

First Step: Admit You Have a Problem?

By John Farrell

**A**fter nearly a year and a half after being appointed Assessor-Recorder by Mayor Lee, Former Supervisor Carmen Chu now admits in the *Examiner* on July 20<sup>th</sup> that the office has major problems. The article “Can Carmen Chu Beat City Hall’s Paper Chase?” written by her friend Joel Engardio came out two weeks after the July/Aug edition of the *Westside Observer* with my article “When Will San Francisco Take the Assessor Seriously?”

In my article, I noted that since the two-term limit passed in 1990 there have been five Assessors *all politicians*. Before the two-term limit, the Assessor came up thru the ranks and had the experience and qualifications needed to run the office, just like it is in the real world in private industry. However, this is government and, as you know, qualifications are secondary to political payback. Three of the five former Assessors resigned and were replaced with Mayor appointments, the current one being Carmen Chu, who was being termed out as District 4 Supervisor, needed a place to go, and was appointed by Mayor Ed Lee.



“Based on my own 35 years of experience in private industry and government (...12 years were in the Assessor’s Office), ... a professional, qualified and independent Assessor means at least \$100 million more annually in tax revenue to the City.”

Mr. Engardio’s *Examiner* article notes “*The assessors’ office was in disrepair because it has a troubled history. It had a dysfunctional bureaucracy in which millions of dollars went uncollected any given year... Chu’s most immediate predecessor twice sought higher office.*”

In other words she is blaming, through Mr. Engardio, former Assessors, including current Assemblyman Phil Ting, for not resolving these problems and leaving her a mess to clean up. As Former President Ronald Reagan used to say, “There you go again.” This is exactly what the prior two Assessors, Teng and Ting, did with their predecessors.

She does admit that the office is losing millions that went uncollected. By the way, millions do *not* go uncollected, since that is the job of the Treasurer/Tax Collector and Mr. Cisneros would be very upset to hear this. The Tax Collector’s Office has an outstanding collection rate. Millions in property tax revenue are lost since many properties are not being *appraised* appropriately, as noted in the State Board of Equalization’s (SBE) Report on the San Francisco City and County Practices Survey

Cont. p. 8

Boathouse Renovation Brings Out Fans , Critics

By Keith Burbank

**W**estside residents celebrated the re-opening of the Lake Merced Boathouse July 8. Various groups brought a variety of thoughts to the celebration.

Community activists asked for a new fishing concessionaire at the building. Residents showed up to see what they can expect. Rowing advocates touted the benefits the now-renovated building will bring to their community.

“This is such a great start,” said Dick Allen, a San Francisco resident. Allen has been advocating for more boat storage for the high school rowing clubs that use the lake because good rowing can mean admission for youth to an elite college.

Perhaps the biggest benefits for rowers will be a training room, which will be set up with exercise machines for high school rowers. One high school that practices at the lake has had to unpack its machines from a closet for each practice.



(left to right) Joe Mees, general manager, Pacific Rowing Club; Mark Buell, Recreation and Park Commission president; and District 6 Supervisor Norman Yee get ready to send boaters off on the south lake during the celebration

“This will be an enormous improvement over our existing facilities,” said the high school coach. He will use the additional time for student training.

The coach was equally pleased about the renovated second-floor balcony, where parents will be able to watch their children practice on the south lake. Before the renovation, the balcony was both decrepit and unsafe.

Cont. p. 3

City Hall Watchdogs

Clogged Sewers Erupt In Whistleblower Retaliation Claim at City Attorney's Office

By Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr

**I**t’s hard to ignore a call from the FBI. In December 2011, Joanne Hoeper, City Attorney Dennis Herrera’s Chief Trial Deputy, got that call. Homeowners were complaining about a handful of plumbing firms that solicited them to replace sewer lines – *at City expense* – because they were supposedly clogged by City-owned trees. However, their sewers were working fine. In some cases, there were no trees in sight.



Joanne Hoeper

“Unhappily, it led directly into Herrera’s inner circle. Seven months later, ... her investigation was quashed, she was pulled from her post, ... after turning 60, she was terminated.”

A 20-year veteran of the City Attorney’s Office, Hoeper launched an investigation. Unhappily, it led directly into Herrera’s inner circle. Seven months later, in July 2012, her investigation was quashed, she was pulled from her post, then banished to the District Attorney’s Office for 17 months. On January 7, 2014, after turning 60, she was terminated. While acknowledging publicly that “*Whistleblowers do not fare well in this world,*” Hoeper felt unable to “*live with myself if I didn’t speak up.*” So she filed a whistleblower retaliation claim with the Controller’s Office this June seeking re-instatement, lost wages and other damages. True to form, the Controller referred the claim to the implicated agency – the City Attorney’s Office.

Acting on Herrera’s behalf to avoid a conflict of interest, the Santa Clara County Counsel assessed and rejected Hoeper’s claim on July 17, 2014, partly because it “*was not presented within six months after the event.*” Herrera instantly fired off a Press Release accusing Hoeper of knowing that her “*baseless allegations were time-barred*” thereby demonstrating “*the vindictiveness underlying her claim.*”

No word about an independent investigation. Hoeper’s attorney, Stephen Murphy, told us “*The City’s response to our claim is unnecessarily hostile; the defense that the claim was untimely is also meritless because it’s a whistleblower retaliation claim. We’re preparing a lawsuit.*”

A Hastings Law School graduate, Hoeper started out with Morrison & Foerster, a corporate law firm based in San Francisco. Though rising to become a partner, she was drawn to community service. Her *pro bono* services focused on civil rights abuses in Guatemala and Argentina. In 1994 she joined the City Attorney’s Office under Louise Renne. After Dennis Herrera was elected City Attorney in 2001, Hoeper rose to become his Chief Trial Attorney. In 2003 she was recognized as one of the “Top 50 Women Litigators in California” for prosecuting a Fortune 500 company that defrauded \$4.4 million from the Unified School District. Herrera lauded her in a 2003 Press Release; “*Jo Hoeper’s legal skills, energy and dedication have made an enormous contribution to the public integrity of our City, while exacting an enormous*

Cont. p. 6

Business Corner  
Trattoria Marks Milestone

By Keith Burbank

**V**ittorio D’Urzo opened his trattoria a little more than a year ago. And a location that once sullied the avenue is making people smile.

“There on it,” said a customer about the restaurant’s service. “Shining” is what she says about D’Urzo and his team.

The location at 150 West Portal Avenue was once home to a successful Cafe for All Seasons, owned by Frank and Donna Katzl. When the Katzl’s sold the business, cleanliness was a problem for the site.

All that seems to have changed. Business is booming, according to D’Urzo. And visits to the trattoria reveal a bright, shiny space. D’Urzo says it was a great first year.

“It met my expectations — even more,” he said. He credits his team for the success. “We’ve built a great big family here.”

And by here, D’Urzo means the Trattoria Da Vittorio, his first restaurant and a place for food from Italy’s south. His mother’s recipes grace the menu. She visited from Italy before the store opened to check for authenticity. D’Urzo said she’ll be back at Christmas.



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Karen Rolph — 4 	Will Durst — 4 
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Kathy Howard — 5 	Roger Ritter — 5 
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Donated more than \$5 million to non-profit and community organizations in 2013



Connected more than 4,500 rooftop solar installations for residents and businesses

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Ruminations From A Former Supervisor By Quentin Kopp



**A**n election is coming. Universal peace is declared, and the foxes have a sincere interest in prolonging the lives of the poultry.” That’s attributed to the English author, George Eliot, in a book first published in 1866. Or, as an anonymous wit decried in a manner certainly attributable to contemporary America, “The cheapest way to have your family tree traced is to run for public office.” With that foundation, I fearlessly approach the November 4 Municipal Election, containing 12 ballot measures. One is an extremely expensive General Obligation Bond issue, three are proposed Charter Amendments, six are proposed ordinances and two are non-binding Declarations of Policy. Since absentee voting commences on October 3, 2014, I carefully furnish my recommendations and the reasons therefor.

