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Mass Evictions Beginning at Parkmerced?

3-day notices issued to 190 tenants, including disabled, seniors, and veterans — they get no help from City Hall

By Lynn Gavin

There were over 190 evictions—3-day Notice to Quit—issued by Parkmerced from April 2011 to December 2011. To date, every single agency and institution purposed with defending renters and low-income people in San Francisco has failed in a spectacular way, except the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force. The retaliation from City Hall reverberated so strongly that the Supervisors broke the law again, and the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force was dismantled this year in a vicious political maneuver. As a result, San Franciscans have not been able to seek redress from their local government for four months.

I was tenant at Parkmerced.

When I heard about the possible demolition of my home that was going before the Planning Commission, I began to make inquiries about issues at Parkmerced. On May 24, 2011, during the Land Use Committee meeting, Board President David Chiu introduced 14 phantom pages of revisions to the development agreement. Supervisor Sean Elsbernd, a proponent of the project and lawyer by profession, sat on the dais throughout most of the meeting. There were nearly 100 people attending the meeting; not everyone received a copy of the revisions nor were we allowed to speak on the revisions. It was a dark day for the City because residents and citizens were denied their right to redress the government and give meaningful public comment regarding the demolition of their homes. Many of the seniors who attended the meeting were visibly shaken. A woman in her 80's desperately called out to Supervisor Elsbernd at the Board of Supervisor's meeting later that day because we had not seen the revisions. The Agreement was approved by the Board.

Thanks to the Sunshine Ordinance, I was able to access pertinent information about the Parkmerced Development Agreement negotiated last year. In doing so, I never anticipated that my Sunshine Case would find that Supervisors Malia Cohen, David Chiu, Eric Mar and Scott Wiener committed official misconduct. The Sunshine Ordinance Task Force (SOTF) referred the case to the Ethics Commission and District Attorney Gascón. The Ethics Commission acknowledged receiving it; I have never received a response from District Attorney Gascón.

On August 23, 2011, at the hearing before the Sunshine Task Force, I finally won a victory! The SOTF found that Supervisor Eric Mar violated the Sunshine Ordinance by allowing the introduction of the phantom 14 pages that were not on the agenda. Parkmerced representative Bert Polacci was present throughout the entire hearing. He left in a hurry when one of the SOTF Commissioners explained that the local remedy had been satisfied and that a case could be filed in court.

The next day—August 24, 2011, after winning part 1 of a 2 part hearing, an unsigned 3-day notice was tacked to my door. The 3-day notice specified “utilities” as the cause and it stated that I had not paid these fees for 17 months. I was very perplexed as to how Parkmerced arrived at these fees so I wrote Parkmerced's attorney and asked to make installment payments. They never responded. At the September 2011 SOTF meeting, the other three supervisors were found in violation of the Sunshine Ordinance, just like Supervisor Mar.

The “utility” issue adversely and disproportionately impacts low-income, disabled, seniors and veterans who are physically or mentally disabled. There was much fear and panic as many residents began to receive these 3-day notices.

I have found no one who will address the question of legality of serving people 3-day notices for “utilities”—notices which are normally used for rent and nuisance complaints. In the discovery process for my case I received evidence that Parkmerced overcharged me for the utilities. Sadly, many of the people who were wrongfully evicted could not and cannot adequately represent themselves legally due to a myriad of factors; the obstacles placed before them suggest collusion and corruption permeating the highest levels of city government.

• On their behalf I asked HUD to investigate Parkmerced. They have not responded, possibly because of pending lawsuits on this issue.

• The San Francisco Human Rights Commission has also been investigating this case. It is curious that these cases were filed in Superior Court when there is existing case law on this issue in Federal Courts.

• I wrote California Attorney General Kamala Harris and City Attorney Herrera about this issue because I wanted to know if it was legal to send these late notices. Her office sent me a tenant landlord book. I read it and discovered that Parkmerced had violated CCP §17200 “unfair business practices”—failure to disclose their intent to demolish my (and every other) townhome when I moved in.

• I also wrote City Attorney Herrera about the “utilities”

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“Residents and citizens were denied their right to redress the government and give meaningful public comment regarding the demolition of their homes. Many of the seniors who attended the meeting were visibly shaken. A woman in her 80's desperately called out to Supervisor Elsbernd at the Board of Supervisor's meeting later that day...”

Oversize RVs, Campers Plug-Up Parking Places Along LaPlaya

By Jonathan Farrell

Parkside resident Lee Ellen Shoemaker has been volunteering her time to help improve conditions at La Playa Park, that stretch of a block or so along La Playa between Irving and Judah at 48th Avenue. She lives on Taraval yet likes the ocean beach area and sees it as a wonderful place to be.

This is why she has been so supportive of the efforts of resident, teacher and neighborhood activist Steve Ward to coordinate a coalition to make the area of La Playa a little niche within the ocean-side neighborhoods.

Shoemaker noted that Ward “has a real vision and is instrumental in spearheading the community effort.”

This past Sept. 17, Steve Ward

alerted the press about a hearing at City Hall concerning over-sized vehicles parking near the ocean, an issue that affects all neighborhoods along the beach.

Ward, who would have liked to have taken time off from work to attend the hearing that Monday afternoon at 1 PM, but was not able to, noted that not many people from the neighborhood were able to show up. “We are all working,” he said. “Yet, I wanted to get the word out because this issue is extremely important to us residents.”

He noted that vehicles “camped” along the La Playa and Ocean Beach area pose a potential health risk. While there is no direct evidence of any one vehicle causing problems. Residents have found dumped garbage, syringes, intravenous needles and human excrement on the street.

Ward said he was pleased that, from the hearing, the issue would be brought before the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Carmen Chu's office alerted the press on Wednesday, Sept. 19, that

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A Primer On Lake Merced

For District 7 Supervisorial Aspirants And Their Constituents

By Jerry Cadagan

In about a month residents of District 7 will elect a new Supervisor. They are fortunate to live in an area that is home to one of the most unique environmental and recreational lakes in all of urban America. Lake Merced is one of the few lakes of any significant size located within the city limits of a major American city. Unfortunately, there are many misconceptions about the lake, and not enough hard facts, currently in the public domain. This column will address the more significant misconceptions and facts, in the hopes that the candidates and their constituents will approach this election with an appreciation of some important basic facts, and recognition that there is substantial room for improvement of management at the lake.

1. Lake Merced is NOT a park within the meaning of the City's Park Code Section 2.01 defines "park" as all properties, facilities, etc. "placed under the control, management and direction of the Recreation and Park Commission by the Charter..." The Charter does not give the Rec and Park any control at Lake Merced. The Lake Merced Tract is owned by SF Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), purchased as a part of the acquisition of the Spring Valley Water Company in 1930. The fact that Lake Merced and the surrounding area is not a "park" raises interesting questions as to the right of Rec and Park to issue event permits, enforce traffic rules, and do other things it is authorized to do in true parks.

2. Recreation and Park's management role at Lake Merced is exclusively a function of these few words in a 1950 SFPUC resolution: "The Public Utilities Commission hereby confers upon the Park and Recreation Commission, the right to occupy, use and improve, for park and recreational purposes" the Lake Merced Tract. There is no publicly available subsequent memorandum of agreement, or anything similar, between the two agencies spelling out in more detail the respective responsibilities of each agency.

3. Since Rec & Park assumed management for "park and recreational purposes," there have been a couple of major disturbing developments. First, as recent publicity shows, there has been significant contamination of the 14 acre John Muir site long occupied by the Pacific Rod & Gun Club. It may be necessary to spend as much as \$10 million to clean up the contamination. Astoundingly, *never* since 1950 has Rec & Park conditioned renewal of the month-to-month lease on the Gun Club maintaining appropriate insurance to protect the City from shouldering that financial liability. SFPUC staff has told its Commission that SFPUC rate payers may bear that cost. Second, No effort has been

made to replace the company that had for many years operated a successful fishing concession operation out of a portable trailer that left the lake in 1999.

4. More management responsibility In late 2006/early 2007 the SFPUC gave members of the Lake Merced Task Force assurances that SFPUC would take on more management responsibility at the lake. In January 2007 the Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 14-07 requesting the two agencies to modify the old 1950 resolution. Consistent with those assurances and that resolution, SFPUC sponsored a 188 page consultants' report — the *Lake Merced Watershed Report* — that took about four years and \$588,484 of SFPUC rate payer money to prepare.¹ At page 10 is language confirming that the intent of the Supervisors was to "transfer primary responsibility for management back to the SFPUC." On two occasions (Nov. 8, 2011 and May 8, 2012) SFPUC staff presented its Commission with a proposed MOU purporting to comply with the Supervisors' mandate. On both occasions the Commission has rejected the MOU as being inadequate. The matter now appears to be in a state of limbo.

5. Boathouse Building At page 43 of the *Lake Merced Watershed Report* it's stated that the downstairs of the existing boathouse building "is no longer adequate to meet the space needs of the rowing clubs that use the Lake." SFPUC and Rec & Park have recently embarked on a \$2 million renovation of the existing boathouse building. The plan does not provide for a single additional square foot of badly needed boat storage space. And, so typical of the muddled two-headed monster management structure at the lake, a Rec & Park staff report relating to the renovation describes the responsibilities this way: "SF PUC is managing Phase I and Phase II of this project with oversight from Rec & Park." What in heaven's name does that mean?

We have been asking for years, "Who's in charge at Lake Merced?" Maybe the candidates for District 7 Supervisor can engage on that question over the next month and get some answers.

Jerry Cadagan Co-founded Committee to Save Lake Merced

¹www.sfwater.org/index.aspx?page=197



The busy boathouses and docks of Lake Merced. attract many teens and adults alike.

Ready for West Nile Virus Season?

First WNV positive Bird found Near City College

West Nile Virus (WNV) infection, caused by the bite of a mosquito carrying the virus, is on the rise throughout California and across the nation. As of September 18, 2012, 126 human cases of WNV infection have been reported in California, including 6 WNV-related deaths. Nationally, 3,142 cases including 134 fatalities have been reported to the US Centers for Disease Control, making this year the highest number of cases reported year-to-date since 2003. Almost forty percent of the nationally reported cases are from Texas.

West Nile Virus can occur here, though no locally acquired human cases have ever been reported in the City since 2005 when it became a reportable disease. Mosquitoes can transmit WNV to birds, and so the recent finding of one West Nile-infected dead bird indicates that the virus is present in the local environment This is only the third WNV-positive bird in the City since 2007. The warm weather beginning in September is the environment that sets the stage for mosquitoes to breed and multiply. Preventing a mosquito bite is always the best first step in combating disease.

Working on the success of the popular Fight the Bite campaign that helped launch West Nile Virus awareness throughout California, local authorities are focusing their efforts on eliminating mosquitoes.

"San Franciscans will be at risk for West Nile during the summer and fall when mosquito activity is at its peak," observed Rajiv Bhatia, MD, Medical Director for Environmental Health at the DPH. "West Nile Virus is preventable and it takes all of us working together to continue to keep ourselves and our families protected."

In urban areas, the single largest source of mosquito breeding are storm drains and basins which are being regularly inspected and treated to prevent mosquitoes from hatching into adults. Homeowners can prevent mosquito breeding by keeping fish in ornamental ponds, repairing plumbing

Cont. p. 8

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*Partial list only.

PHIL GINSBURG: General Manager or Special Events Promoter?

By Anmarie Mabutt

For the tenth year in a row, the Recreation and Parks Department is approving the permits for the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival (HSBF) secretly, behind closed doors, without any public discussion or input whatsoever. It is precisely this lack of public oversight that explains how Hardly Strictly has grown into one of the country's largest annual music festivals. The public has repeatedly been denied its opportunity to speak out in defense of the park and surrounding communities. The pastoral western end of Golden Gate Park was never intended or designed as a mass outdoor concert arena. It was to be a series of green, open spaces that offered visitors a place of peace and quiet reflection. But under Mayors Brown, Newsom and now Lee, the Western End of Golden Gate Park has been transformed into the largest concert venue in the country.

The largest stadium in the country is the University of Michigan football stadium, capacity 109,901. The largest stadium in the Bay Area is Berkeley Memorial Coliseum, capacity 75,662. The maximum capacity for Speedway Meadow is 18,600, Lindley Meadow – 9,300 and Marx Meadow – 4,000 yielding a combined daily maximum capacity of 31,900. Yet, for the past five years, police estimates report average daily attendance of 200,000-250,000 for the crowds at the HSBF. RPD General Manager Phil Ginsburg, Permits and Reservations Manager Dana Ketcham, and Assistant Property Manager Nick Kinsey are well aware of the Western Meadows' capacity limits. Yet, in complete disregard for public health and safety and in clear violation of the RPD Permits and Reservations Policy which prohibits staff from issuing permits for events for which they have reason to believe will exceed the venues' stated capacities, RPD staff continues to issue the permit for the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival.

According to Sue Fry, a Sunset District resident, at a local police advisory board meeting following last year's Festival, police admitted that SFPD could no longer handle the crowds at Hardly Strictly. The Festival had grown too large. When asked last week, less than thirty days before the opening of the 2012 HSBF, how many officers and parking control officers had been assigned to the Festival and what, if any, meetings had been held regarding public safety and outreach for the event, Richmond Station Captain Sharon Ferrigno refused to provide any details. Captain Ferrigno also refused to confirm whether SFPD staff had even attended any meetings with RPD, Slim's Production Company, or any other public agencies regarding crowd control and public health and safety for the 2012 HSBF. As in years past, it seems little if any effort is being made to keep the HSBF crowds within the stated maximum capacities for the Western Meadows.

