LAF: How would you say your medical practice has aided you in your writing and vice versa?

DW: The more experiences you have the deeper the well of your strengths. Everything I do, the writing, the music, the media hosting and producing, the raising of children in a balanced environment. . . all of that makes me a better doctor. Medicine is not just the application of science to the life situation, it is shaping science to fit the personalities and prejudices and anxieties of the patients. Not all scientific truths will be seen as true by someone with

pneumonia or cancer. You have to make them truths within their own way of thinking, their own personalities, their very individual and special life. As for medicine helping writing, many of the same skills are required. A keen sense of observation. A no-nonsense attitude about discovering truth. The courage to be different. And, of course, a love of people.

LAF: What’s up next?

DW: The sequel. I already have a mental sketch in place. It’s going to be a wild one.

LAF: Thanks so much for talking with us and for your fabulous writing!

DW: You’re very welcome!

“The Lucifer Connection” is available —ask for it at your local bookstore!

Linda Ayres-Frederick



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SEE THE FACTS IN SAN FRANCISCO

-  **Replaced** approximately 28 miles of gas transmission pipeline
-  **Invested** more than \$443 million into electrical improvements
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