**Proposition A** was submitted by the Board of Supervisors and Mayor. It constitutes a \$500,000,000 borrowing by taxpayers, if approved by two thirds of votes cast November 4. With interest over the 30-year life of the proposed bonds, at a likely 3.50% interest rate, taxpayers will pay \$17,500,000 annually in interest or \$525,000,000 over the life of the bonds, thus costing about \$1,000,000,000! For what? Read the ballot measure and you still won’t know. Buried in the gobblygook is a statement that said bond proceeds will be spent on an undefined S.F.M.T.A. “Transit Effectiveness Project” not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act because Proposition A constitutes “Establishment of a governmental financing mechanism that does not involve *any commitment to specific projects to be constructed with bond funds ...*”! Proposition A merely proclaims that a portion of bond proceeds “may” be applied “to constructing improvements,... that will improve Muni service reliability and reduce travel time on Muni.” It declares that a “portion” (without specifying any amount) may be allocated “to deliver pedestrian safety improvements at locations throughout the city where the majority of pedestrian injuries and fatalities occur.” City Hall doesn’t build anymore; it “delivers.” Voters and taxpayers are not informed of location of any such expenditure. Proposition A further declares that an unspecified portion of bond proceeds “may be allocated to more effectively manage traffic congestion...., improve the overall reliability of the transit system and improve pedestrian safety by replacing obsolete and deteriorating signal infrastructure.” Again, no identification of cost, amount or location of improvements is specified. Proposition A states: “A portion of the Bond may be allocated to fund the City’s share of needed improvements to CalTrain’s infrastructure.” CalTrain is the Peninsula commute rail system, used by few San Franciscans. Santa Clara and San Mateo County residents comprise about 88% of its ridership, but Atherton, Hillsborough, Palo Alto and Woodside property owners won’t defray this \$1,000,000,000 bond issue’s cost.

In other words, Proposition A represents a “blank check” to city bureaucrats. It mentions a “citizens’ oversight committee;” it doesn’t, however, establish one. It weighs undefined administrative code time requirements. It contains no specific purpose, contrary to the California Government Code, and is probably vulnerable to legal challenge. Contrary to City Hall assurance, it contains no prohibition against selling the bond before a comparable amount of General Obligation bonds are repaid by taxpayers. If you’re a tenant, don’t think you’ll receive a “free ride” if A passes. The ballot measure requires half the principal with interest to be repaid by tenants! In 55 years of reading general obligation bond measures, City and State, I’ve never seen a vaguer measure. ‘Nuff said.

.....

**“In 55 years of reading general obligation bond measures, City and State, I’ve never seen a vaguer measure. ‘Nuff said.”**

**Proposition B** amends our Charter by increasing Muni funding as population increases. It’s another example of diminishing the City’s General Fund by automatically taking money for a special purpose. The aim may be noble; the method constitutes a common bane of responsible governance. **I’m voting against it.**

**Proposition C** amends the Charter to prolong another bit of special funding called the “Children’s Fund.” The same pernicious policy exemplified in Proposition B impels **my vote against C.**

**Proposition D** provides health benefits for former Redevelopment Agency employees who were discharged after Redevelopment Agencies were eliminated by Governor Brown and the Legislature. It probably adds a slight amount of unfunded health liability for future taxpayers. **I’m still inclined to vote for it.**

**Proposition E** imposes a tax on “sugar-sweetened” soft drinks. Battling over E are “nanny government” lovers and the giant corporate makers of beverages which sensible people eschew. The blustering tactics of the soft drink industry are repulsive. Their paid political operatives have figuratively bought endorsements from bastions of “progressivism” (whatever that word means), while virtuous would-be dictators of proper food and drink ingestion minimize the financial effect on low-income consumers. **I’ll vote for Prop E** while risking slanderous accusation as a “nanny” because I’m offended by corporate opposition tactics.

**Proposition F** arises from successful enactment last June of Proposition B, requiring voter approval of any project which exceeds existing waterfront height limits. Pier 70 comprises a conglomeration of dilapidated structures and emptiness, except for one existing building 90 feet high. Forest City, Inc. will build 300 housing units, public parks, office space and retail stores. Forest City needs voter approval for any structure exceeding the current 40-foot limit, while planning to build no higher than the current 90-foot structure, which will be retained as a historical landmark. **I strongly support that project;** so do all the other initiators of last June’s Proposition B. I know of no opposition!

**Proposition G** proposes an additional transfer tax on residential property, with minor price exceptions, sold within five years of its purchase. Put on the ballot only because of a Charter provision, which allows four supervisors to submit an initiative to voters, it avoided, for example, the arduous voter approval represented by Proposition H. Proposition G was submitted by Supervisors Avalos, Campos, Kim and Mar. The transfer tax has always lacked logic in my strong view. I opposed the original transfer tax as a Supervisor in the 1980’s. If government wants to charge a fee for servicing the transfer of real estate, charge the amount of money it costs to process a real estate transaction, not an arbitrary tax. Why shouldn’t people possess the right to buy and sell real estate with all of the transactional cost without government demanding a tax? Proposition G attempts to punish people who buy and sell residential property as a business. That’s not justified. **I’ll vote “No.”**

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Boathouse (Cont. from p. 1)

The pleasure expressed by the rowing community is tempered by a frustration over the lack of a fishing concessionaire at the renovated building.

“As you may know there has not been a fishing concessionaire at Lake Merced since April of 1999,” said Jerry Cadagan, a community activist. The renovated building includes a renovated concession area, according to a San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (SFRPD) press release. But SFRPD, which will operate the boathouse, has not chosen a business for the space.



Upstairs: a part of the renovated balcony from which parents can watch their children row on the south lake.



A boathouse entry wall provides information as to activities that go on around the renovated building. (Left) Boats are set out on the dock before the re-opening celebration begins.

“Let there be no mistake, fishing is back at Lake Merced,” said Phil Ginsberg, general manager, SFRPD. Ginsberg was speaking to a crowd gathered to hear dignitaries celebrate the re-opening. But it doesn’t appear that will include supplies for fishing. “It looks like at [this]

time we are focusing on maintaining the Boathouse as a community hub,” said Connie Chan, deputy director of public affairs, SFRPD. She said the department would keep the *Observer* posted “if and when” the department is ready for a concessionaire.

The renovation project cost \$3.2 million, which was shared by the SFRPD and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, and included 7,200 square feet of restored space on the upper floor. Underneath is space for boat storage.

Dorothy and Arthur Lathan, San Francisco residents for many years, said they have been waiting ever so long to have the boathouse restored. The couple was at a lot of boathouse parties before the building was neglected.

“We’ve had lots of fun here,” Dorothy said.

Keith Burbank is a local journalist.

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# Don't Kick Grandma Out of Pottery Class!

By Karina Morales

One of the biggest problems currently facing City College is declining student enrollment and its domino effect on funding. A big share of that problem comes, not from the City, but from Sacramento, led by one Barbara Bento, whose war on San Francisco's City College is wreaking havoc that may be irreparable.

The rule against *repeatability* is devastating to seniors for whom ongoing class participation can mean the difference between years of isolation or association with like-minded friends.

Using the rationale that "Budget cuts have forced us to ration education" the Board of Governors, who worry that "we are currently turning away hundreds of thousands of students from our campuses," have issued a statewide blanket regulation, turning away thousands of students, causing classes to close, all while we are losing great teachers and endangering the financial health of the greatest community college in the state. "No *repeatability* of classes" is the pinion regulation of the "Student Success Plan".

The *repeatability* rule means professionals who took a class in Dreamweaver, version 3, now find they cannot return and take Dreamweaver in version 8; similarly InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, Excel, Word and many continually changing tech programs are no longer *repeatable*. What an incredibly ill conceived ruling, considering San Francisco has become home to several of the world's most innovative technology producers. It is critical to keep current with technical advances, yet the college can no longer offer this valuable service to interested learners.

Many seniors have formed friendships and communities with fellow students. The rule against *repeatability* is devastating to seniors for whom ongoing class participation can mean the difference between years of isolation or association with like-minded friends. Gerontologists

tell us social engagement is a key to healthy aging. Throwing Grandma out of the pottery class she loves is not the solution to the high cost of education.

The Governors want to privatize these 'unnecessary' classes — "join a gym," or "take a private pottery class" is their solution. Now exercise and visual arts classes can only be taken once—aerobics, dance, music, painting, drawing; all the arts that need continual practice. Why not offer *repeatability*, so City College is fulfilling its mission of access to everyone? Students and faculty traveled to Sacramento and testified against the change.

Now, students who wish to take one class, repeat classes, pursue a certification, or transfer to four-year colleges and students who are not aiming for a degree — like our seniors — have been pushed out of classes in music, dance, exercise, and art classes. They may only be taken once. Who thinks that's a good idea?