The capacity limits for the Western Meadows and all other RPD venues were calculated using a very specific formula. The methodology was based on the SF Fire Department crowd metric of seven square feet per person. To ensure a safe and manageable crowd for concert goers and police, fire and other emergency personnel, each person is supposed to have a three-foot diameter circle. The details of the process are discussed in Board of Supervisors File #080880, the legislation that most recently amended the special event permit fees. The new special event fees are based on the maximum capacity limits for each venue and provide further evidence that SF City officials are well aware of the Western Meadows' capacity limits, but are knowingly ignoring those limits.

RPD staff has made a determined effort to keep the RPD Permits and Reservations Policy a secret. At the December 17, 2009 meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission, Permits and Reservations Manager Dana Ketcham and Assistant Property Manager Nick Kinsey gave a presentation on the procedures for special event permits. At the meeting, Mr. Kinsey posted a slide that read "Currently, there is a sound policy for events

in Sharon Meadow but not for those at the Polo Fields and the surrounding meadows." All it takes is a brief glance at the RPD Permits and Reservations Policy, Resolution #9705-073, to realize that this is completely untrue and extremely misleading. But since the RPD has never complied with City Charter Section 4.104 that requires the Recreation and Park Commission and Department to provide a copy of all rules and regulations to the Clerk of the Board, very few people are aware of the strict limits on the use of amplified sound in the Western Meadows, or the maximum capacity limits for those same meadows.

Contrary to the RPD staff report presented to the public and the Commission at the December 2009 meeting, the RPD Permits and Reservations Policy includes very clear limits on the days and hours during which amplified sound may be used in the Western Meadows. In deference to the pastoral nature of the Park's Western End, the Policy prohibits staff from issuing permits for amplified sound events for two consecutive days during a weekend or weekend holiday in any given week of the year. The Policy also restricts the use of amplified sound in the Western End to no more than four consecutive hours a day and twelve hours a week. For Marx Meadow, the Policy is even more restrictive, allowing no more than two consecutive hours of amplified sound a day. Yet, for at least the last five years, RPD staff has issued permits for HSBF that have allowed more than double the allowable limits, with 8 to 8 ½ consecutive hours of amplified sound per day at Lindley, Marx and Speedway Meadows, and more than twenty four hours of total amplified sound per week.

Under the RPD Permits and Reservations Policy, modifications and exceptions to the amplified sound rules are allowed, but they must be approved by the Recreation and Park Commission. The Commission must also approve any new road closure requests and any outdoor food sales. In the twelve years of HSBF, the food sales have never been approved by the Commission. The last time the Commission approved an exception to the amplified sound policy or a new road closure for HSBF was June 20, 2002. Ten years later, the residents and business owners of the Richmond and Sunset districts continue to be denied their rights to information and for an opportunity to comment on the annual preparations for the HSBF.

The Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival brings great joy to many people but it has clearly outgrown its home in the Western Meadows of Golden Gate Park. The HSBF could stay free, in keeping with Mr. Hellman's original spirit for the Festival, but ticketed, to ensure the crowds in the Western Meadows remain within safe and allowable levels. Any overflow could be directed to live streaming video of the Festival at locations throughout the city. There is no reason that each and every District in the City cannot partake in the joy and the financial benefits of Mr. Hellman's annual gift to the city of San Francisco.

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RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR By Quentin Kopp

Dejection in District 7 and Proposition Perspectives

On September 22, 2012, I became dejected listening to nine candidates for the Board of Supervisors assaying the high honor of representing what is commonly referred to as District No. 7. To suggest that district election of Supervisors is in the 21st Century as harmful as it was for approximately five years in the 20th Century minimizes the deleterious effect of a concept which deprives San Franciscans of knowledgeable, informed legislative governance.

As readers may know (and I reiterate), I've endorsed Joel Engardio and F.X.Crowley. Neither embarrassed me at the West of Twin Peaks Central Council-sponsored session at Aptos Junior High School. Others, unwittingly or otherwise, embarrassed themselves. Messrs. Julian Lagos and Glenn Rogers espoused a local tax on corporations, as if San Francisco legally possesses the power to impose a corporation tax. It does not. While corporations pay state and local sales tax, the San Francisco property tax (if they own real estate in San Francisco), a real estate transfer tax, applicable parcel taxes and utility tax (which, thanks to an initiative I sponsored in the 1980s, cannot apply to residents), the State of California enacted Revenue and Taxation Code

Section 17041.5 in 1963, prohibiting any local governmental entity, a city, county, city and county, school district or special district from levying an income tax on any person, resident or non-resident. That prohibition applies both to people and corporations. Probably, it would surprise Lagos and Rogers to learn that elemental fact of law.

Another candidate, Ms. Lynn Gavin, who accurately portrays herself as the only woman candidate, credited the incumbent and departing Supervisor, Sean Elsbernd, with "bringing the U.S. Open to San Francisco." I nearly fell from my first row chair with that untrue statement. Try that on the Olympic Club membership which secured the event. At least Ms. Gavin knew that the annual \$7,300,000,000 San Francisco budget for fiscal year 2012-13 is larger than Philadelphia's, which contains nearly three times the population of San Francisco. Another candidate, Mike Garcia, a manifest enemy of the Pacific Rod and Gun Club, falsely represented to the audience that the cost of removing lead from Lake Merced was \$14,000,000. It is not. There is a dispute between the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and the Club for the cost of removal, the PUC having obtained a bid estimate of \$10,000,000, the Club having obtained a bid estimate of \$5,000,000.

Thereafter, the candidate discussion of the justifiability of allowing "food trucks" to operate on West Portal Avenue ignored the basic fact, clearly leading to the objection of not just West Portal Avenue restaurants but other businesses, that "food trucks" pay no rent; West Portal Avenue restaurants do pay rent — and probably lots of it every month.

Later that day, I attended a reception in Pacific Heights for a District No. 1 candidate, David Lee. His opponent is Supervisor Eric Mar, a fellow known, among other things, for opposing the continuation of Junior ROTC in our public high schools. In condemning Mr. Mar for lack of housing development in the Richmond District, Mr. Lee offered faint praise by declaring that Mar "has built only 500 units of housing." I didn't realize Board of Supervisor members "build" housing. They, of course, do no such thing, no more than they create jobs except by adding public employees, and it is folly to utter misstatements to the public based upon fanciful language. The best any Board of Supervisor member

can do with housing is to "get out of the way" and allow private owners and contractors to proceed with new housing units, consistent with zoning, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance and financial ability to do so.

On Monday, September 24, the monthly West of Twin Peaks Central Council meeting heard former Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin cogently urge defeat of Proposition B, a \$195,000,000 general obligation bond issue mainly for parks, but also for the Port of San Francisco, and current Supervisor Scott Wiener contend the measure merited voter approval. Although the 20-member neighborhood organiza-

...I was struck by the naïveté of a couple commentators and deceptive remarks from Mr. Wiener, claiming the Recreation and Park Department needs "a dedicated source of revenue."

tions failed to adopt a resolution of non-support for Proposition B, which had been scrupulously written by former Council President George Wooding, such failure was based mostly upon abstention due to no prior authority from some Council associations. Not a single vote was recorded against the resolution; if failed only because of lack of a requisite majority vote. During the discussion, however, I was struck by the naïveté of a couple commentators and deceptive remarks from Mr. Wiener, claiming the Recreation and Park Department needs "a dedicated source of revenue." Iteration of fundamental governmental principles appears necessary. The many, many departments of the City and County of San Francisco are divided basically into (1) a few "enterprise" departments, such as the Airports Commission, the Port Commission, and the Public Utilities Commission, and (2) General Fund departments, meaning departments whose appropriations emanate from San Francisco's General Fund. The General Fund is chiefly comprised of revenue from property taxation, local sales taxation, a real estate transfer tax, a utility tax on commercial real estate, allocation of a small share of the state gasoline tax of \$0.18 per gallon, interest paid on city bank deposits, license, permit and similar fees, and some state and federal statutory subventions. The Port, SFO, and PUC don't merit money from the General Fund because they operate like private enterprise services. In fact, SFO, under a Charter-established formula, contributes money to the General Fund in good revenue years. A "dedicated revenue source" for any other city department could only be derived from the General Fund. That would decrease the money available for all other General Fund departments. Proclaiming "dedicated revenue source" to solve Recreation and Park Department mismanagement constitutes an illusion. It's one matter for everyday citizens to advocate chimerical policy; to hear an elected Supervisor do so bespeaks the duplicity for which too many local (and state) elected legislators and executives are infamous.

It is hypothetically possible legally to impose a parcel tax by a two-third super majority vote of the electorate, as Proposition A attempts to do to cure City College's fiscal maladministration. A parcel tax is perhaps the most imbalanced governmental financial practice, applying only to real estate, but not based upon the value of such real estate. The owner

Keystone Follies

By Steve Lawrence

Nearly one hundred years ago engineers set out to bring water from the far-away Sierras to the newly rebuilt City, which had burned up in the aftermath of the Great Quake. Imagine bringing water from so far away, through many dozens of miles of tunnel and buried pipeline. Then imagine not having to pay for pumping millions of tons of water; gravity would do the work. A dam high in the remote mountains, the keystone of the system, would store sufficient water, and would propel the whole wondrous waterworks.

Now San Franciscans are asked whether to begin the process of removing the keystone.

We San Franciscans are richer than almost all cities of our size or larger, and do we spend! Perhaps our free spending is part of our attraction. Rents are high; there is great demand to live in our fair town.

Spending three-quarters of a billion on City Hall, or \$8850 per resident per year on City government (\$7.3 billion for fiscal 2012-13), or for new sports venues, libraries, and parks is one thing. To spend an extra ten billion dollars in an attempt to restore a remote valley that is the keystone of our elegantly-engineered water system, to remove that keystone, would be folly.

San Francisco is most of the way through updating our water system. By the time we are through (in 2017), water rates will have tripled. What was inexpensive, as well as extremely pure and fine tasting, will be average priced, and will be supplemented with less pure groundwater. The 1920s era engineering has served marvelously; soon it will meet modern seismic standards.

San Francisco's Water Enterprise already has over \$3.2 billion of debt outstanding. It is about half done with paying for the updating.

The next step—the reverse side of the same coin—is to update San Francisco's old sewer system. Most water city dwellers use goes down the drain. Stormwater adds in. Updating our water system is costing the City about \$2 billion; updating the sewer system will cost ratepayers about \$7 billion.

After all this updating, the portion of the average San Franciscan's income that pays for water and sewer doubles—to about 2.5%. This is at the limit of what is considered affordable. Should we add to that burden by tearing down the system's keystone?

While some readers, and most San Franciscans, do not pay water and sewer bills directly, make no mistake: everyone pays. Rents eventually reflect the increased cost. Everyday prices that businesses charge must reflect the cost of utilities. Directly or not, no one escapes paying for water and sewer.

Proponents of the Hetchy initiative will claim that it calls only for study. Do not fall for this. The clear purpose and intent is to require the draining of Hetch Hetchy reservoir. This wheeled horse is not empty.

Recycled water will substitute? Come on. The enviros and NIMBYs have already hit the delete key on the City's first recycled plant. The plant was to be built at the site of a dump at the far southwest end of Golden Gate Park. Seven-eighths of that plant's recycled water was to go to irrigating the Park. How green good is that? San Francisco has been fooling



“Spending three-quarters of a billion on City Hall, or \$8850 per resident per year on City government ... or for new sports venues, libraries, or parks is one thing. To spend an extra ten billion dollars in an attempt to restore a remote valley that is the keystone of our elegantly-engineered water system, to remove that keystone, would be folly.”

with recycled water for more than twenty years, yet its purple pipes remain bone dry. Why? Face it: In a city like San Francisco recycled water is uneconomical, insufficient, of undesirable quality, and makes little sense—except as an expensive symbol. NIMBYs abound. At the very most, and at great cost, recycled water might provide one-tenth of the City's water needs.

Conservation of water is also urged. We San Franciscans do conserve. We use much less than we did at the beginning of this millennium. Our per capita demand for water is lower than anywhere else in this country. Can we lower it further? Probably—a little. Officials have already committed to do that. We cannot grow our population and develop without doing that.

Civilized society requires water. Trees and parks and fine eateries don't survive when parched.

Nor are we going to magically take the same water just further downstream. Where would it be stored? Low country water would need to be filtered; that would require a huge new investment. Our water system is designed as a gravity system; it relies on Hetch Hetchy.

It would be folly to discard the keystone of the water system on which San Francisco has relied for eighty years, and just updated.

Nor would it be “green.” Building all the needed replacement infrastructure would not only cost a fortune but also would heavily impact the environment. Lost permanently would be the forty percent of electricity generated by all the water released in controlled fashion from behind the dam at Hetch Hetchy. Wind and solar is not suddenly going to replace that. We have been spending to encourage those green sources for years, yet what has been erected supplies nothing near forty percent of the electricity that would be lost. Unlike water usage, demand for electricity continues to grow.

If you think that a City can always somehow survive, look at Detroit. Consider New Orleans. Cities can and do have near death experiences. Enough bad choices made, plus one big event, can decimate an urban area. Cities are vulnerable. Might San Francisco some day suffer a big event?

It's fine for San Franciscans to be dreamers and innovative. We need that, and our innovative companies are the vanguard of the future. But remember that many fail. The market decides winners and losers. We translate desirable bravado to the public realm at the City's peril. Water is not where you take big risks.

Keep the keystone.

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



MY TWO CENTS By Will Durst

WORST CAMPAIGN EVER?

It's time to start worrying about Mitt Romney. Seriously. The guy may just be running the worst campaign ever. And yes, that includes the McDLT, print ads for organic hemp underwear and France in 39. Not to mention McCain/Palin in 08. Which currently holds the gold standard for lousy campaigns. Sure to be a Hall of Fame inductee in a couple years.