Reversing the *repeatability* ruling could return a lot of students, perhaps enough to fill the 23% enrollment decline. It is very shortsighted of the Governors to take this hard line against life-long learning, long a mission of City College.

Take a step — sign up for a class — join Trustee Anita Grier's petition to restore *repeatability* at: [petitions.moveon.org/sign/dont-kick-grandma-out?source=c.em&r\\_by=11234920](http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/dont-kick-grandma-out?source=c.em&r_by=11234920)

# Why November's Prop L is Not Realistic

By Howard Strassner

Some of our neighbors fondly dream back to a time when they could drive anywhere in San Francisco very easily, and when they got there, parking was very cheap. They hope that Proposition L will bring those times back. But we can't go back, because in those days there were less than half as many cars as now, and the capacity of our streets has not increased. They also forget that inflation alone increases the cost of parking by eight times; 25 cents an hour then is now two dollars for neighborhood commercial parking. They resent paying \$2.00 for 140 square feet to park their car, while transit riders pay \$2.25 for three square feet on a lurching bus, more than eleven times the fare when driving was easier. Somehow, this is unfair to drivers.

...it is fair that your parking fees are used ...so that you will suffer less congestion than you might experience if transit were worse."

Prop L calls for more residential parking, which means fewer, more expensive apartments and even more gridlock, not easier driving. L proposes to use Muni funds to build more garages, rather than improve pedestrian safety. The proponents of L want more subsidized parking in San Francisco, while most of us have to pay market rate for housing. To this writer it is an endless puzzlement how the privately-owned car, the symbol of the American capitalist system, requires socialist subsidized parking. Prop L even opposes the market rate parking policies that are proven, by federally-funded studies, started when Bush was President, to actually make parking easier for the driver, better for merchants, at no increase in average parking meter rates. Republicans liked that study because it was based on the market rate, what people are willing to spend for a scarce commodity.

I see that drivers in San Francisco feel that they are the in majority and therefore should have their way. In this country, laws protect the minority, and San Francisco has to comply with State laws that tend to reduce driving as a means of reducing the production of global warming gases. Drivers resent the use of their parking fees to

fund about 20% of Muni. There are many sources of funding for local transit around the world. In New York State gasoline taxes fund most of the New York subway and bus system. In Paris, buildings near transit pay an extra fee that pays for most of Paris transit. The San Francisco method says to drivers, albeit without words, if you want to be able to drive and find a parking space at a price that you are willing to pay, then it is fair that your parking fees are used to provide transit that is good enough to induce people to use it when they can, so that you will suffer less congestion than you might experience if transit were worse.

So, when you go to the polls in November, or before you fill in you ballot and put it in the mail, please vote Yes on A and B to improve and run Muni, and No on L. These votes should improve your drive, along with making some improvements to pedestrian safety.

The writer occasionally drives his wife's car but and more frequently he enjoys her company while she drives. Otherwise he mostly uses Muni or walks.

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

## Leadership



My 2¢ • Will Durst

## SMUG SHOTS.

Now he shouldn't. Couldn't help himself. Talking about the beaming leer in Rick Perry's mug shot. Or to be more precise, his smug shot. In the photo released by the Austin Police Department, the Texas Governor grins like a Cheshire cat who just cleaned out the canary department of a PetSmart and is pre-setting his Lexus' GPS for another store.



Because he vetoed the budget of the Travis County Attorney General who refused to resign following a drunken driving conviction, Perry is now being indicted on two federal felony counts relating to abuse of power. Which for a politician is real similar to being accused of breathing through their mouth. No big deal. The loyal opposition is programmed to consider all power abusive. A fact extensively covered in the freshman orientation pamphlet.

In the photo released by the Austin Police Department, the Texas Governor grins like a Cheshire cat who just cleaned out the canary department..."

The three reasons he's smirking are obvious. One: there's a better chance of being struck by lightning while holding Charlize Theron's purse stuffed with winning Powerball tickets, than being convicted. Two: he can wear these charges as a loud red badge of partisan courage, rekindling presidential aspirations. As for the third thing... well, he'll have to get back to you. Ooops.

This is all proof that today- any and or all publicity is good publicity. Andy Warhol's future has arrived and taken over the conference room. Famous for 15 minutes. That's the goal. You don't have to be talented or accomplished or good looking or an artist or even credible. Just get your name and face out there. Get on television. Even basic cable. By hook or by crook or by booking photo.

Arianna Huffington sold her website to AOL for \$315 million based on the business model of rounding up scores of scripting serfs who will write for free. With 7 series and a spate of spin- offs, the Bravo Network has practically given up on narrative programming, morphing into the Real Housewives or Women be Fighting and Stuff Network. The Weather Channel has a new reality show called 3 Fat Guys in the Woods, which infringes on absolutely no fairness in advertising doctrines. Anybody can be a star. Build your brand. We're all one viral post away from the big time.

The NFL has attempted to harness these ambitions by charging musical acts to perform at their Super Bowl Halftime Show. The three finalists, Katy Perry, Coldplay and Rihanna have each been asked to pony up for the privilege of performing in front of billions of people AND to kick back a slice of their post-show concert tour. Next they'll want an NFL logo carved in the haircut of the bass player. And who's going to argue? It's the bass player.

The most humane solution would be for the NFL to pay viewers to watch their overproduced lip-synched parody of an extravaganza. Or maybe just go back to marching bands and Frisbee-catching dogs. But where's the money in that?

Kim Kardashian's new iPhone app is expected to make over 100 million dollars, this year alone. The goal of the game is to do anything and everything to become famous. Just that. Fame. It's all about the exposure. Of course, in the Midwest we were taught you can die from exposure. Then again, couldn't happen to a nicer couple than Rick Perry and Kim Kardashian. And the 3 Fat Guys in the Woods.

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## WESTSIDE OBSERVER

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PO Box 27176, SF 94127 • 415 517-6331

[www.westsideobserver.com](http://www.westsideobserver.com)

Publisher: Mitch Bull

[mitch@westsideobserver.com](mailto:mitch@westsideobserver.com)

Editor: Doug Comstock

[editor@westsideobserver.com](mailto:editor@westsideobserver.com)

Ad Sales • Mitch Bull

### Contributors:

Brian Browne, Mitch Bull, Keith Burbank, Julie Casson, Matt Davies, Will Durst, John Farrel, Katherine Howard, Flora Lynn Isaacson, Joanne Jordan, Jack Kaye, Dr. Derek Kerr, Dr. Carol Kocivar, Quentin Kopp, Anise J. Matteson, Barbara Meskunas, Brandon Miller, Don Lee Miller, Patrick Monette-Shaw, Karina Morales, Sergio Nibbi, Roger Ritter, Dr. Maria Rivero, Howard Strassner. Photos: Luke Thomas.

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# Prop “I” – Initiative uses kids as a front for Rec and Park power grab

By Katherine Howard, ASLA

At first glance, Prop I, the Rec and Park initiative on the November ballot, sounds wonderful. Its backers claim that it will give the City the power it needs to provide valued recreational facilities for our children.

But beware this Trojan Horse! The City Charter already grants broad powers to the Recreation and Park Commission to approve projects. These extensive powers are subject to a limited set of checks and balances, including the ballot initiative process. However, under certain conditions, Prop I would transfer all effective control over our parkland to the Recreation and Park Department staff.



Prop I makes doubling usage the ONLY value in deciding on a project. Most commercial uses would double usage. Will Prop I open up your park to commercialization?

This initiative will apply to ALL of San Francisco’s parks, and as such, it has serious consequences for the future of your neighborhood park.

### What does the Rec & Park Initiative say?

Rec and Park’s initiative amends the Park Code so that, “the City shall allow” any renovation of children’s playgrounds, walking trails and athletic fields if the Recreation and Park Department forecasts a doubling of usage and that estimate is cited in a certified Environmental Impact Report (EIR.)

In a legal context, the word “shall” means a compulsion to perform an act. In this case, the City may be legally compelled to authorize a project without regard to any considerations other than an RPD forecast of doubled usage in an EIR.

### What does this Rec and Park Initiative really mean for your park?

First of all, Prop I won’t provide any new funding for our parks. Also, it doesn’t add any new parkland. Prop I simply alters how decisions are made about our limited open space.

The proponents claim that this legislation would just prevent new laws from being passed that would stop renovations after they have been approved. But none of this is spelled out in this murky legislation. Always read the contract — don’t trust the salesman’s word!

Prop I raises more questions than it answers: *Would the public lose the right to challenge a project that the neighborhood does not want? Would Prop I deny the Recreation and Park Commission the discretion to consider other City goals and values before approving the project? Will Prop I eliminate the citizens’ right of the ballot initiative?*

## Letters to the Editor

I was struck by the front page of the July-August issue, with two articles right next to each other:

### City has "No Plan" for Climate Change and SF's War on Motorists

These articles show a real lack of consciousness, and are ludicrous, if taken together.

I consider the climate crisis to be the biggest challenge facing our people and our planet. I believe that we must take all possible steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It’s very clear to me that San Francisco’s transportation policies are headed in the right direction. The overuse of private vehicles is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, San Francisco has a very good plan: support walking, bicycling and transit. Make private auto use less convenient, and charge drivers for the full cost of the convenience of driving their cars.

I am a West Portal mother of two, with a very nice car in my garage. Some people would immediately place me in the demographic to support Tony Hall’s article. I could not disagree with him more. If we want to address the climate crisis, and have a more livable, safe city, we MUST limit private auto use. We must prioritize spending and enforcement of laws to make walking, bicycling and using transit much more enjoyable and safe.

Prop I makes doubling usage the ONLY value in deciding on a project. Most commercial uses would double usage. Will Prop I open up your park to commercialization?

Furthermore, Rec and Park controls the data on usage of our parks. Does Prop I give carte blanche to Rec and Park to use its own data to decide unilaterally what happens to your park?

Rec and Park tried to take the JP Murphy Clubhouse away from the public by leasing it out to a private company. This would have doubled usage. The JP Murphy neighbors had to fight to keep local control of their clubhouse. Is the goal of Prop I to eliminate neighborhood input into decisions about park facilities and let Rec and Park make all of the decisions?

Could Prop I be used in the future AGAINST soccer fields? Remember, political administrations change. Soccer teams should be careful how much power they give away — this power could be used against your fields in the future. Do you really want to take that risk and lose your voice in what happens to your playing fields?

If nothing else, the very vagueness of this legislation will lead to lawsuits and tie the City up in costly court battles.

### Keep control of your parks

The Rec and Park initiative is both too vague and too broad. It is full of unforeseen consequences for your parks. If you want to maintain control over your park, your playing fields, your playground and your walking trails, then you had better think seriously about voting no on I.

Katherine Howard , ASLA Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance

I hope that the Westside Observer will, in the future, present a more intelligent perspective on the challenges facing our city. This would have been a more appropriate heading for the two articles: **Motorists' War on the Climate.**

Peggy da Silva

(Re: SF’s War on Motorists) I read your short column in the latest issue of the *Westside Observer*, and I take issue with what you said. First of all, the so-called “Transit and Bicycle only” policy by the SFMTA does not exist. I don’t know where you first read that, but last time I checked, the SFMTA implements the *Transit First* policy according to complete streets principles. A complete street, by definition, supports all modes of transportation equally, not favoring one over the other. And so, those modes include automobiles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. From your column, it sounds like you don’t like bicyclists. Well, if you want to remove bicycle infrastructure from the streets, where are bicyclists going to ride? Sidewalks?

Also, from what sources are you getting your information? Have stores (on Polk street for example) been openly expressing dissatisfaction that people are not patronizing them because of the

Cont. p. 6

# Don’t Turn West of Twin Peaks Into Fawly Towers!

By Roger Ritter

The West of Twin Peaks Central Council, which represents twenty (20) neighborhood associations in western San Francisco, opposes Supervisor David Chiu’s proposed legislation to legalize short-term rentals in residential neighborhoods for the following reasons:

- **The proposed legislation would amount to a complete rezoning of the entire City.**
- **Hotels and bed-and-breakfasts would be permitted in all residential neighborhoods, including those that are zoned as RH-1-D (Residential, House, Single-Family, Detached) and RH-1 (Residential, House, Single-Family), thereby jeopardizing residential character.**

• Classifying short-term rentals as a “residential use” would make it more difficult for homeowners’ associations to enforce their CC&R’s against businesses in residential neighborhoods.

• This proposal, coming on the heels of the legislation legalizing secondary units throughout the City, would destroy single-family residential character West of Twin Peaks. The proposed legislation would allow tenants to rent their units on a short-term basis, so that instead of knowing who our neighbors are, whether they are homeowners or long-term renters, we would have no idea who was living next door to us, or for how long. The proposal would increase traffic and congestion, as well as pose health and safety issues caused

to be respectful of their neighbors. Many of the complaints that the Department receives about short-term rentals have to do with the hours of activity tourists keep compared to long-term residents with regular nine to five work schedules.

The proposed legislation strikes at the very heart of what it is to be a *community*. The single-family homes in the residential neighborhoods West of Twin Peaks are part of the fabric of their communities, and they are more than just isolated dwelling units. Families know their neighbors, their children play together, and they watch out for each other. If changes are to be made to protect long-time homeowners who are in financial difficulties, especially seniors, they should be made with the participation of all the members of the community, not by legislative fiat at City Hall, and definitely not for the benefit of real estate speculators and large corporations with no real stake in the community.

Our western residential neighborhoods are useful when elections roll around, or when City Hall wants a new bond measure passed. Then the politicians want to come and speak to us. But no

... let’s use the correct terminology to describe what is really going on here. People who rent rooms to tourists are not “home-sharers.” They are “home-renters.” ... Renting rooms to tourists is a commercial activity."

by unregulated rooms. Not long ago we learned of a house that was renting out rooms on a short-term basis and was burning creosote-soaked wood from a redwood deck that had been torn down, as part of a backyard “happy hour” for its guests. We called DBI and the owner claimed to have ceased the operation. Under the proposed legislation, neither the neighborhood association nor the neighbors would have standing to complain about the rental.

• Here is what could happen: Absentee owner (A) rents the house to Tenant (B), and also builds a secondary unit, which s/he then rents to a third person (C), who then rents it short-term to a fourth person (D). If someone comes back at 2:00 a.m. and tries to get into the home, or downstairs apartment, how do the next-door neighbors know whether that person is a tourist or a burglar?

• Short-term rentals may be appropriate in neighborhoods that are already zoned for commercial uses, such as hotels and bed-and-breakfasts, where neither the neighbors nor the neighborhood associations object to such use. They are definitely **NOT** appropriate in our single-family residential neighborhoods.

The planning staff’s own draft report noted the threat to neighborhood character, as follows:

### Neighborhood Character

*The Department is also concerned about how short-term rentals are impacting neighborhood character and the quality of life for San Francisco residents. A neighborhood made up of permanent residents has a very different character than a neighborhood where everyone is a transient visitor. While tourists are important for this City’s economy and its cultural identity, it’s primarily the residents of San Francisco that make it a unique and interesting place to visit. Permanent residents have a vested interest in maintaining the unique quality of life in San Francisco. They build community by developing longstanding relationships; help ensure that trash doesn’t accumulate on the sidewalks, and are inherently motivated*

one solicits our views before attempting a massive rezoning that affects us all. It was bad enough when the proposed legislation only applied to secondary units, but now apparently any single-family home can be turned into a guest house, or bed-and-breakfast, without any notice to the HOA, in secret, to protect the owner’s “right of privacy.” Worse, the proposed law defines such use as “residential,” so that HOA’s may not even be able to enforce their own CC&R’s against running a business.

What we have here is a blatant attempt to rezone the entire city, so that the concept of a single-family residential neighborhood will cease to exist. There are very powerful economic interests that either do not care about San Francisco’s single-family neighborhoods or who believe, in good faith, that they should not exist at all, and that San Francisco should become a high-density city like Paris or Manhattan. Those are both great cities to visit, but I would not want to live in either of them. People buy houses in our single-family residential neighborhoods precisely because they are low-density. We have zoning laws for that reason. If the City wishes to change those laws to accommodate more people, then there should be a full and fair debate about what kind of city we want to have, how many people it can hold, both transient and permanent, without further straining public services, and whether every part of the City should allow guest houses and bed-and-breakfasts.