Willard has taken bad to a whole new level. Bad like a dumpster behind a fish market during a garbage strike bad. Bad like a 3 dollar Dark Knight Rises DVD bought off a Times Square cardboard table with Albanian subtitles bad. Bad like Todd Akin at a NARAL benefit bad. Bad doubled down. Beyond breaking bad to the point of broken bad.

And every time the former Governor of Massachusetts opens his mouth, it gets worse. He's tone deaf, tongue-tied, logically-challenged and as approachable as a near-sighted porcupine in heat. The Anti Ray Romano-Nobody Loves Mitt.

So uncomfortable around real people, you can practically hear him whisper “icky, icky, icky” under his breath while shaking hands at rallies. You know there's an aide with a bottle of Purell hand sanitizer waiting for him on the bus. Maybe even a 55-gallon drum connected to a shower head.

Got caught on a secret video calling 47% of those real people moochers and malingerers. Shirking entitled victims dependent on the government for food. Food. Mmmm. That's us. Just can't get enough of that Government cheese. You know what this country needs? A good 5¢ Government cracker.

The impression is that 1) he was pandering to his rich donor buddies; or 2) the poster child for the 1% really believes what he said. Either way—awkward! And that massive pounding sound you hear is a herd of stampeding elephants running away from what they fear might be contagious.

Said he wouldn't concern himself with that 47%, which depresses his most ardent supporters, because “hell, that's more than half!” One major problem with insulting 47% of the American public is that at least 58% of them worry that

“Face it, if Bain Capital were running Mitt's campaign right now, they'd close it down, fire him and hire some Chinese guy to do it better and cheaper.”

you think they're part of that 47% and you know 112% of America believes that. They do. Bet you \$10,000.

The video's release obscured the Romney campaign's much bal-lyhooed new design to sharpen its message. Would have been interesting to see how many

truckloads of flint they were going to use to try and put an edge on that much smoke. Honing fog.

His own staffer warned us. The Etch-a-Sketch has been turned upside down. Prepare to be shaken. Problem is, you keep rebooting something as stiff as Mitt and it starts short-circuiting all over the place. Romney 8.0. Better than Romney 7.0. Now with Desperation.

Maybe it's the extra large silver spoon in his mouth that keeps him from seeing the view from the middle class. Can't understand why they don't pull themselves up by the bootstraps like he did when his daddy loaned him his first million.

With the debates still to come, there's time to turn this race around. But this far in, it's like turning the Titanic. After hitting the iceberg. And the helm is underwater. Face it, if Bain Capital were running Mitt's campaign right now, they'd close it down, fire him and hire some Chinese guy to do it better and cheaper.

5 time Emmy- nominee Will Durst has a new e- book: “Elect to Laugh!” published by Hyperink. Available at redroom.com or amazon.

WESTSIDE OBSERVER

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

VOTE NO on Prop B: Neighborhood Parks Bond

By George Wooding



San Francisco neighborhoods no longer trust the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) to act in the best interests of the neighborhoods. The Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods (CSFN) just voted unanimously against supporting Proposition B, the Park's Bond.

The Park's Bond is a General Obligation Bond requesting \$195 million in property taxes; \$34.5 million will go to the Port Authority and \$160.5 million will go to the RPD.

Traditionally, San Francisco taxes have paid for the RPD. As San Francisco public employees' salaries and benefits continued to increase, City Hall has deliberately decreased the amount of public funds that RPD receives through the City budget's General Fund.

Because of this lack of General Funds:

- 1.) the RPD deferred maintenance and repairs throughout the park system, and
- 2.) issued a \$110 million General Obligation Bond (GOB) in 2000, and another \$185 million GOB in 2008, and now this *proposed* \$195 million GOB in 2012.

The current GO Bond was originally scheduled for 2014, but according to Dawn Kamalanathan, the RPD Director of Planning, the bond must be moved forward so that the RPD's planning staff could stay on the RPD payroll. To date, only 51% of the 2008 bond money has been spent; 49% — \$73.5 million — *remains unspent*, and several 2008 bond projects will continue through 2013.

Kamalanathan was in such a hurry to build an acceptable RPD bond that many of her early presentations to neighborhood groups were inaccurate. She promised groups such as the WTPCC that she would come back and either ask for their opinions, or explain what the RPD was going to do in District-Seven (D-7). The WTPCC never heard from her again. Kamalanathan continued by telling the city Capital Planning Committee — the oversight committee for the issuance of long-term city debt — how well the meetings were going with the city neighborhoods.

When the RPD finally announced its plan for D-7, the largest geographic district in San Francisco, the District had only received \$2 million — about 1% of the entire bond. This bond money is earmarked for Lake Merced. Further, the RPD absolutely refuses to tell anyone what they intend to do with this \$2 million until after the bond is passed. Neighbors want to know what they are paying for before the park bond is passed.

\$61.5 million of Proposition B will not be dedicated to a specific project until after the bond is passed.

The RPD also told selected D-7 citizens that they *might* also do something with Miraloma Playground. This is extremely doubtful, as Miraloma Park is not on the proposed Neighborhood Park sites list. If your park is not on the list, the RPD will do almost nothing for your park. There are many good people who have been promised park improvements who are about to be disappointed. These false RPD promises are a tactic to get citizens throughout San Francisco to support the bond.

Projects that are on the parks improvement list and are rebuilt may end up like J.P. Murphy Park. This D-7 park cost the voters \$3.9 million. Just after the refurbished park was opened, the RPD fired the recreation and park director. The RPD then claimed that the park was "underutilized" and tried to install a tenant who would pay \$1,500 per month. This is a good example of how the RPD is trying to take open park space away from the public and use these public assets to generate revenue.

The biggest RPD bond showdown in D-7 is the battle between a citizen's group called the Forest Alliance and the RPD's Native Area Plants (NAP) program. NAP is a program that planned to cut as many as 1,600 trees on Mt. Davidson and replant the mountain with native plants. To protect the newly planted native plants, whole areas of Mt. Davidson would need to be fenced off to keep people and dogs from harming the plants.

Surrounding neighborhoods were very unhappy with the NAP program, as both large and small trees were scheduled to be cut down. When neighbors purchased their homes near a forest they wanted to keep the forest — not have it clear-cut and replanted with grass, shrubs, and baby oak trees.

Forest Alliance wants to halt the destruction of city park trees and reverse NAP plans that would deny public access

Cont. p. 7

Democracy San Francisco Style

Swimming in "Official Misconduct"

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

Is San Francisco governed by its rule of law, or by the law of its rulers?

The hypocrisy of San Francisco's Board of Supervisors and its Ethics Commission no longer comes as a surprise to most open government observers; hypocrisy clearly visible in two cases is currently shedding light on the death of democracy in San Francisco.

The first case involves the Board of Supervisors, which wrongly alleged that the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force (SOTF) violated the City Charter, when in fact the Task Force had not. Supervisor Scott Wiener — who the Task Force found engaged in official misconduct regarding the Parkmerced development deal — went so far as to allege that the SOTF had engaged in "official misconduct" when the Task Force had done no such thing.

The Ethics Commission went to great lengths to dream up new relationships to support the Mayor's charge that Mirkarimi's conduct had fallen "below the standards of decency, good faith and right action impliedly required of" elected officials. Ethics Commissioner Paul Renne considered it pointless to discuss any "relationships" at all. But Commissioners Liu, Studley, and Hayon held to their moral certainty that Mirkarimi was guilty, and through "backwards reasoning," they simply made up a middle-ground "relationship" test.



The second case involves the Ethics Commission's recommendation now submitted to the Board of Supervisors to remove Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi from office for "official misconduct;" to reach that recommendation the Ethics Commission itself appears to have violated the City Charter by exceeding its authority.

It will now be up to the Board of Supervisors to explain how the Ethics Commission could be permitted to violate the City Charter in the Mirkarimi matter, while the Supervisors make false claims against the Task Force.

Sunshine Task Force Shut Down

The Observer reported in its last several issues that the Board of Supervisors has effectively shut down our local Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, the quasi-judicial body with which citizens can file administrative complaints regarding open access to public meetings and public records. As reported, the Task Force has not met and conducted any of the people's business since the end of May.

Because the Board of Supervisors improperly removed the ordinance-required physically disabled Task Force member and failed to appoint another physically disabled member, the Task Force was forced to abruptly adjourn its June 6 and July 7 meetings, and cancelled its August 1 and September 5 meetings since the body was not in compliance with Sunshine Ordinance section 67.30(a) that requires a physically-disabled member sit on the Task Force *at all times*.

Although the Board of Supervisors had to have known of this legal requirement since at least June, the Supervisors have not appointed a disabled member during the past four months. Unfortunately, on Wednesday, September 19, the Task Force also cancelled its October 3 meeting, because a disabled member had still not been appointed when the Board of Supervisors rejected re-appointing Bruce Wolfe a second time. The Task Force, and citizens who have filed legitimate Sunshine complaints, have been immobilized for five months.

Supervisors Invoke "Let's Get Even" Retribution

As previously reported, the issue that launched the Board of Supervisors ire and their "let's get even" retribution involved a Sunshine complaint regarding the Parkmerced development deal, which resulted in four members of the Board of Supervisors referral by the Sunshine Task Force to the Ethics Commission over allegations of official misconduct. Pastor Lynn Gavin — a candidate for the Board of Supervisors in District 7 and a resident of Parkmerced, until being unjustly evicted — filed a Sunshine complaint alleging that the Board of Supervisors wrongly considered 14 pages of last-minute amendments to the Parkmerced development agreement just minutes before voting on the matter, but without providing the amendments to members of the public prior to their vote. The Task Force ruled the last-minute amendments violated the Sunshine Ordinance, and referred the matter to the Ethics Commission for enforcement of official misconduct against four City supervisors, including David Chiu and Scott Wiener.

Reportedly, the Board of Supervisors were not as annoyed so much by the SOTF's referral to Ethics as they were by the Task Force's additional referral of the Parkmerced violation to the District Attorney. The Task Force began referring official misconduct complaints to the D.A. following years of inaction on official misconduct cases referred to the Ethics Commission, which has dismissed without public hearings all previous official misconduct cases referred to it by the Sunshine Task Force, except the case against Library Commission president Jewelle Gomez.

Supervisors Haven't Learned Their Lesson

During the full Board's September 18 meeting, the Supervisors considered the Clean Power SF public power measure with Shell Oil. Supervisor Wiener, along with other Supervisors, complained during the September 18 hearing that they had been handed several amendments to the Clean Power SF measure just as they were walking into Board chambers to cast their votes. Clearly, members of the public weren't provided copies of Clean Power SF amendments before the September 18 hearing, repeating the same situation as the Parkmerced amendments.

This suggested that the Board of Supervisors hasn't learned its lesson about complying with the Sunshine Ordinance, given that it again willfully engaged in what can only be considered "official misconduct."

Ethics Commission Violates City Charter

San Francisco's mainstream daily news media have reported only the most superficial information about the issues underlying Mayor Ed Lee's official misconduct charges against Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi. In stark contrast, a detailed, dispassionate analysis was posted anonymously on September 9 in a blog article titled "San Francisco Ethics Commission Official Misconduct Proceeding Against Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi — Thoughts on Final Hearing – August 16, 2012."

The anonymous author thoughtfully presents successive observations about the

Cont. p. 6

George Wooding's

PROPOSITIONS A – G • VOTING GUIDELINES

Go to the Westside Observer at westsideobserver.com for a detailed analysis on all the Propositions.

Prop A: City College Parcel Tax

A mess that needs to be fixed **YES**

Prop B: Parks Bond

Financially unaccountable and irresponsible ... **NO**

Prop C: Housing Trust Fund

30 years of developer welfare. ... **NO**

Prop D: Odd year elections

Almost inconsequential ... **YES**

Prop E: Gross Receipts Tax

A new type of tax that keeps & loses jobs ... **YES**

Prop F: Hetch Hetchy

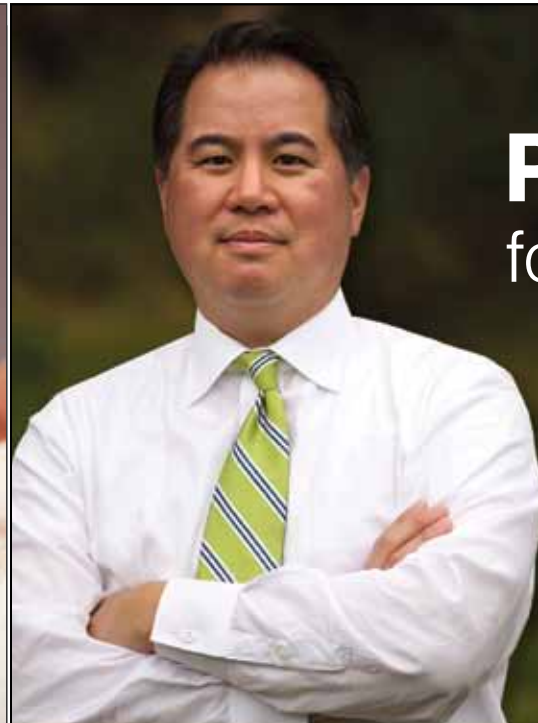
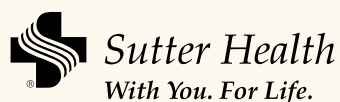
Trys to reclaim Hetch Hetchy valley.. ... **NO**

Prop G: Opposes Corporate Personhood

Supreme Court overruled? ... **NO**

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Phil Ting for Assembly

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better schools
and affordable
higher education

Phil Ting knows that to rebuild California's economy, we need to create high-paying jobs, improve our public schools and make college more affordable. Phil Ting is an innovative leader who has helped create hundreds of new high-wage jobs with successful programs like GoSolarSF and ChinaSF. As the father of two young daughters and a product of California's public schools from kindergarten through UC Berkeley, Phil Ting understands that the future of California is rooted in our outstanding schools and universities. That's why as a member of the Assembly, Ting will fight every day to restore the California dream.

Join the Democratic Party, Attorney General Kamala Harris, Congresswoman Jackie Speier, State Senators Mark Leno and Leland Yee, Assemblymembers Tom Ammiano and Fiona Ma, District 11 Democratic Club, Westside Democratic Club, teachers, police, firefighters, nurses and many more in supporting Phil Ting for Assembly.



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Official Misconduct (Cont. from p. 5)

deliberations of the Ethics Commission, raising about ninety well-reasoned arguments of how the Ethics Commission went astray.

In a series of tables, the author examines each of the Mayor's six counts against Mirkarimi—counts that had to be revised and reintroduced after the Ethics Commission rejected the Mayor's initial charges. Notably, none of the Mayor's revised six counts were sustained in full by the Ethics Commission, which rejected four of the six counts outright, and then created a single hybrid new charge by picking and choosing portions of the remaining two counts. The hybrid charge was raised just minutes before the Ethics Commission voted four-to-one against Mirkarimi, depriving him of the information, vital to his defense, of what charge he was actually fighting until just seconds before the Commission's verdict.

The author illustrates quite clearly that the only sustained supporting fact (Mirkarimi's wife's bruised arm on New Year's Eve) did not relate to any of the Sheriff's duties of office, so it can't possibly be "official misconduct" related to Mirkarimi's official duties.

The author examines the new "relationship" tests the Ethics Commission dreamt up to evaluate whether any relationships existed between Mirkarimi's alleged wrongdoing and the office(s) he held. The Ethics Commission went to great lengths to dream up new relationships to support the Mayor's charge that Mirkarimi's conduct had fallen "below the standards of decency, good faith and right action impliedly required of" elected officials. Ethics Commissioner Paul Renne considered it pointless to discuss any "relationships" at all. But Commissioners Liu, Studley, and Hayon held to their moral certainty that Mirkarimi was guilty, and through "backwards reasoning," they simply made up a middle-ground "relationship" test.

But the made-up requirements are so diluted that they amount to no requirement at all, exactly what Commissioner Renne had insisted: No direct relationship between duties of office held and alleged conduct was necessary.

The anonymous author concludes that a court will likely conclude in the future, and reject out of hand, Renne's blatantly unconstitutional interpretation of the definition of official misconduct. The author also believes that with just a bit more effort, a court will also reject the "backwards reasoning" Commissioners Liu, Studley, and Hayon used to arrive at the same unconstitutional conclusion.

The analysis concludes with two key points: First, the Ethics Commission was strictly limited to a single legal question: Did a public official commit "official misconduct" as defined

in City Charter Section 15.105(e), or not? The Ethics Commission didn't answer this question.

"Upgrading" Charges Exceeded Commission's Authority

Instead, they made up their own rules. The author notes, "Voters never granted the unelected five-member Ethics Commission the authority to make recall decisions for them. Its authority is strictly limited to a legal question. ... The Ethics Commission may not exercise authority it has never been granted by 'upgrading' non-official misconduct to 'official misconduct' merely because the Ethics Commission is confident — even certain — that voters would not have elected the official had they known what the Ethics Commission has since learned."

The only way the Ethics Commission could do that would be by substituting their own political judgment for the judgment of voters, but they have no authority to do that, either.

Second, how far back in time can a Mayor or Ethics Commission look to uncover evidence of former improper misconduct in misguided attempts to find relationships to previous conduct and an elected or appointed office held? Eight months? Two years? An entire lifetime?

If this new "standard" is upheld, every City employee could face removal by a vindictive Mayor. Who would ever choose to become a public servant or public employee with rules like that in place? If Mayor Lee is allowed to make up these rules as he goes along, what's to stop him from fabricating charges against, say, Supervisor Sean Elsbernd or Supervisor Scott Wiener? Is any employee safe with this sort of a precedent, and does the Board of Supervisors really want to hand such open-ended authority to the Mayor in perpetuity? How would that work under a really rotten mayor?

By making up the rules of the misconduct proceedings against Mirkarimi as they went along, the Ethics Commission appears to have violated the City Charter itself by exercising authority it has not been granted.

Further reading: The dispassionate, anonymous analysis of the Ethics Commission's handling of Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi's case can be found online at <http://rjemirkarimi.blogspot.com/2012/09/ethics-commission-proceeding-against.html>. It is well worth the read.

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

Parkmerced Evictions (Cont. from p. 1)

issue and met with a Deputy City Attorney (DCA) Yvonne Meré from the enforcement unit on December 2, 2011. I asked if there was going to be an investigation into the utility issue. DCA Yvonne Meré said that she would have an answer for me on December 8, 2011. I made numerous attempts to follow-up with DCA Meré but she did not respond for nearly three months. City Attorney Herrera has never responded to any of my inquiries about this issue.

- On December 13, 2011, I spoke to the Rent Board Commission regarding this issue and staff stated that the City Attorney's office was going to investigate the issue. It has been nearly a year since I spoke before the Rent Board, and I have not heard anything from the City Attorney.

By investigating, I have been able to allow sunshine in and expose the corruption and collusion. I have been viciously retaliated against, culminating in the wrongful eviction of me and my family from our home. So many people were afraid of being evicted that I could not stand by and do nothing. Given everything that my family and I have experienced, I would gladly do it again because I wish for justice to be done. I have filed a lawsuit in federal court to address these issues.

Lynn Gavin is a candidate for Supervisor District 7. Feedback: gavin4seven@hotmail.com

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Prop B/Wooding (Cont. from p. 5)

to park land.

With over 3,000 members, Forest Alliance was too strong for the RPD to ignore in a park bond election year. Hat-in-hand, District Eight Supervisor Scott Wiener struck a deal with Forest Alliance — that if they did not oppose the 2012 Proposition B Parks Bond, the RPD would not use any of the 2012 bond funds on NAP’s Mt. Davidson efforts. Forrest Alliance accepted the deal.

The Forest Alliance leadership is a savvy group. They must know that the RPD can use its bond funds from 2000 and 2008 for NAP projects at Mt. Davidson, plus the RPD’s open space fund gives NAP an additional annual budget of \$1.5 million. All of this money can still be used by NAP at Mt. Davidson. If Forrest Alliance really wants to stop NAP, their members should vote against the Proposition B parks bond. After the November election, Forest Alliance will have lost its leverage over the RPD.

Financially Irresponsible

The RPD is attempting to use this GO Bond money to partially replace the General Funding that has been deliberately taken away by the Mayor’s Office. This incessant bond borrowing is a horrible financial policy, because the interest on the RPD bonds is costing the public millions of extra dollars — similar to financing your car payments with credit cards. And remember: our paid taxes have *already* given the city *more* than enough money to pay for park infrastructure with no additional interest payments.

Unfortunately, the RPD has not been financially accountable to the citizens of San Francisco. RPD funds are routinely hidden, transferred from one park fund to another, or sent directly to the city’s General Fund with no transparency or accountability to the public. Financially, the public can no longer trust the RPD.

RPD management staff has little to no training in recreation and park management, and consists primarily of City Hall cast-offs that could not tell a mole from a gopher. Fifteen new six-figure employees, each with a 33% benefit package, have been hired in the last year.

Around the same time, RPD fired 166 local Park Recreation Directors who were mentors to latch-key children and youth. These Rec Directors took responsibility for the sites at which they worked.

After they were forced out, part-time private coaches and other casuals drop in to work on an “as needed basis.” There are no longer custodians /directors in our local parks.

The new RPD mission under its General Manager, Phil Ginsburg, has been to “extract” or “activate” as much money from the park system as possible through increased permit fees, philanthropic donations, higher or new admission fees, more events, and mandatory security fees. This has undermined the RPD’s paramount responsibility to provide accessible parks and recreation facilities to the public.

In effect, the RPD has become a lobbyist for wealthy donors rather than keeping true to its mission as an advocate for the public — and steward of our parks and open spaces.

With no operating funds for staff, our parks are deteriorating. Recreation facilities are understaffed, neglected, or shuttered. Public access is now more costly. Green spaces are being covered with hard surfaces and toxic artificial turf.

While this bond would enhance some facilities, it would reinforce the destructive practices of the Recreation and Parks Department. As noted, \$61.5 million of this bond will not be dedicated to any specific project until after the bond is passed. This tactic allows the RPD to promise neighborhoods throughout the City that their local park “may” receive bond funds. The RPD needs citizens’ votes, but will often not honor the original promises made to neighborhoods.

RPD routinely sets up conflicts between residents and private interests. Contractors, lessees, and concessionaires become investors in the “enterprise” and fight to keep their businesses, thus catalyzing more privatization of public space. Citizens’ voices are routinely ignored.

Because bond funds can legally be used only for capital improvements, this measure will not meet our parks’ most dire needs for the return of the dedicated park recreation directors who have been let go, plus more gardeners, custodians, and maintenance workers.

Only after the wayward Parks Department resumes its appointed role as steward of our cherished parks will we gladly vote to allot them more money.

VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION B!

George Wooding, Midtown Terrace Homeowners Association



Central Council Candidate Forum

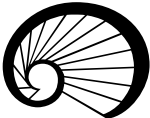
Over 200 people gathered for the West of Twin Peaks Central Council District 7 Candidate Forum. Before entering the auditorium, neighbors had to survive a gauntlet – a throng of partisans waving signs and declaring their support for candidates. Once seated in the classic auditorium, the show began with WOTPCC President Matt Chamberlain thanking the candidates for their participation, and noting that it was in 1936 at the Aptos School Auditorium that the Council was born. 76 years later, the same auditorium was still a place for civic discussion.

All nine candidates appeared and were afforded a brief time to introduce themselves, with all confirming they enjoyed living in District 7, were committed to protecting neighborhoods, and would be a great supervisor. The 10 minutes of statements were in turn followed by a surprise round of questioning that only allowed for Yes or No answers, signified by paddles held by the candidates. Some answers allowed for universal agreement; no candidate supported removing Hetch Hetchy, and no candidate dared to support Sunday Parking meters in West Portal. Issues inspiring marked dissent among the candidates included 1)free passes for MUNI youth; 2)public power; 3)the decriminalization of prostitution; and 4) the removal of Ross Mirkarimi. Answers were recorded and are available on the West of Twin Peaks website.

Not all candidates appreciated the chance to give direct answers. Andrew Bley wasn’t sure where he stood on prostitution, and Michael Garcia forcefully refused to answer about his support for Ross Mirkarimi, declaring that the City Attorney had advised him and other candidates not to state a position. Other candidates disputed his claim as untrue.

After the yes/no round, two moderators, respected local journalists Barbara Taylor and Joe Eskenazi, deftly asked questions that the candidates didn’t always want to answer clearly. All nine were asked questions, but attention focused on the top three frontrunners. Norman Yee discussed his leadership on the School Board. He suggested that the city should audit its departments, but at times struggled to give clear positions when put on the spot. Michael Garcia spoke well about his experience as a teacher and in government specially relating to land use/development on the Board of Appeals, though his answers sometimes required follow up questions from moderators to get a clear answer. FX Crowley quickly branded himself a moderate, referring to his biggest supporter, Dianne Feinstein. He gave answers that detailed his experience in the Arts sector and service on the Public Utilities Commission, and usually focused on substantive details, notinjecting much flash or personality. Journalist Joel Engardio, fighting to enter the top tier, gave polished answers, focusing on common sense as his platform, and was rewarded by an appreciate crowd.

After two hours, the September 22nd successful forum ended, the moderators were given copies of books on West of Twin Peaks, and Chamberlain thanked everyone and reminded them all to vote this November, or absentee, in this important race.



San Francisco Public Library

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San Francisco Public Library Service Hours

The San Francisco Public Library invites the community to visit a neighborhood library this fall and give us input about library operating hours. This will be an opportunity to give us your ideas on library services and priorities.

For more information, check sfpl.org or call (415) 557-4277

Meeting Dates and Locations:

Thursday, September 13 6-8 p.m. Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch Library	Tuesday, October 2 6-8 p.m. Bernal Branch Library
Saturday, September 15 1-4 p.m. SF Main Library, Koret Auditorium	Tuesday, October 16 6-8 p.m. Visitacion Valley Branch Library
Wednesday, September 19 6-8 p.m. Chinatown Branch Library	Wednesday, October 17 6-8 p.m. Ortega Branch Library
Tuesday, September 25 6-8 p.m. Presidio Branch Library	Monday, October 22 6-8 p.m. West Portal Branch Library
Saturday, September 29 1-3 p.m. Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library	Wednesday, October 24 6-8 p.m. Park Branch Library
	Tuesday, October 30 6-8 p.m. Excelsior Branch Library

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- ✓ Work to address budget concerns by emphasizing the need for Government to live within its means by addressing unfunded and unsustainable mandates which will kill pension plans and essential services.
- ✓ Reform our educational system so parents will have an incentive to enroll their kids into our public schools.

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MONEY MATTERS • By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan

The Retirement Wild Card
Planning for Your Future
Healthcare Costs

Planning financially for retirement is becoming an increasingly complex task, and the rising cost of healthcare isn't helping matters. Household and national budgets are pinched in part thanks to more expensive care, a population with longer life expectancies and growing healthcare debt. Add to this an aging boomer population that's expected to experience an uptick in their need for healthcare services with each passing year, and it's easy to see that costs will likely continue to soar. All told, it's apparent that Americans need to be prepared for significant healthcare spending in their golden years and adjust their retirement plans (and expectations) accordingly.

Are you overwhelmed yet? There is a great deal to know, so spend some time researching and finding answers to your questions well in advance of retirement. Whether you plan to retire in the near future or much further down the road, it's important to understand how leaving the workforce will affect your healthcare options and your wallet.

The following discussion provides an overview of what to consider, and may help you determine how best to manage your medical costs in retirement.