Finally, let’s use the correct terminology to describe what is really going on here. People who rent rooms to tourists are not “home-sharers.” They are “home-renters.” Sharing means *giving* of what you have to another, not *selling* to another. Renting rooms to tourists is a commercial activity.

Stop this legislation dead in its tracks. Tell the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors **NOT** to approve it.

Roger Ritter is the President of the West of Twin Peaks Central Council



Senior Smarts

# Adaptive Clothing for Stroke Survivors

By Anise J. Matteson

After a stroke it may be difficult to perform activities of daily living, especially donning and doffing clothes. Simple Pleasures provides a solution with garments for women.

For the September 2011 issue of Caring Boomers Newsletter, I asked Lynn Dow of Simple Closures for permission to use the description and photos from her flyer for adaptive clothing for the Problem Management section of the newsletter. In response, Lynne wrote: “Coming in September, we have a new line of clothes which fasten down the front with easy closure which will be particularly helpful for people with strokes. These can be viewed on our website around the middle of September. [www.simpleclosures.com](http://www.simpleclosures.com) or phone 1-800-282-1163.” The clothing are Designed in San Francisco. Made in the U.S.A. **ADAPTIVE CLOTHING is designed specifically for women who experience wide-ranging physical and/or mental challenges.**

### Shirts

Simple Closure tops eliminate the twisting and turning movements common to putting on and taking off conventional tops and blouses. Each top fastens in back, maintaining the appearance of a pullover or front opening blouse

- Physical exertion is decreased, to conserve energy and reduce painful movements
- Closures are strategically placed to minimize discomfort on pressure points along the spine

### Pants

- Waistbands have large openings which, when fastened, form deep functional pockets
- Elastic waistband in back allows for fluctuations in waist size
- Extra roomy legs accommodate edematous (swollen ankles and splints)
- Fast removal and ease during toileting, with minimal snaps along the waistband

### Skirts

- Easy on and off, with elastic waists and full-length side openings
- Easy dressing of individuals who are unable to stand
- Skirts tuck underneath and snap in place easily as the wearer is turned from side to side in bed

### Culottes

- Elastic waists and wide pockets
- Great coverage: looks like a skirt, but has all the practical advantages of pants
- Roomy legs allow for unrestricted movement

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Next Month: Part IV: Assistive Technology Products

Anise Mattson is an elder care consultant, retired Registered Health Information Technician, writer of reference books for seniors and Caring Boomers Newsletter ©2011. Part III © Information courtesy of Lynn Dow, Simple Closures. Email: [cfaalo@yahoo.com](mailto:cfaalo@yahoo.com).

## City Attorney Whistleblower (Cont. from p. 6)

price from those who’ve sought to cheat and defraud San Francisco taxpayers.”

Hoeper prosecuted other high-profile frauds and served as an advisor to City officials. She was named a “Northern California Super Lawyer” in 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, based on peer nominations and third-party evaluations of professional achievement – an honor accorded to 5% of California lawyers. She became one of Herrera’s closest advisers, a member of his 4-person Executive Team, until her 2012 investigation.

Two years later, Herrera’s Press Release disparaged her as “a disgruntled former employee, who clearly has some axes to grind against some of her former colleagues, who is expressly seeking a payout...by making reckless and unsupported charges of serious crimes in a bid to shake-down taxpayers.” What happened?

Upon receiving the FBI tip about fraudulent sewer claims, Hoeper alerted the City Attorney’s Claims Bureau that handles claims against the City. The Claims Bureau Chief, Matthew Rothschild, is a long-time political operative and fund-raiser for the Democratic County Central Committee and the Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club – and an asset for Herrera’s political campaigns. The Claims Bureau Assistant Chief, Michael Haase, reportedly assured her that dubious claims were weeded out and that there was no cause for further inquiry. Given the seriousness of the allegations and a pattern of anomalies in the claims, Hoeper also contacted the Chief of Investigations, George Cothran, who provided an investigator. Years before, as an investigative journalist, Cothran had critiqued Rothschild’s bid for a Municipal Court judgeship. (*SF Weekly*; 2/28/1996)

According to her claim, Hoeper informed Herrera that from 2002- 2011, the City had paid out \$19 million for

several thousand claims, mostly to replace private sewers allegedly damaged by City tree roots. Oddly, the Claims Bureau paid the higher cost of replacing rather than simply repairing the sewers. Importantly, no other California City paid to replace private sewers clogged by roots. The consensus of arborists and sewer engineers was that tree roots do not cause sewer breaks. Rather, roots infiltrate already broken sewer lines. Further, the repair of private sewers is the legal responsibility of property owners – not the City.

After persuading homeowners that the City would restore their aging, supposedly damaged sewers to modern standards, plumbing company salesmen filled out the claims, had the owners sign them, and submitted them to the Claims Bureau. Within days, Hoeper noted, the City paid the property owners who then paid the contractors. If, after a claim was submitted, a property owner balked at signing the form required by the City to issue a check, the Claims Bureau would open a new claim in the name of the plumbing company – and pay it directly. Hoeper also alleges that the Claims Bureau awarded these companies no-bid contracts to fix City-owned sewers despite City rules requiring a bidding process. She concluded that millions in taxpayer dollars enhanced private properties while furnishing several plumbing firms most of their profits.

Next month, we’ll explore how Hoeper’s long-praised pursuit of fraud - when aimed inward - became a threat to the City Attorney’s Office and its Claims Bureau.

Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr were senior physicians at Laguna Honda Hospital where they repeatedly exposed DPH wrongdoing. Contact: [DerekOnVanNess@aol.com](mailto:DerekOnVanNess@aol.com) or [www.SFWistleblowers.com](http://www.SFWistleblowers.com)

## Kopp (Cont. from p. 3)

Proposition H constitutes a true citizen initiative, qualifying for the ballot with about 15,000 voters signing a measure circulated by volunteers West of Twin Peaks and elsewhere. Proposition H stops violations of law, namely the assiduously-promulgated Golden Gate Park Master Plan and the Western Shoreline Area Plan. Both were scrupulously adopted to protect natural values at the western end of Golden Gate Park by requiring the city to maintain all athletic fields therein as natural grass and barring night time field lighting in such areas. To subvert Proposition H, Supervisors David Chiu, Katy Tang, Mark Farrell, Eric Mar and Scott Wiener (remember these names) submitted an initiative, Proposition I, as a “poison pill” intended to confuse voters and defeat H. Proposition I arguably denies the Recreation and Park Commission discretion to consider other city policies before approving a project, clearly limits the powers of citizens and their Board of Supervisors and perhaps prohibits future voter initiatives on the subject matter. The proposed Beach Chalet soccer complex project would remove seven acres of living grass, removes over 55 trees and inserts an acre of concrete paving in our historic park. It’s a trick. I don’t like politicians’ tricks. I’m voting “yes” on H and “no” on I.

Proposition J increases the minimum wage governing San Francisco workers from \$10.74 per hour to \$15 by 2018. I’m voting for it.

I’m voting against Proposition K, another meaningless housing statement by City Hall.

## Letters (Cont. from p. 5)

fact that parking is being replaced with bike lanes? I’m sure bicyclists would very much take offense at what you said about them going to “unknown destinations to the north”. Everyone who’s traveling has somewhere to be, right? And don’t even get me started on the environmental, logistical, and social aspects of driving versus alternate modes of transportation. An automobile-dominated lifestyle in a dense city like San Francisco just is not realistic.

You may have gathered from all of this that I am biased towards the side of alternate transportation, which is true; however, I would encourage you to get your facts and data straight, if only to be informed personally.

David E. Leong, California Polytechnic State University Alumni, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, City & Regional Planning Department

(Re: Fate of Parkmerced Awaits Court of Appeals Decision) Thanks very much for a very good article about Parkmerced.

I would add one comment. I believe Proposition B is far more enforceable because its central principle, a limit on building height limits not to exceed existing zoning without specific voter approval, is legally clear. Existing zoning on our Bay shores is clearly defined in zoning codes and maps. The problem with Proposition M is that there is no court precedent nor enforceable legal definition for neighborhood character. I don’t believe Mr. Flashman cited any court precedent nor firm legal definition for what exactly is meant by neighbor character, therefore how could any court enforce it or limit a development based on such prior findings?