Understand Your Medicare Benefits. In 1965, the United States government implemented Medicare, a government-subsidized healthcare program designed to provide affordable healthcare to older and disabled Americans. One common misunderstanding about Medicare is the notion that it provides total coverage for retirees. Participant costs — including premiums and co-insurance — do vary, but middle-and high-income families can expect to contribute significantly to their healthcare costs in retirement.

Medicare includes several parts and can be tricky to understand. Part A is hospital insurance, Part B is medical insurance and Part D provides prescription drug coverage. Then there are supplemental plans, which include Medicare Advantage plans (formerly called Medicare Part C) and Medigap plans. These optional plans are designed to help cover deductibles and copays; they may include provisions for prescription drugs, vision and dental care. Many retirees opt to pay a premium for supplemental plan coverage to avoid spikes in their monthly expenses.

Medicare eligibility starts at age 65, or sooner if you have a qualifying disability. If you're nearing retirement age, pay close attention to enrollment timelines and requirements to ensure eligibility.

Evaluate your need for long-term care insurance. Like all forms of insurance, long-term care insurance is a way of protecting yourself against an adverse event that could possibly never occur, but there's a good chance you would make use of a policy. Cost and eligibility are tied to age and overall health, so this type of policy is not



practical for everyone. Also, these plans are not standardized, so compare options before you buy.

Incorporate healthcare cost planning into your overall financial plan. While it's valuable to understand how healthcare costs play out in retirement in a general sense, it's even more useful to apply this information to your unique set of circumstances. A financial advisor can help you examine your family's situation, project your costs to the extent possible, and recommend strategies to help you enhance your savings options and potentially reduce expenses in retirement.

For example, if you or your spouse have not paid Medicare taxes over the course of ten years while working, your retirement plan should reflect an allocation for the monthly premium attached to the benefit of Medicare Part A, which others will receive free and clear. If you have a chronic condition, you can expect to incur more out-of-pocket costs. Your circumstances may also be different if you have a generous pension plan or if your former employer offers insurance coverage into retirement.

Will you be able to retire early? Some people may have dreams of leaving fulltime employment before Medicare kicks in at age 65. The Affordable Care Act includes a provision to encourage employers to maintain retirement insurance coverage for early retirees through the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program. Find out if your employer participates and think carefully about the pros and cons of leaving the workforce early.

Keep in mind that our healthcare system may seem "unwell" at the moment, but just like our bodies, there is tremendous potential for healing if each of us takes responsibility where we can by finding ways to improve our health and spend our healthcare dollars wisely.

¹Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010 Medicare Chartbook, "Section 1: Medicare Beneficiaries."

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

professional. Like sunburn, West Nile Virus is completely preventable."

Fight the Bite San Francisco campaign recommends the following methods to reduce the likelihood of getting bitten by an infected mosquito:

- Eliminate all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed
- While outdoors at dawn and dusk, wear long pants and shirts
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin according to label instructions
- Report significant mosquito activity to DPH by calling 3-1-1
- Report dead birds to the State at 1/877/ WNV-BIRD

Info::www.sfm mosquito.org and www.west-nile.ca.gov.

“Why Do they Keep Coming
to this Doctor?...”

(Who admits to curing no one.)

Dear friend,

I've got to tell you something that I have never said out loud.

But what I am going to tell you makes so much sense that you'll probably get mad that no one told you this before.

I've been doctor in this town for 10 years now. And to this day I've never cured anyone. You may think that the word would get around and that no one would come to see me anymore. The opposite is true. The more people who understand, the more people come to see me.

Several times a day patients thank me for helping them with their health problems. But I can't really take the credit. I've never healed anyone of anything. What I do is perform a specific spinal adjustment to remove nerve pressure and the body responds by healing itself. And, we get terrific results. That is why our office is filled with people who have found help nowhere else.

Let me tell a little about me before I tell you about a terrific offer I have for you.

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, 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 medical 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 answer to the pain, I went to medical doctors, physical therapists, acupuncturists; I tried special pillows, etc. 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 I 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! So I made an appointment with the chiropractor. 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, I thank him every day!

After that, I knew what I had to do. I had to become a chiropractor.

I have adjusted babies within hours of being born. They obviously didn't complain of neck or back pain. I adjusted them to keep their spines in alignment so there were no pinched nerves to cause problems or pains... As with the many children that I care for in my office. And that is how it happened!

For the last 7 years, people from San Francisco and the surrounding area have

come to see me with their pinched nerve problems. They also come to me with their:

- 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 you 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

"After two major car accidents, after trying 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 Doctor 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

Exciting offer-look, I 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 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 \$318.

Again there are only 20 of these slots so don't miss out.

Great care at a great fee...Please 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. My qualifications. I am a graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractic who has published articles in leading chiropractic journals and taught chiropractors chiropractic. I've been entrusted to take care of tiny babies to athletes that you may know. I've been helping your neighbors in San Francisco since 2004. I just have that low exam fee to help more people who need care.

My assistants are Raquel and Lila and they are really great people. Our office 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 office 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 Raquel or Lila today for an appointment. We can help you. Thank you.

— Dr. Christina Meakim D.C.

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

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

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

WHISTLEBLOWERS / Dr. Maria Rivero & Dr. Derek Kerr

Veiled in Secrecy – The Whistleblower Program

By Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr

Between 2004 and 2009, the SF Controller's Whistleblower Program (SFWP) issued public reports every six months. Though brief, they gave examples of investigated complaints, substantiated or not. Readers could tell why some complaints were not substantiated. Starting in 2006, investigated City departments were identified. High-profile cases involving Commissioners, CEOs and even Supervisors were noted. Whistleblowers were promised confidentiality — and encouraged to identify themselves. SFWP staff would “ask follow-up questions and/or relay results of investigations.” By 2008, 57% of tipsters were providing contact information. There was a sense of public engagement.

Something changed in 2009. Public reports were cut from two to one a year, and loaded with verbiage about “confidentiality.” Names of implicated City departments were replaced by generic terms like “an employee” or “a department manager.” Such generalizations can hide mismanagement in a City with some 60 departments and 30,000 employees. “Unsubstantiated” case reports were deleted, though they outnumbered substantiated ones by 2-to-1 and may have harbored scandals. For the first time, the SFWP disclosed that it had “facilitated the investigation” of 50% of all complaints. But the number of investigations independently conducted by the SFWP remains a secret.

Right after Ben Rosenfield became Controller, the 2008-09 budget for SFWP salaries, benefits and overhead was surreptitiously cut by 41%. At an April 2009 meeting, the newly-appointed SFWP Director, Tonia Ledijs, reported; “The Whistleblower Program is being revamped.” Nothing more was disclosed. Likewise, annual budgets for the SFWP were never made public. In response to our public records request, the Controller's Office compiled data showing that in fiscal years 2004 to 2008, the average



annual SFWP budget was \$256,300. The next four years, between 2008 and 2012, the average annual budget plunged to \$134,079 – a 48% drop. During the same time frame, the flow of complaints surged from an average of 278 to 391 yearly – a 41% increase. Nobody reported how the SFWP performed with 41% more work and 48% less money. And, the SFWP refuses to conduct a whistleblower Satisfaction Survey.

In its early years the SFWP consisted of a Manager and two investigators. Now, the SFWP reportedly gets by with two half-time investigators, one of whom is also the Manager. For fiscal year 2011-12, the SFWP budget was \$139,192 – a puny 1.2% of the \$11.6 million allotted to the City Services Auditor. Compare this \$139,192 to the \$93,849 base salary for SFWP Manager Steve Flaherty in 2010-2011. That budget barely covered one full-time investigator plus 30% benefits. Fiscal starving could explain the cloddish customer service, why investigations were punted to implicated City departments, and why most complaints were “unsubstantiated.”

The secrecy of the SFWP, and the alienation of its informants, were unveiled

Cont. p. 14

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL By Mitch Bull

A night of heavy fog outside didn't deter the attendees or dampen the discussions at the West of Twin Peaks Central Council meeting on September 24th. The newly-elected 2012-13 council officers, led by (re-elected) **President Matt Chamberlain**, presided over a meeting that was highlighted by a spirited debate over the upcoming **Neighborhood Parks Bond measure, Proposition B.**



The bond measure, a \$195,000,000 package offered by the Recreation and Parks Department, is being touted as essential for capital maintenance to dozens of San Francisco city parks, pools and other Rec and Park facilities that are suffering from years, and in some cases decades of “deferred maintenance.”

District 8 Supervisor **Scott Weiner** presented the “pro” side of the measure, explaining that the Rec and Park Department is trying to repair areas such as dilapidated pools, structures built from pressure treated lumber that contains arsenic, to broken irrigation systems and other unsafe playground conditions. The Supervisor cited over \$1 billion dollars in deferred maintenance over decades. Weiner explained that the bond would not increase property taxes as this new bond is being proposed as other bonds have expired so that property taxes will not be allowed to move higher than 2006 levels, and that the Capital Improvement funds are needed, as routine maintenance has not been performed for years.

He acknowledged that many people are not pleased with the performance or priorities of the Recreation and Parks Department under **General Manager Phil Ginsberg**, but that voting no on the bond measure would not be sending the right message; instead it would penalize the citizens who utilize the parks and playgrounds.

Former Supervisor Aaron Peskin agreed that the Parks need help, but is adamant that this bond measure is not

Supervisors Scott Weiner and Aaron Peskin (former) argue Prop B the right answer at this time. Peskin feels that voters can best send a message to the Rec and Park department by defeating this “flawed” measure; otherwise, a yes vote will give a vote of confidence to the Rec and Park management team and support their activities of renovating parcels, then closing or privatizing them due to lack of operating budgets. He went on to say that the Rec and Parks Department is averaging a new bond measure about every 8 years and that as of May, over \$78,000,000 from the 2008 Bond Measure was still unspent and unallocated. Citing past programs such as the renovated (but still closed) J.P. Murphy clubhouse (closed due to lack of stable operating budget funding), Peskin offered that it is better to let structures “rot or raze them” if there is no operating budget to staff and operate them once they are renovated. He agrees with Weiner that the lack of operating funding has created problems, but disagrees on the need for more capital improvements and repairs using this bond measure.

In a short rebuttal, Weiner disputed that vast amounts of dollars were still unspent, telling the crowd that over 90%

Cont. p. 19

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417 Dellbrook Ave Beautifully renovated and maintained 4BR/3BA home. Oak hardwood floors, gourmet kitchen, garden patio, massive lot.
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- **Parks are for kids, dogs and trees.**
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- **Business is not a bad word.**
We need a dynamic local economy to create jobs and revenue. Let's make it easy to start and grow your small business dream.
- **Your house is not the city's ATM.**
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LaPlaya (Cont. from p. 1)

discussion on the topic of over-sized vehicle use will not be ignored. “The legislation recently passed unanimously out of Land Use Committee, and will be considered by the full Board of Supervisors.”

The full outcome of that will have to address the issue of homelessness as a vehicle “camped-out” along the beach for an extended amount of time usually implies that the people in the vehicle are homeless.

Many neighbors have empathy on the issue of homelessness, but believe some of the “campers” are simply engaging in a fringe lifestyle that openly encourages intoxication and vagrancy, and want others to join them in their partying and

loitering. Ward agreed as he said that many of the people “are not from around here. They don't understand this is a place where families live and that we want to improve the quality of life here.”

Ward and others consider The Parkside, Sunset and Richmond Districts the last of the “real neighborhoods” of San Francisco. The Parkside and surrounding areas are where ordinary hard-working people live.

Neighbors hope that Steve Ward's effort to foster a strong community at La Playa will also foster solidarity among others in the Parkside, Sunset, and Richmond Districts.

Jonathan Farrell is a SF free lance reporter.
jonathan@westsideobserver.com

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Quentin Kopp (Cont. from p. 3)

of the Transamerica Pyramid, a Shorenstein& Co. or Clint Reilly building, or one of those monstrous buildings South of Market would pay the same amount of parcel tax as every homeowner. (None of that tax will be paid by tenants.) That's the reason I'm not voting for Proposition A, despite my love of the National Championship City College football team and its coaching staff. It's unspeakably unfair. I strongly also urge a “no” vote on Proposition B, which allocates \$34,500,000 to the Port and \$160,500,000 to Recreation and Park. It's the third such bond in 12 years, following a \$110,000,000 issue in 2000 and a \$185,000,000 borrowing in 2008, of which \$73,700,000 (49%) has not been spent! If you're parochial, you'll note that only \$2,000,000 of the \$195,000,000 indebtedness will be spent in District 7 (Lake Merced), but without detail as to such asserted “improvements.” Only city government has the audacity to encumber taxpayers in 2008 for alleged specific improvements, then ask for \$195,000,000 more, not even using half of the 2008 indebtedness. This is a department which last year eliminated about 160 playground directors in favor of creating “property managers” to rent and lease our public properties to private

entities, such as a “for-profit” school. The San Francisco Consumer Price Index has increased 50.3% from 1996-97 to 2012; but this department's General Fund budget has increased from \$74,218,771 in fiscal 1997 to \$138,504,752 in this fiscal year, an approximate 95% increase.

That's fiscal profligacy.

Remaining San Francisco ballot measures C, D, E, F and G are of lesser moment. I'll probably vote for D (consolidating municipal elections), E (eliminating the payroll tax, which I tried to do in 1984), and G (a declaration of policy opposing corporate personhood, which seems consistent with my support of State Proposition 32). I certainly oppose Proposition F artfully characterized as “restoring” Hetch Hetchy, and I'll vote “No” on Proposition C, a “housing trust fund,” for developers, their “affordable” housing allies, and similar political housing hacks. The measure seizes \$20,000,000 in the first of 30 years of existence, amounting to about \$1,200,000,000 over 30 years. It also seizes and increases the hotel tax and business license fees. It's unworthy of your support.

(Next month I'll discuss State ballot measures.)

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



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CASTRONOE VALLEYPACIFIC HEIGHTSPOTRERO HILLUPPER MARKETWEST PORTAL



What a weekend. First, the West of Twin Peaks Central Council organized a very well-attended District 7 Supervisor Candidate’s Forum, then our SF Giants clinched the Western Division title (over the dreaded Dodgers), then to cap it off, the 49ers came out flat in Minneapolis...and the Raiders upset the Steelers. It proves that you never can tell what is going to happen. Saying that, it will be interesting to see what happens on the national and local levels as we start to come to the end of the 2012 election season. From the Presidency to our local Supervisor, the seats are up for grabs and there’s no telling what the voters will do.

Thank you to everyone who called and commented about the candidate profile in last month’s issue of the Observer. In this issue there is additional coverage and commentary from our local political pundits. Whether you physically go to the polling station, or vote by mail, just remember to exercise your right to vote. Make it a priority to get out and make your choices known.

It’s a small world... I recently watched a PBS special on Marilyn Monroe, as this year marks 50 years since her passing, and in the Observer mailbox I received a note from local hairdresser and celebrity Marc Troy describing his sessions with the Hollywood star...

“I was always ‘Hello Mr. Troy’ to Marilyn Monroe. Yes, she was everything that hundreds of writers wrote and said about her, maybe more or even less, but at the end of the day, when alone she was simply Marilyn. Weekly visits to the St. Moritz at 323 Geary Street (the tens of thousands of cable car riders who passed below would never have imagined that Hollywood’s most talked about and glorified star was having her hair done above their heads)...which extended through the months she visited the salon as Mrs. Joe DiMaggio.” Thank you to Marc for sharing this amazing experience with us.

Visit the “Villa”...My wife and I had the pleasure of having dinner the other evening at the classic SF restaurant, Villa D’Este on Ocean Avenue in Lakeside Village. Owner Ramon Orapeza has an extensive and delicious menu that carries on the traditional Italian dinner that we’ve lost, as places such as The Granada Café, Caesars and the Gold Spike are no longer with us. The food is great, the décor is classic and the prices are very reasonable. THE Classic San Francisco experience.

Congratulations to the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association on joining the West Of Twin Peaks Central Council organization. The WOTPCC has been representing the Westside neighborhoods since 1937 and now has 20 neighborhood member organizations.

Do you have an event, a neighborhood fact or just an observation to share? Drop us a line at mitch@westsideobserver.com Check out www.WestsideObserver.com, or on Twitter @ Twitter!@ WestS_Observer and Facebook. and share your ideas or just let us know what you think.



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Oak / Fell Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Project

SFMTA Board of Directors Meeting

Tues., Oct. 16, 1:00 PM City Hall Rm 400
Consideration of approval of parking and traffic changes. The community will be given an opportunity to share their comments with the Board. The final proposal includes bikeways separate from motor vehicle traffic, corner bulbouts and traffic signal changes to slow vehicles. INFO: (www.sfmta.com/OakFell).



IMPROVE THE ECONOMY, CREATE JOBS



I am the owner of a building maintenance company that has created thousands of jobs in San Francisco. As a local-business owner I know what it means to create jobs and improve the economy. I also know that the city government is usually the biggest obstacle in doing that. High taxes and unnecessary regulations are increasing the cost of doing business here, which causes businesses to move out and shoppers and tourists to go to other cities that are more affordable.

STAND UP FOR FAMILIES

As a homeowner I know what it feels like to be used as an ATM for City Hall. Every year parking tickets go up, local-taxes increase while schools get ignored and potholes grow. This increase in cost of living is driving families out of our neighborhood, and making it harder for all of us to pay our bills.



Sri Lanka, 2005
Bob Squeri brings humanitarian aid to the victims of the tsunami

In 2006, Bob Squeri founded One Child At A Time Inc. as a proactive response to the dire situation around the world.

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

TUE • 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 of wine consumed on site. 230 West Portal Ave 731-7000

Every Thu | 5:30–9 pm | Chef Val serves up Tapas \$3–7.

WED • EVERY WED MORNING - TOASTMASTERS

Wed | 7-8 am | Toastmasters helps you become a confident public speaker. Every Wednesday morning from 7-8am, Tennessee Grill, 1128 Taraval Street, upstairs meeting room.

THU • EVERY THURS – NIGHTLIFE@ACAD SCIENCES

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

FRI • JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

FRI • FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

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

FRI –SUN • FREE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES DAYS

5 Fri – Sun Oct 5–7 | 9:30 am–5 pm | Free admission SF residents in each ZIP code 94116 & 94122 Each visiting adult is limited to six children for free entry.

SAT-SUN • WORLD VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL

6 Sat-Sun Oct 6–7 | 10 am-6:30 pm | 13th World Veg Festival, County Fair Building, GG Park (Lincoln and 9th Ave). \$8 Child, Seniors students. Info: 273-5481. www.sfv.org

SUN • GOLDEN GATE PARK BAND SEASON FINALE

7 Sun Oct 7 | 1pm - 3pm | One of America's oldest concert bands GG Park: Music Concourse Bandshell under the direction of Michael L. Wirgler. 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden

TUE • NERT- EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

9 Tue Oct 9 & 16 | 8:30 am–5:30 pm | Free disaster preparedness training from SF Fire Dept., SF State, 800 Font St. Seven Hills Ctr. www.sfgov.org/sffdnert for more info on training and class locations.

TUE • LEARN ABOUT COLLECTING STAMPS

9 Mon Oct 9 | 7–8:30 pm | History and art combined into a tiny postage stamp. SFPD stamp club meeting, SFPD Richmond Station, 461 - 6th Ave.

TUE • GREATER WEST PORTAL-GWPNA

10 Tue Oct 10 | 7:30 pm | West Portal Clubhouse, 139 Lenox Way. First Tues each month. The "Western Heart" of SF. www.gwpna.org

THU • SUNSET DIST COALITION MEETING

11 Thu Oct 11 | 7 pm–9 pm | Meets 2nd Thu each month. Info or to be added to the agenda: Susan at 586.8103 or ssuval@sbcglobal.net Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave.

MON • SUNSET-PARKSIDE MEETING

15 Mon Oct 15 | 6 pm | SPEAK aims to educate Sunset/Parkside residents on public safety, zoning, planning etc. 3201 Ulloa St. (Grace Lutheran) 3rd Mon each month. speaksanfrancisco@yahoo.com

TUE • AUTHOR JACOB NEEDLEMAN

16 Tue Oct 16 | 7 pm | *An Unknown World: Notes on the Meaning of the Earth* SF State professor explores the question: What is the purpose of life on Earth? BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal, 564-8080.

TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

16 Tue Oct 16 | 6 pm | Taraval District Police 3rd Tue of the month. Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. Minnie & Lovie Ward Rec. Ctr., 650 Capitol 759-3100.

FRI • NATIVE PLANT SALE

22 Fri Oct 22 | 1-5 pm | California Native Plant Society's native plant sale of indigenous drought tolerant plants, 350 O'Shaughnessy 531-2140 or e.edelson@sbcglobal.net • cnps-yerbabuena.org

MON • WOTP CENTRAL COUNCIL

22 Mon Oct 22 | 7:30 pm | West of Twin Peaks Central Council meets on 4th Monday each month for those interested in local issues. Forest Hill Clubhouse, 381 Magellan.

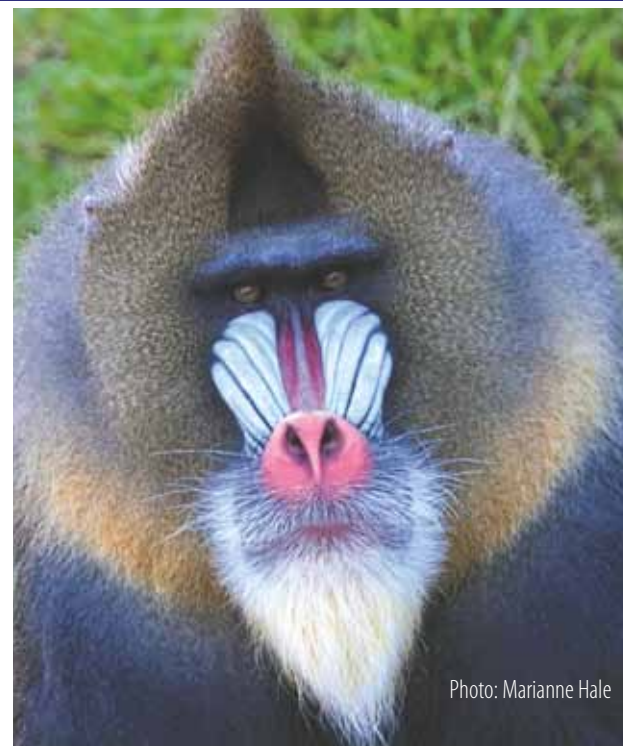


Photo: Marianne Hale

JESSE AT 15 YEARS

SF Zoo's male mandrill, Jesse, turned 15! Jesse and the Zoo's two female mandrills, Cleo and Lulu, can be seen in the mandrill exhibit near the Primate Discovery Center.

Mandrill is listed as Vulnerable. Intensive hunting pressure (combined with habitat loss) across its range, —likely a decline exceeding 30% over the past 30 years.

WED • SUPPORT FOR MEMORY LOSS CAREGIVERS

2 Wed Oct 24 | 6-7:30 pm | Alma Via of San Francisco is hosting a support group. Learn about memory loss, share experiences and get answers. Alma Via, One Thomas More Way. RSVP 508-5500.

MON • SHARP

29 Mon Oct 29 | 7 pm | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People. Last Mon each month. 1736 9th Ave. (Moraga)

TUE • SF HISTORY SOCIETY

30 Tue Oct 30 | 7pm | Building Golden Gate Bridge. Historian Peter Moylan's historical narrative. St. Philip's Catholic Church, 725 Diamond (at 24th St). He tells the stories and describes the building of San Francisco's iconic bridge

Have a local event? Contact: editor@westsideobserver.com

Now At the Movies • *By Don Lee Miller*

He'll be back next month! Check: westsideobserver.com for current reviews. www.westsideobserver.com/columns/movies.



Dr. Annette Lust



Flora Lynn Isaacson

The play's subtle probing to uncover the mystery of Juliana's psychological disintegration brings substance to this thriller about family life, and poses the philosophical question as to whether restoration can be achieved. The play holds

Cont. p. 14

Masterfully directed by veteran director Brian Katz, who incorporates interesting Commedia and vaudeville, the role of The Woman is performed with charm and command by Linda Ayres Frederick and The Man with vivacity and wit by Richard Aiello. Anya Kazimierski and Shane Rhodes bring youthful

Paid for Clark for Assembly 2012, FPFC# 1346552



Photo by Strange de Jinn



SOCCKER FIELD OPPONENTS APPEAL TO THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

When will environmentalists stop their opposition to plastic grass in Golden Gate Park? Probably never.

SF Ocean Edge, Sierra Club, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods, Viking Soccer Parents for Grass Fields in Golden Gate Park, Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance, and other organizations and individuals have filed Appeals of the Local Coastal Permit for the Beach Chalet soccer fields project with the California Coastal Commission (CCC).

This project will remove over 7 acres of living grass and replace it with over 7 acres of artificial turf and add 150,000 watts of sports lighting on 60 foot poles in Golden Gate Park, next to the Ocean Beach Promenade. These appeals mean that the project will be heard before the CCC at some time in the future. The CCC can have a major impact on the final design of the project. Your input will be very important to their decision. Please go to our website and sign up with us for updates as they become available. www.sfoceanedge.org

Whistleblowers (Cont. from p. 9)

in a May 2011 ABC-7 "I-Team" broadcast, "San Francisco Whistleblower Program Comes Under Fire"; and the July 2011 Civil Grand Jury report, "Whistling in the Dark – The San Francisco Whistleblower Program."

In September 2011, Sunshine activist Mel Shapiro won a Superior Court ruling that San Diego's Whistleblower Program "must disclose any report of an investigation that has been substantiated." These events prodded the SFWP to revise its 2010-2011 Annual Report on 11/22/11. Finally, all substantiated complaints were reported. However, the names of implicated City departments were not. Quarterly reports were issued and a FAQ section was added. In a reversal of previous practice, anonymous rather than identified tips were encouraged. Anonymity can isolate informants, limit follow-up contact, and lower the odds of full investigations. The number of anonymous complaints was withheld. Nothing about the 43% of complaints deemed "unsubstantiated" was disclosed.

This level of secrecy exceeds the confidentiality granted to Whistleblower Hot-Lines by California Code 53087.6(e). While the identities of whistleblowers, witnesses and subjects are protected, State law allows Programs "to issue any report of an investigation that has been substantiated, or to release any findings resulting from a completed investigation that are deemed necessary to serve the interests of the public." Since 2009, the SFWP has denied any public interest in knowing why so many complaints are unsubstantiated. In comparison, Santa Clara County's "24/7 Whistleblower Program" does a better job. There, the Board of Supervisors gets twice-yearly summaries of every complaint received – including unsubstantiated ones – along with investigative findings and actions taken.

State Senator Leland Yee asserts that whistleblower complaints are often settled and "swept under the rug." Yee proposed Senate Bill 1336 in February 2012 to identify subjects of substantiated complaints, the action taken, and the outcomes of unsubstantiated allegations. Since then, SB 1336 has been eroded in committee and opposed by City auditors and Unions, among others. The clause requiring disclosure of unsubstantiated complaints was the first casualty. Disclosure of unsubstantiated complaint findings remains discretionary State-wide, and unobtainable in San Francisco.