Nick Pasquariello Producer “The Future of Parkmerced” (a work-in-progress)

(Re: Prop F) Our city needs to address its neighborhood housing challenges with more common sense and respect. Westside neighborhoods were not interested in legalizing in-law units and we oppose short-term rentals and infill development. We believe in single-family home ownership as an important contributor to the

I’m voting enthusiastically for Proposition L. It’s a policy declaration, which contains therapeutic value in demanding restoration of balance in San Francisco’s transportation policies by simply proposing that traffic laws should be enforced equally for everyone using San Francisco’s streets and sidewalks. Do you realize that San Francisco taxpayers, through their Federal, State and regional taxes and fees, pay nearly half of the vaunted Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s annual budget and motorists pay most of those taxes and fees. Muni riders pay only 22.42%, another 4.90% emanates from traffic fines, rentals and advertising. Bicyclists pay 0.0%. The U.S. Census, in its latest five-year estimate (2008-2012) concludes that of the 409,015 San Franciscans who work outside their residences, 164,017 drive alone to work, 142,350 utilize public transportation, 43,363 walk and only 14,833 ride bicycles to work. Although bicyclists’ constitute just 3.6% of San Francisco commuters, eliminating traffic lanes and street parking is seemingly the priority transportation objective of city government. I know Proposition L won’t mandate the force of law, but its passage should affect City Hall decisions and establish equality of treatment for taxpayers who pay the bills.

Finally, I note my vigorous endorsement of Supervisor David Campos for Assembly and a fine San Franciscan, Nicholas Josefowitz, for BART Board of Directors representing most of San Francisco. Next month, I examine State ballot measures and candidates.

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

diversity of housing and demographic make up of our city. When a neighborhood wants something, and goes out of its way to advocate for it as Potrero Hill and Dogpatch residents are doing in support of Proposition F to develop a long abandoned Pier 70, we need to respect their wishes.

This type of development makes sense. Instead of building density in our backyards, we should first look at the swaths of underutilized and abandoned land like Pier 70. Once before, I voted on a major development project at the Hunter’s Point Shipyard for similar reasons. It makes sense, given the trends are leaning clearly on tremendous pressure on San Francisco’s long-term financial health and well being that we’ll have to keep on building. San Francisco’s population is growing, public safety spending is up, and infrastructure improvements and maintenance are lagging.

Potrero Hill and Dogpatch neighbors want to see Pier 70 developed and need the rest of the city to vote yes on Proposition F to see that happen. I’ll get my chance as a voter to mark the box in favor of Proposition F to add needed dollars to our tax rolls by building up to 2,000 units of housing on the 28 acre parcel on Pier 70 - based on the trends, we sure could use the revenue!

The Pier 70 project achieves a balance with the neighborhood and city government to accommodate development and manage it in a way that maintains order, efficiency and unity. This proposal equitably distributes the costs and benefits of development adding millions to our future tax rolls and giving middle-class families a shot at home ownership in San Francisco. It’s a straightforward, community led effort to revitalize an abandoned section of our southern waterfront. Most importantly it’s supported by the surrounding neighborhoods — Prop F is a yes vote for local, neighborhood preference and choice and we should all support it.

Denise LaPointe, President, Twin Peaks Improvement Association, Former President, West of Twin Peaks Central Council



Civil Grand Jury Report on Ethics Commission

Ethics’ Pretenses vs. Sunshine

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

The tenuous relationship between San Francisco’s Sunshine Ordinance Task Force and the City’s Ethics Commission was already the subject of an Ethics Commission complaint filed on June 22 involving probable inappropriate communications from an errant Task Force member to the Ethics Commission that appears to have contributed to conflicting rulings issued by the Ethics Commission.

The very next day, the San Francisco Civil Grand Jury coincidentally issued a blistering report that is highly critical of the Ethics Commission.

Civil Grand Jury Faults Ethics Commission — Again

The 2010–2011 Civil Grand Jury issued a scathing 15-page report three years ago titled “San Francisco’s Ethics Commission: The Sleeping Watch Dog,” highly critical of the excessive influence the Ethics Commission’s Executive Director, John St. Croix, holds over Ethics Commissioners, leading Commission members to abdicate oversight and their responsibilities to serve as an independent watchdog. The 2011 report contained seven findings and seven recommendations.

Among other issues raised, the Jury’s June 2011 report focused heavily on the dismissal of all 18 Sunshine complaints referred by the Task Force to the Ethics Commission for enforcement between 2004 — the year St. Croix was first hired — and 2010. Each of the 18 cases was dismissed by the Executive Director; none was ever heard during an open hearing before the Ethics Commission. The Grand Jury’s report asserted the Commission’s Executive Director controls the “agenda” of the Ethics Commission, and reported that one Commissioner stated that there was an expectation that “... the Commission should support the Executive Director in his decisions to dismiss a case.”

The Grand Jury noted its 2011 report was not meant to be a definitive report on

the Ethics Commission; that report would be left to a future Grand Jury.

Fast forward to 2014. On June 23, the 2013-2014 Civil Grand Jury released a 43-page report (excluding several appendices) containing 45 findings, and 35 recommendations, titled “Ethics in the City: Promise, Practice or Pretense.”

Among other recommendations, the Grand Jury recommended a two-year pilot contract with California’s Fair Political Practices Commission to enforce violations of California Public Records Act and Sunshine Ordinance violations; an audit by the City Attorney of potential improper campaign contributions returned to the contributor, rather than forfeited to the City as required by City laws; a recommendation that the Board of Supervisors enhance the “Citizen’s Right of Action” to enforce the City’s ethics laws; a policy needs to be developed to preserve e-mails and

text messages consistent with preservation of other public records; violations of departmental Statements of Incompatible Activities by City employees and members of boards and commissions should be disclosed; and enhancing the Form 700 Statements of Economic Interests City officials are required to submit to make them searchable. There are many more substantive issues raised in the Grand Jury’s 2014 report.

The Ethics Commission’s draft response to the Civil Grand Jury appears to have been authored by Mr. St. Croix. Of note, during its August 18 special meeting to discuss the Ethics Commission’s response to the Grand Jury, Ethics Commissioner Peter Keane — a widely respected



Ethics Commissioner Peter Keane, Photo Bob Butler

in addition to the departmental annual report required of each City department, and each board and commission. St. Croix’s draft response to the Grand Jury claimed that the additional annual report addressing effectiveness of ethics laws “was not necessary,” and “implementation is not up to the Ethics Commission.” Initially Ethics Commissioner’s were poised on August 18 to allow St. Croix’s draft language to stand, until they took public comment and heard from both members of the public and members of the Civil Grand Jury, that the second report is required by the City Charter. Only then did the Ethics Commissioners decide to re-write St. Croix’s draft response, agreeing that the Ethics Commission should, in fact, develop and submit the supplemental annual report.

For his part, during discussion of the recommendation on August 18, Commissioner Keane astutely noted this is a “mom-and-apple-pie issue.” He asked “Why would we disagree with a broader right of citizens’ access to ethics laws?” After lengthy discussion, the Commission voted to change the recommendation from “disagree, to “agree,” and agreed to write the second report.

A Wayward Sunshine Task Force Member

On April 28, 2014 Sunshine Ordinance Task Force member David Pilpel appears

Cont. p. 16

“ Ethics Commissioner Peter Keane — a widely respected Professor of Law and Dean Emeritus at Golden Gate University School of Law who was appointed to the Ethics Commission by City Attorney Dennis Herrera — observed that the draft response was too “defensive,” needed substantial edits, and that a “lot of the language in the proposed draft is inappropriate.” Finally, St. Croix’s excessive influence over the Ethics Commission appears to be gradually waning.

Of concern to the Grand Jury was the failure of the Ethics Commission to produce an annual report about the effectiveness of San Francisco’s ethics laws, an annual report required by the City Charter



Margaret Handelman, resident since 2011

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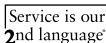


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Money Matters • By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan

## Adjusting Your Money Mindset

Money is a powerful force in our lives. We're required to think about money—how much we have, how much we want, how to get more of it—on a regular basis. Undoubtedly, how we think about money influences our emotions and behaviors. For these reasons, if you're serious about improving your financial life, it can be helpful to examine your money mindset, look for patterns that may interfere with your personal goals, and replace what hinders you with more productive habits.