By October 2007, the SFWP had partnered with the City's Customer Service Center and switched its Hotline number to 311. The sixty call-takers at the 311 Service Center receive over 7,000 calls daily. Though call-takers are trained to forward whistleblower tips to the SFWP website, they also forward minor complaints about botched City services. After the transition to 311, the average number of SFWP complaints zoomed from 263 to 391 annually — a 49% increase. Was this dramatic rise due to service complaints or whistleblower tips?

Since 2009, the SFWP has masked complaints coming from the 311 Service Center by combining them with tips that whistleblowers log directly onto the SFWP website. Importantly, the number of citizen service complaints, versus employee whistleblower tips, is no longer reported. To preserve its focus and to inform the public, the SFWP should track true whistleblower tips separately from service complaints, as before.

The SFWP has expanded "confidentiality" beyond the realm of public interest, best practices, and even its own past practices.

Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr were senior physicians at Laguna Honda Hospital where they repeatedly exposed DPW wrongdoing. Contact: DerekOnVanNess@aol.com

Theater (Cont. from p. 13)

us in suspension as we move through Juliana's thought processes in plot twists that flow smoothly from present to past.

Credit should be given to Henny Russell's interpretation of a strong-willed woman, broken down and fighting to salvage the loss of her daughter and her mind. Russell dramatically portrays this conflict in the scene in which she mistakes another young woman for her daughter in their Cape Cod home.

Other credits are due to Donald Sage Mackay as the impatient and concerned husband, Carrie Paff as the empathetic Woman, and Patrick Russell as the Man.

White's *Other Place* brings experimental elements within a well-structured form, and challenging content that suits the Magic Theatre's commitment to present works with innovative form and content.

The Other Place plays until October 7. For information on The Other Place and upcoming productions call 415-441-8822 or visit www.magic-theatre.org. Annette Lust

SECOND THOUGHTS / By Jack Kaye



Why Is Romney Running and Who Should Vote for Him?

The first question we could be asking is, why is Romney running to be President of the United States? It's not the money. Romney makes more than \$20 million a year without lifting a finger. He surely doesn't need the \$400,000 a year salary that goes with the job. He does not need to live in the White House because he has many fine homes and with his net worth at about a quarter of a billion dollars, he could live anywhere he wants.

He surely has no ideology or plan to help our country. He has suggested no plan for tax reform other than making the rich richer and the poor poorer. His plan for the military is to increase it to equal a certain percent of the GNP, regardless of our defensive needs. He has no plans for increasing hiring or for reducing the number of home foreclosures.

He has no national political experience and worked in government for only four years. When he left the governor's office he had all evidence of his time there removed from computers and file cabinets. When he left office, his state was number 47 out of 50 states in job creation. He introduced health care reform which was the model for the Affordable Care Act, but is now against it even though it has been one of his few successes.

He says that he is the man for the job because he has 25 years of business experience but he doesn't want us to know what that experience really was. It appears that his company got into buying struggling companies, borrowing large amounts to pay for them, shrinking their work force and benefits, taking large commissions and then letting them go bankrupt. This does not create jobs. Many of the jobs his firm did create were in China and India by outsourcing the work.

He wants to reduce taxes on the rich but won't share his tax returns with the public. The one year's return he did reveal showed that he had much of his wealth offshore and in Swiss bank accounts to avoid paying taxes himself, while not using his wealth to create jobs in America. He wants to manage our tax code but can't manage to complete his 2011 tax return that was due April 15th, six months ago.

He calls himself severely conservative, which means that he is against gay marriage, abortion and unions. But when he was in government he said that he was in favor of those social issues.

So why is he running? Why was McCain running when he too had no need of the money, having married well the second time. I think it was for the same reason, and also might have even been George W's for running.

They were competing with their fathers.

George W's father was a war hero, a member of Congress, head of the CIA, Vice President and President of the United States. George W. joined the Air Force reserves to avoid battle and then was AWOL at that. He was a failed businessman and sports team owner. He had problems with substance abuse. He then became a successful governor, albeit in Texas, and ran for President like his father had done. He had twice as many terms as his dad, but almost destroyed the country in the process.

John McCain's father and grandfather were both four star admirals in the Navy. John had less than one year of combat experience flying planes in Viet Nam. He was captured and held as a POW for five terrible years. He realized soon that his military career would never equal his father's. He remarried well to a rich heiress whose father helped John get into Arizona politics. Being rich and a senator was not equal to a four star admiral, but being President and Commander-in-Chief would trump old dad. The admiral is still ahead on points.

Mitt Romney's father was head of an American car company and governor of Michigan. He was a contender for the Republican nomination for President, even though he was a Mormon and was born in Mexico, coming to America at age five. His son Mitt got into and through high school, college and graduate school because of his father, and was then given a moneymaking

“He was governor of Massachusetts for one term, but still had not equaled his father. Becoming President would surpass his father. The essence of Romney is competition and who better to beat than his own father? ...Instead of pursuing his real, individual talents, abilities and passions, he tries to be a better version of his father, a totally different individual.

business to run soon after school. He made a lot of money at Bain capital outsourcing jobs, reducing payrolls and benefits, and sometimes bankrupting the affected companies. He was governor of Massachusetts for one term, but still had not equaled his father. Becoming President would surpass his father. The essence of Romney is competition and who better to beat than his own father?

This might explain why Romney is so ill at ease running for President and does such a poor job

of it. Instead of pursuing his real, individual talents, abilities and passions, he tries to be a better version of his father, a totally different individual. With his looks he could have excelled in other careers - sales, modeling and acting come to mind. Romney could have even been the Marlboro man. Can't you see it now?

The next question is: who should vote for Mitt Romney? First, they must be Republican - 24% of the electorate. Being Republican also means being white and Christian. A recent study found that 90% of Republicans are white and 90% are Christian. The other 10% either didn't understand the questions or just don't understand what their best interests are. Besides being a white Christian Republican (a redundancy), they should also be rich, at least in the top two percent of family income, receiving more than \$250,000 a year because if re-elected, President Obama will raise their taxes while Romney might even lower them. But they have to be aware that lowering taxes on the rich in 2001 and 2003 helped create the economic disaster from which we are currently recovering. If taxes are lowered even more for the rich, regulations loosened and military spending increased, our deficit will grow even more rapidly, putting even the rich at risk of losing money, customers and stock value.

Other potential Romney voters might be white Christian Republicans who are not in the top 2% of income recipients but hold very strong cultural values. Some, like the evangelicals, love their Savior and hate gays, blacks, Jews, Muslims and foreigners in His name. They feel compelled to vote against the President even if it makes them suffer more economically, affected by the service program cuts that have been promised by candidate Romney. These evangelicals might even believe that Mormons are not Christians, but prefer them to what they perceive as a black, Muslim, socialist, pro-gay, pro-abortion and anti-gun foreigner (Kenyan or Hawaiian) President.

And of course every Mormon and everyone who contributes to Fox "news" is duty bound to vote for challenger Romney.

I think that that covers all the likely Romney voters.

That means that if you are not white or Christian or very rich, you shouldn't vote for the challenger unless you care nothing about your own or your country's best interests. If you are a member of a union, work for the government, need health care coverage, are against the U.S. military build up, are in favor of women's reproductive rights, approve of gay unions, care about the poor, want to avoid saber rattling that could lead us into war with Iran, Syria, North Korea or Yemen, care about the environment, believe in voter's rights, want to be able to look forward to receiving Social Security and Medicare benefits in the future and/or think that gun violence has gone too far, should and must vote to re-elect the President. "Should" because it would be in your best interest as well as the nation's, and "must" because every vote counts.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

SHARON THE HEALTH / By Sharon Caren



Fit, Flexible & Fabulous at any Age

Aging doesn't mean getting old. It means getting better! We mature like a fine wine. We gain wisdom that brings much joy to our lives, our family, our friends, and to the world. I'd never want to go back to my younger years with all the drama and disharmony around me. Our soul is everlasting and doesn't age, only our physical body does. If we think young, our body will reflect it. So how do we maximize our years of knowledge and wisdom and live with vitality? Let's explore some possibilities.

Anti-Aging

The term ageing is somewhat ambiguous. Chronological age does not correlate perfectly with functional age. For example, two people may be of the same age, but differ in mental and physical capacities.

Life Extension Science, also known as anti-aging medicine, experimental gerontology, and biomedical gerontology, is the study of slowing down or reversing the processes of aging to extend both the maximum and average lifespan. Some researchers believe that future breakthroughs in tissue rejuvenation with stem cells, molecular repair, and organ replacement will eventually enable humans to have indefinite life spans through complete rejuvenation to a healthy youthful condition.

The sale of anti-aging products such as nutrition, physical fitness, skin care, hormone replacements, vitamins, supplements and herbs is a lucrative global industry, with the US market generating about \$50 billion of revenue each year. Some medical experts state the use of these products has no effect on the aging process. If this is the case, why are so many Anti-Aging clinics popping up all over the world?

Here is one right in your neighborhood – SFPMG, San Francisco Specialists in Natural Medicine -380 West Portal Avenue, Suite C, San Francisco, CA 94127 Tel: (415) 566-1000. Dr. Joel Lopez, MD, CNS specializes in Anti-Aging, Longevity and Nutritional Medicine. I know him personally and urge you to call on him if you'd like to know more.

My husband found pictures of Raquel Welch, age 72 and Adam West (Batman), age 84, amazingly well preserved. If you want to be inspired, look them up on the Internet. This is proof that age is only a number. Maybe in their cases, very expensive, too?

I don't need to look like a movie star. However, being healthy and strong is my goal. Looking good is a by-product. I don't mind spending \$\$\$ investing in my health. What better investment can I make for a better quality of life?

If you've been reading my health column over the past 3 years you know I've written about many of the above natural means of self-care that I live by and use each day. All I know is, I feel better at age 63 than I did at 43! When I feel better, I am better. So I say, try good nutrition, physical fitness, vitamins, and supplements to see if you feel better. You be the judge, and these products may even add years to your life.

The Underrated Importance of Posture

Watching the movie stars, super models, entertainers, and beautiful people, you'll find they all have one thing in common — Great Posture. They embody an air of grace and ease. It's an unspoken confidence that lures the public to

watch and admire their every move, pay to see them in person and on screen, making them famous. It's a body language that says, "I've got something you want." We can all have it when we know the secret!

The working definition of good posture is when one's body weight is evenly balanced on its naturally intended weight-supporting surfaces. Great Posture is when the body is flexible, strong and responsive enough to maintain good posture naturally and effortlessly.

As children we grew up hearing the old cliché, sit up straight and have good posture. The problem was no one really showed us how to properly employ "Good Posture" nor did they explain how much pain we'd be in later in life if we didn't. As our physical bodies age, we no longer heal and repair as we did when we were children. Our bodies have more wear and tear and more aches and pains as we start feeling the effects of bad posture. The worst part is, unless someone points it out, we may not even realize bad posture could be the reason for much of our chronic pain.

The human body sustains 14.7 pounds of pressure per square inch of surface area, taking a beating every day. The body works more effectively and efficiently when it's flexible, allowing for good posture. When the body is in the correct position, with joints safely handling all the pressure gravity is putting on it, the result is effortless movement. If this had been explained to us with proper visuals as kids, we'd all be in much better physical shape today.

Can we change the imbalances we've been wearing for years? Absolutely, and flexibility is key. My personal experience after breaking my neck in a car accident in 1977 proves it. I was in a body cast for 3 months and thank goodness my neck healed naturally. About 15 years later, however, I developed carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis elbow, neck and upper back pain. I also had a neck forward position (bad posture) and much tension and tightness in those neck and arm muscles. I was searching for some relief because I was much too young and healthy to feel so bad.

In 1996 at a health fair I met a posture researcher and the developer of Reposturing Bodywork, Aaron Parnell. He served on the first Sports Massage Team for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Boy, was I lucky. He gave me a free 5-minute upper body treatment that changed my health, my life and my career. I'm now a Posturist and Licensed to teach.

Over the past 15 years, I've worked with folks who have experienced relief from frozen shoulder, neck immobility, sciatica, carpal tunnel syndrome, and TMJ, just to mention a few. All of these challenges are postural. When the torso is balanced even wrinkles are minimized. Using Facial Reposturing, a cutting edge anti-aging technique, I stretch the muscles of the neck, face,

head, and jaw. It's like having a non-surgical face-lift without the invasive, painful treatment and at a fraction of the cost.

Reposturing = Unique Stretches & Breath & Massage & Specific Exercises

Specific Exercises for great posture at home

Reposturing Yoga is a simple and safe system of flexibility exercises. It merges the traditions of Hatha Yoga with leading edge research and development of exercise, science and Kinesiology. Using the internal power of the breath creates an easy and effective way to stretch. We have books and DVD's to walk you through the process. I have clients who stopped coming for treatments when they adopted this program because they feel so good. Call me at 650.359.6579 if you'd like to know more or sharonthehealth.com

I love to miss my clients. As a teacher, I empower others to take responsibility for their own health self-care. It's wonderful to wake up each morning feeling good. This is my wish for you.

You are invited to a very special event on Wednesday, Oct. 17th from 6:45 to 8:30 PM. Come meet Mr. Aaron Parnell, the developer of Reposturing Bodywork in person. Don't miss his first speaking engagement in Pacifica for:

Sharon The Health Presents

Fit, Flexible and Fabulous at Any Age

Florey's Book Company

2120 Palmetto Ave.

Pacifica, CA 94044

RSVP ASAP as space is limited!

Call Sharon 650.359.6579

Or email Sharon@sharonthehealth.com

"The views expressed are those of the writer. If you have any questions about your health, you should always consult with your doctor."

FX for YOU

SUPERVISOR

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THE REAL ESTATE ANSWER MAN By Kevin Birmingham



Q: Should I expand or buy a larger home? Prop 13 keeps me stuck in my home.
..... Grace Fahey

A. Before you make your decision whether to expand or move, make sure you look into propositions 60 and 90. These two propositions were designed for seniors who would like to move but are otherwise trapped by their low tax base.