**Acknowledge the influence of your personal history.** Because our financial lives are inextricably linked to our family of origin and upbringing, we're all bound to have a complex and layered relationship with money. If you grew up in poverty, you may have an underlying sense of never having "enough." If you are accustomed to abundance, you may never have learned how to manage money wisely. Of course, neither of these scenarios may be true if you had someone who taught you good money habits. The purpose of looking back is to see if you have any ingrained stumbling blocks that can sabotage your best intentions to earn what you're worth, save adequately, spend responsibly or be more philanthropic. If you see room for improvement, awareness paves the way for change, as needed or desired.

**Evaluate your emotional response to money.** Is your emotional state tied to your assets? Does your bank account define you? When you allow money to occupy the driver's seat, normal emotional states can sometimes turn into feelings of anxiety. It's not that it's wrong to feel a certain way, it's just that certain powerful emotions can prevent you from making reasonable choices.

**Stop playing money mind games without much possibility of winning.** If you find yourself in any of these mental exchanges, you might be setting yourself up with challenges down the road.

**I'll be happy when I make more money.** Working toward your financial goals is crucial, but it's also important to enjoy successes you're experiencing today.

**Money is the only thing that matters.** Money is important as a means to an end. However, worshipping money at the expense of people, nature, art and ideas is likely to lead to loneliness and disappointment.

**Money is meaningless.** This kind of thinking can also be harmful, because it can feed reckless spending and de-motivate your work life. Money should be treated with respect and not frittered away.

**Let go of the past.** Stop beating yourself up for your financial mistakes. It's better to reframe regrets as opportunities to learn and grow. Don't shut the door on your past, but don't let it convince you that you don't deserve another chance, or that you can't change the present or the future. Plenty of people have turned their financial lives around after a failed business, job loss, stock tumble, tax trouble or any number of other financial fiascos. Focusing on what you can do now, with an open mind about the future, can free you from a history you'd prefer to forget.

**Curtail the time spent thinking about money.** There's an appropriate amount of time to devote to money matters, and then there's the extreme of continuous, non-productive dwelling on dollars and cents. If you find yourself mulling over financial mistakes or fantasizing at length about winning the lottery, it's time to switch gears. Try to gain insight into what you really hope to accomplish (or avoid) by allowing money to monopolize your thoughts, and step back to see the futility of your preoccupation. Next, identify actions you can take that will be more successful at helping you reach your goals. Give yourself permission to problem solve or daydream for short bursts of time, but then get back to the business of living.

**Enlist a financial ally.** A skilled financial advisor will be very familiar with the mental, emotional and behavioral landmines you may be grappling with as you work to establish a strong financial foundation for your life. They can provide you with the tools to plan, save, and invest, within your timeframe and budget, according to your personal goals. But you can also look to your advisor for guidance and encouragement as you sharpen your mental game with regard to personal money management.

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 LGBT individuals and families plan and achieve their financial goals.



## Farrell/Admit Problem (Cont. from p. 1)

dated June 2013. The SBE noted "We found a number of parcels that were not assessed even though the Assessor was aware of the transfer" and that "the Assessor's failure to assess new construction as of Jan 1<sup>st</sup> is contrary to statutory provisions and results in a loss in revenue and inaccurate assessments."

Based on my own 35 years of experience in private industry and government (of which 12 years were in the Assessor's Office), and on discussions with former and current staff members, a professional, qualified and independent Assessor means at least \$100 million more annually in tax revenue to the City.

Over the past year I have written articles identifying close to \$200 million in tax revenue to the City that is not currently being appraised by the Assessor's Office, such as the unconstitutional loophole in the Presidio Trust that tax exempts tenants, the non-assessment of naming rights at AT&T Ballpark, the PG&E franchise fee by the SBE, and the appalling appeal by the Giants to reduce their Ballpark value to \$140 million after they built it 2000 for over \$350 million, to name a few. If these high profile properties are not being assessed appropriately, than what about other properties in the city. Just think, this \$200 million in tax revenue not being addressed appropriately is just from a handful of properties and represents 10% of the City's total annual property tax revenue. This \$200 million would go along way for affordable housing. Is this the tip of the iceberg?

Over the past year and a half, I have personally talked with Mayor Lee, Assessor Chu and several of the Supervisors, and all are fully aware that potentially hundreds of millions of dollars are not being addressed in the Assessor's Office.

Mr. Engardio's article reports "San Francisco's City Hall still relies on antiquated computer systems and a lot of paper.... That's why Chu is desperate to modernize her office." The prior two Assessors Ting and Teng also complained about the systems being used in order to cover their butts. "There you go again." It is easy to point fingers; it's a bigger thing to address the issues.

I was lucky to work in the Assessor's Office with Les Cazzaza, who is one of the best in the state in ownership transfers. Les and I took the bull by the horns and spent over five years developing and implementing the Assessor's existing assessment system, which revolutionized how valuations and ownerships transfers are processed. When this system went live in 2000 we picked up over one billion in appraised value from values that had fallen off the assessment roll or were not calculated correctly. This resulted in over \$10 million annually in tax revenue to the City that otherwise wouldn't had been received. The recent SBE Survey noted that this system met their requirements in processing assessment roll changes. By the way, San Mateo County is currently using this system as well.

Is this system perfect? Of course not. But it was light years ahead of what was being done and was state of the art at that time. Keep in mind everything prior to 2000 was done manually. For example, prior to the implementation of this new system, on a typical home sale an appraiser would calculate the value of the property

and manually fill out forms for the supplemental (and could fill out two supplemental forms depending on the transfer date) and the current roll value, and then submit to a clerical unit for data entry which would take up to several months to input. Now, under the new system which streamlined the process, once the value is approved by the appraiser, they push a button and the system calculates the values correctly and creates the applicable adjustments (roll correction, escape or supplemental) automatically and is paperless.

Prior to this new system, it took a minimum of 6 to 9 months for a homeowner to get a supplemental notice after the sale of a single family home. With this system's direct enrollment of single family homes, it takes no more than 60 days after the sale for a homeowner to receive their notice and a subsequent tax bill which meets state requirements.

When Les and I left the office several years later, there was no one in the office who continued to foster the system. Before we left, we setup a process which automatically changes ownership and enrolls values once indexed by the recorder staff. We were also ready to implement an automatic partial ownership transfer process. Both of these processes are still sitting in a test environment over ten years later, gathering dust.

In life, a person should never forget where they come from in order to understand how they got to where they are. In order to understand any operation, you should learn its history so you have an understanding on how to move forward. The last three Assessors - Teng, Ting and now Chu - all have directly or indirectly blamed their predecessors for leaving them with a dysfunctional office, excessive backlogs, and antiquated systems, resulting in millions of lost tax revenue annually. "There you go again." Assessor Chu now has the opportunity to rectify the situation, which Ting and Teng failed to do.

But the first step is to admit there is a problem.

By the way, thank you to the dozens of people who wanted me to run for Assessor. If it was about being a fifth generation San Franciscan and love for the City; being a dedicated professional and having the qualifications, knowledge and experience needed to lead the office; being independent and working for you and not for a Mayor; setting an example and earning respect of the staff and not being handed the position for political payback; treating all taxpayers fairly and equitably; and bringing in hundreds of millions to the City which would otherwise not be received, which I have done in the past, then I would have highly considered it. But this is not the case. It is about politics and not real substance. Every decision that I would make would be in the best interest of the City, which is not the political thing to do in many cases. This is why taxpayers are not all being treated fairly and equitably. I am a moral leader, not a political follower.

"Everyone should pay their fare share."