Q: If I buy a home for my own primary residence that is tenant occupied, do I have to pay the tenant to leave?
..... Lance

A. I know from over 10 years of experience in dealing with rentals that there is no such thing as exemption from eviction controls in San Francisco and it is very common to have to pay a tenant. The good news with a single family home is it's much easier to get tenants out than other types of properties.

Q: I am relocating to San Francisco. I am undecided whether to rent or buy?
..... Rose Yuen

A. Your decision should be based on your individual goals both short and long term. Do a cost analysis of buying vs. renting. Many people rent in the short term to figure out exactly where they want to buy. Whatever you decide, this is the best time to buy as prices and rates are relatively low.

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DINNER: Su/Th 5-9:30PM/Fr-Sa 5-10PM

Remember When?



Buena Vista Hill (no date) M. Behrman Collection. Permission to use this image was obtained from the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

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

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.

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

Phyllis' Findings / Phyllis Sherman

How To Eat Out Without Spending A Lot

When eating out, Frances Levant never used to complain if her food wasn't cooked to her liking. She just paid the bill--and a 25% tip without saying anything. "I didn't want to be my annoying customer," says the 44-year old restaurateur who co-owns several New York City restaurants. But since the economy went out, Ms. Levant has begun watching what she's spending, and as a result she has revamped her restaurant habits. For one thing she is a more demanding customer. Speaking up if something is wrong with her food or her check, and leaving only a 15% to 20% tip depending on the level of service.

Ms. Levant is not ready to give up eating out. In fact, she dines out at least five times a week to keep tabs on the competition. But she has changed the way she picks restaurants and orders food. She now goes to high-end restaurants only for lunch. "At that meal you are going to spend half of what you'd spend at dinner time, and you're getting the same food," she says. "Plus service at lunch time isn't as rushed." For dinner she goes to more casual restaurants. And she never has breakfast, or even her morning coffee, outside her home.

Before going to a restaurant for dinner, Ms. Levant plans out what she's going to eat so she doesn't order too much. She looks at sites like Eater.com and



MenuPages.com in order to find out what a restaurant is known for.

Often, Ms. Levant orders two appetizers, instead of the appetizer, entree and dessert that she used to often feel an obligation to get. "Appetizers are always much better than entrees and are always the most interesting dishes. I believe they are the best way to taste a restaurant's food.

She also looks for prix fixe menus, which tend to be good deals, and avoids specials, which often cost more than other items, and, of course, she has stopped ordering bottled water and cocktails.

To make sure that she sticks with her plan and doesn't over order, Ms. Levant snacks on a little piece of fruit or cheese before going out.

The adage, "Never go the grocery store hungry" also applies to eating out, she says. "I'll never go to a restaurant hungry.

LET'S ALL CLAP HANDS FOR MS. LEVANT AND HOPE SHE DOESN'T INCUR ANY RESTAURANT OWNERS' WRATH!

Feedback: phyllis@westsideobserver.com

OPEN LATE



By Julie Casson



Vote for a Better Economic Future on November 6!

The November election ballot contains critical initiatives that will impact San Francisco residents and businesses for years to come. Join your neighbors, local merchants and SF Forward in voting for jobs and a better economic future.

VOTE YES

Local Measures

- Prop B Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond
- Prop C Affordable Rental Housing and Home-Ownership Fund
- Prop D Consolidate Local Elections for Better Voter Turnout
- Prop E Business Tax Reform to Create Jobs and Grow Economy

State Measures

- Prop 30 Schools and Public Safety Temporary Tax
- Prop 31 Good Government State Budget Reform
- Prop 33 Discounted Car Insurance for Responsible Drivers
- Prop 39 End Tax Loophole for Out-of-State Businesses

VOTE NO

Local Measures

- Prop A City College Parcel Tax
- Prop F Save Hetch Hetchy! Don't Drain our Drinking Water!

State Measures

- Prop 37 Food Labeling Mandate - Expensive and Unnecessary
- Prop 38 State Income Tax Increase

Learn more at: www.sfchamber.com/votingguide



SF Forward - the Political Action Committee (PAC) of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce - is the political voice for businesses and residents who support sound economic policy and an exceptional quality of life for all San Franciscans.
www.sfchamber.com/sfforward

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Parents Must Be Role Models In Our Democracy

Fault Lines in Our Democracy, a recent study from Educational Testing Service, shows that “weak civics knowledge among young people is linked to less voting, less volunteering and greater distrust in government.”

For those who are civics challenged, this has nothing to do with whether you drive a Honda or whether you get lost on your way to the polls.



It is about our democracy and how we participate in important decisions. And it also is about how we educate our children.

Before I tell you how well our kids did on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in civics, let’s see how well you do:

Below are some of the issues our students were asked to know:

1. *What is the main source of government funding?*
2. *What is the purpose of the constitution?*
3. *Identify a right protected by the first amendment.*
4. *What is the role of the Supreme Court?*
5. *Identify the meaning of a Supreme Court decision*
6. *Identify the effect of foreign policy on other nations.*

Piece of cake? Not so much?
The questions above that are in *bold italics* are the Piece of Cake questions. If you got those right, you hit “basic” knowledge.

To be proficient, a 4th grader should know the purpose of the constitution, an eighth grader should know the role of the Supreme Court and a 12th grader should know the effect of foreign policy on other nations.*

Did you beat the kids?
According to the report, only 27 percent of fourth graders, 22 percent of eighth graders and 24 percent of 12th graders were proficient on the 2010 NAEP assessment.

The report also found that if you are young, less educated and in a lower-income group, you are less likely to vote.

These findings have big implications for our democracy and for how we make decisions about the future of our state and our nation.

So what can we do? Parents can be role

models.
The report found:
“Parents... can boost the civic participation of their children. In fact, recent analysis by the Center for Labor Market Studies has shown that the home may be a much more important influence than the schools. In the 2010 election, 18- to 19-year-olds were much more likely to vote if a parent voted (32 percent versus 4 percent). This large difference held across both gender and racial/ethnic groups. These data support the notion that good civic behavior is learned in the home, as well as in school.”

Here are some suggestions:
Register to vote. Visit¹ for information on how to do this.
Find out how your local school supports civics education.
Support community efforts to register and encourage eligible young people to vote.
California State PTA believes civics learning should be a priority in school reform.
We helped write Proposition 38 on the ballot in November to support a comprehensive education for all our children. This specifically supports funding for civics and history in our schools.

You can find more resources to support civics education on the California State PTA website.² With an important election coming up, we encourage you to use these resources in your school and community, including MY VOTE.

¹www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vr.htm
²www.capta.org/sections/programs/e-civic.cfm
* Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *The Nation's Report Card: Civics 2010*. (NCES 2011-466), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2011.

City and County of San Francisco Department of Elections

Be A Voter

November 6

General Election

Register to vote by **October 22**
Request to vote by mail by **October 30**
Vote early at City Hall **October 9 – November 6**
Polls open 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM **November 6**

Become a paid pollworker: Apply at
City Hall, Room 48 or sfelections.org/pw

(415) 554-4375 sfelections.org/toolkit







Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi

Doing the Charleston

Sunday's breakfast in the garden was as delightful as the weather was beautiful. The clear skies and warm sun complemented the scones, biscuits and bagels which were served with sherried fruit. Charleston is on a peninsula with the Ashley River on the west and the Cooper River on the east. About three blocks north of where we're staying is the City Market with four or five blocks of stores, restaurants, and an endless shed of a building housing every conceivable craft and junk store imaginable.

We chose to head south towards The Battery, stopping along the way to gaze at the never-ending rows of gracious old homes from the past. The Battery is now a lovely park lined with magnolia trees and waterfront paths, but it still has scores of cannons, mortars and guns used to defend the city during its many conflicts. We could easily see Fort Sumter, which was first fired upon by the Confederate forces, starting the War Between the States.

Heading back north we walked the mile or so to the market, where for \$15 apiece we rode on a horse-driven carriage and watched and listened to our driver. As he meandered through many of the same streets we had just walked through, he rattled off dates, names and lore. The history of the area is fascinating and we were told how Charleston had been under bombardment for over 550 days from the Northern troops, more than any other besieged city in history; how the largest earthquake in North America, other than Alaska, had almost wiped out the town; and how Hurricane Hugo destroyed 80% of the trees and many of the buildings in town just a few years ago. There are still markers around town, a good four feet off the pavement, showing the high water mark of the storm. Not surprising, considering the highest point of St. Michael's steeple is only 11 feet above sea level. Many years ago, a sea wall was built around the town and the area filled in, with most of the city still well below sea level.

By late afternoon we made our way to the Heyward-Washington House, which

is one of many mansions open for public tours, most of which are owned and operated by the Charleston Museum or the Preservation Society. The most amazing part is finding out how many of the locals signed the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution.

Needing to give our feet a rest, we decided to head for one of the plantations on the following day. There are three within 10 miles of the city, and we chose Middleton Place. We first took the house tour and later the self-guided tour of the gardens, but once again we found out most of the original buildings had been destroyed during the Civil War, rebuilt, only to be destroyed again by fire or earthquake.

The museum house contains many of the original furnishings, and many valuables and statuary had to be buried before the Union troops burned and plundered the entire plantation. When slavery ended, the plantation owners could no longer afford to keep the properties and many ended up in ruin.

Charleston's harbor is one of the best in the nation, and as a result, was

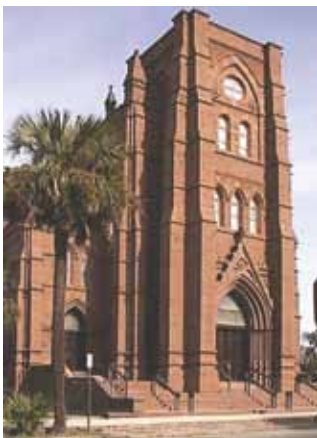
always under siege. It also provided for worldwide trade, and with rice, indigo and cotton farming sustained by slavery, the economy prospered, beautiful homes were built, and children were educated both here and abroad. Unfortunately, by the end of the Civil War, the city was in ruins and there were so few men left, rebuilding took years.

The people have been very nice, the grits so good that we ate them for breakfast, lunch and dinner and even the fried green tomatoes were delicious.

So now it's time to leave the Low Country, as it's called, and head for

Savannah for a new adventure. Hopefully the elevation will be higher; we're starting to get web feet having been so far below sea level.

By the time I drove the car around the corner from the inn's parking lot to the front door, Maurice had our luggage on the curb and ready to load. He



picked up the bags as if they were packed with feathers instead of the layers of clothing that we thought we needed but have not used. After a few more "Yes Sir" and "Thank you, Sir," we drove off for Savannah, a two-hour, one hundred mile drive.



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Theater (Cont. from p. 14)

Lend Me A Tenor

Ross Valley Players opens its 83rd season with *Lend Me A Tenor* by Ken Ludwig, in which Kris Neely takes on the directorial challenge of creating a three-ring circus of slamming doors, double takes, and prat-falls at top speed.

In the slapstick sweepstakes, David Kester, as the long-suffering opera company director, wins hands down, followed by Robert Nelson and Craig Christiansen, who do a wonderful second act dance as the two Othellos being pursued by women (Christina Jacqua as a lecherous dowager, Gwen Kingston as an ingenue admirer, Dylan Cooper as a prima donna who seduces the tenor for her ticket to the Met, and Amanda Grey as a sexy bellhop). Laura Domingo as the tenor's long (but not silently) suffering wife was

almost as skillful and overblown in her stage Italian as her husband in their arguments.

Actors hustle in and out of six doors in Ken Rowland's handsome red and white set, hiding in bedrooms and closets, disappearing in the nick of time into the hallway or the kitchen. The beautiful costumes by Michael Berg are easy on the eyes.

Lend Me A Tenor achieves comic delirium at the curtain call when the cast romps through a two minute mimed version of the lunatic plot, more charming and comical than the preceding two hours.

Runs Sept.14-Oct. 14 at Ross Valley Players' Theatre. Reservations: 456-9555, ext. 1. Up next at Ross Valley Players is You Can't Take It With You by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart, directed by Jim Dunn, Nov16-Dec 16. Flora Lynn Isaacson

WOTPCC (Cont. from p. 9)

of the 2008 bond funds will be spent by the time the new bond funds (if passed) are available, and that it doesn't matter if the bond was moved forward by two years, the capital needs are current and necessary.

Countering, Peskin closed with the argument that "if you don't have the money to operate it, there is no reason to repair it." He also stated that the priorities at City Hall are not focused on the Parks, but instead, money was found to support the America's Cup program, and to do the EIR (Environmental Impact Report) on the Beach Chalet Soccer field proposals.

At this point both speakers departed to attend other functions.

Later in the meeting, a proposal was discussed and debated whereas the West of Twin Peaks Central Council would take a position officially opposing the Rec and Park ballot measure by writing letters of opposition. After much discussion, a roll call was taken of the attending delegates and the resolution failed, gaining only 5 yes votes against, 1 no vote and

10 abstentions, thus defeating the vote.

In another vote, the delegates voted unanimously to admit the **Sunnyside Neighborhood Association** as the newest member of the WOTPCC, following glowing reports on their activities and structure by Don Dutil and Dave Bisho.

Other WOTPCC News:

A short presentation was made by Justine Fenwick to demonstrate the neighborhood private social media application "Nextdoor." Several neighborhood associations are already using the services of the SF-based company, with possible WOTPCC involvement in the future.

President Chamberlain asked attendees to help the WOTPCC to defray the costs of the recent candidate's forum by writing a check to support the forum, which was held on 9/22 at the Aptos Middle School.

The next meeting of the WOTPCC will be on Monday, October 29th at 7:30 PM at the Forest Hills Clubhouse. Info: WOTPCC website (www.westoftwinpeaks.org).

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