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

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# SF's Hidden Gems: Public Tennis Courts

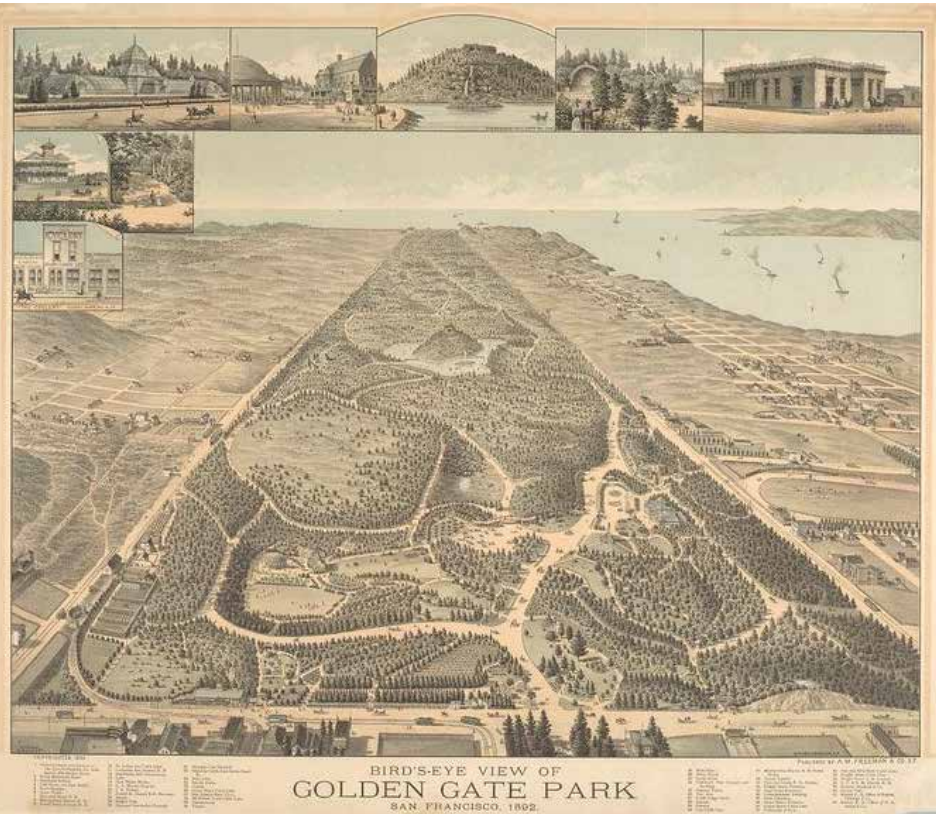
By Michael Moran

San Francisco is home to an extensive park system which contains a surprising number of public tennis courts in varied settings. Many are surrounded by stunning panoramic vistas that only San Francisco could serve up. Many of these courts seem to barely be used, while others are wildly popular. All the courts have a story to tell as many of them are over 100 years old, dating back to the era when tennis first became a worldwide phenomenon. Although tennis as we know it is an old sport, the roots of tennis are older still...

While evidence is thin on the ground, the game of tennis is believed to hark back thousands of years, with several indicators suggesting the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans played precursors to tennis. For example, the Arabic word for the palm of the hand is rahat, similar to the word racket, while the Egyptian town Tinnis again bears a resemblance to tennis. More substantial evidence emerges from around 1000, when French monks began playing a crude courtyard ball game. This sport, played against their monastery walls or over a rope hung across a courtyard, took on the name je de paume – ‘game of the hand.’ According to this theory, the word ‘tennis’ was coined by these monks, who would shout the word ‘tenez’, the French for ‘to take’, ‘take that’, while they served the ball.

In 1850: Charles Goodyear invented a process for rubber called vulcanization, which made the material used to make tennis balls significantly bouncier. As a result, tennis could now be more easily played by the masses, outdoors on dirt, clay, pavement or grass. At that time, the game was more often than not called “Lawn Tennis”. By this time, the foundations for modern tennis had been paved, and this sport surged in popularity

A few years later, in London in 1874, Major Walter C. Wingfield patented the first rules and equipment for tennis, which he called Sphairistike, the Greek for ‘playing at ball.’ The ubiquity of croquet at the time meant there was a ready supply of smooth outdoor courts, which proved easily adaptable for tennis. Tennis soon spread to Russia and Asia.



“In 1865, when San Francisco's Daily Evening Bulletin asked its readers if it were not time for the city to finally establish a public park, residents had only private gardens and small urban squares where they could retreat from urban crowding, noise, and filth. Five short years later, city supervisors approved the creation of Golden Gate Park, the second largest urban park in America.

It wasn't long before tennis arrived in the United States in the mid-1870s separately and independently in at least six different places. The first formal lawn tennis club in the Americas seems to have been formed in 1876 in New Orleans, after English merchants in the city on business brought the game over with them. But whether the first lawn tennis court in the Americas was set up in San Francisco (as many claim), in Nahant, Mass. (north of Boston), or Staten Island (New York), in Canada, or even at Camp Apache

in the Arizona Territory, or elsewhere – all possibilities – the game quickly became popular with the leisure class, on Army posts, and wherever British merchants and diplomats traveled, which in the 19th century was everywhere.

Coinciding with the spread of tennis was the era of public park creation. In fact, there were two distinct periods in the history of American park building, each defined by a distinctive attitude towards “improving” nature: the romantic approach, which prevailed from the 1860s to the 1880s, emphasized the beauty of nature, while the rationalistic approach, dominant from the 1880s to the 1920s, saw nature as the best setting for uplifting activities such as and education and athletics, including tennis. Public parks were being installed in cities worldwide about the same time as San Francisco was evolving into a full-fledged city.

In 1865, when San Francisco's Daily Evening Bulletin asked its readers if it were not time for the city to finally establish a public park, residents had only private gardens and small urban squares where they could retreat from urban crowding, noise, and filth. Five short years later, city supervisors approved the creation of Golden Gate Park, the second largest urban park in America. Over the next sixty years, and particularly after 1900, a network of smaller parks and parkways was built, turning San Francisco into one of the nation's greenest cities.

As a result of the popularity of tennis and the concurrent building of parks throughout the city, San Francisco became home just shy of 150 public tennis courts. These beloved courts, free to the public, and rich in history, are yours to use whenever you like (Please note that the Board of Supervisors under Supervisor Weiner closed the parks at night.) Being on public land, they are free from the threat of development and should enrich our communities for generations to come. The same cannot be said for the Bay Club, which

looks like it may be soon torn down to make way for condos.

If you would like to explore our city's tennis courts here are two good places to start:

SF Tennis League <http://tennissf.com/Tennis Maps> <http://www.tennismaps.com/index.asp?regionid=64>

Here are the some of the city's most popular tennis courts:

### Golden Gate Park Tennis Complex

The largest tennis complex in the city was built in 1901, 5 years before the great earthquake and fire. The park's 21 hard-surface tennis courts are nestled between the Conservatory of Flowers and the Children's Playground. The trees deter the wind from ruining your serve, and courts are typically first come, first served. Players of all levels go for pickup games and private and group lessons (\$50 and \$20). It's also the site of the annual City Open.

### Alice Marble Tennis Courts

It can get windy on top of Russian Hill in George Sterling Memorial Park, but the views of downtown, Alcatraz, the Marina, and Golden Gate Bridge make it worth the occasional wild serve. The four courts have modern Laykold flooring that provides more cushion and bounce absorption than your average clay court.

### James Moffet Tennis Court

Venture to the Outer Sunset's Parkside Square, where you'll find four courts in top condition. They're largely occupied by longtime neighbors who have been playing here for most of their lives, and as such, the regulars are a little protective of their turf. Hard flooring provides high-bouncing balls, and the surrounding pine trees give off a nice scent.

Explore San Francisco is a locally owned co-op of guides who help us explore and discover the City's “hidden gems”. For more information on touring SF, check out their website at [ExploreSanFrancisco.biz](http://ExploreSanFrancisco.biz) or call them at 415.793.1104

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**NAPA Quake affects us all...**our thoughts and wishes go out to everyone affected by the recent quake in Napa and the surrounding communities. It is a sobering reminder that when Mother Nature wants to flex the earth's crust, the power is immense, quickly crumbling structures and dreams. It is amazing and fortunate there were no fatalities.

I spoke with Craig Smith, CEO of the Napa Downtown Association, and he filled me in with an update. "Although it was a major event and there are 20 plus red-tagged buildings in the downtown area, most of the downtown area and businesses fared pretty well considering how close we were to the epicenter. At this point (Labor Day weekend) about 90% of our restaurants, retail establishments and tasting rooms are open and operating at their normal business hours." He continued that there is long-term damage to other buildings that will take a long time to clean up and reconstruct/rebuild. Retail areas such as the Oxbow Market, the Riverfront area, and the historic Hatt building complex are all open and operating.

I say we go out, buy some Napa wine at our local merchants; make plans to visit the wine country and help keep their economy going. It remains to be seen what effect the quake will have on the upcoming fall crush and wine production for 2014.

Of course, although we see the damage in Napa on the news, other local communities such as American Canyon and Vallejo also suffered major damage from the temblor and we wish their residents and businesses well for the future.

It's been 25 years since the Loma Prieta and this one was close enough to remind us to look around and strengthen our preparations for the next one.

**SNNA at the Commonwealth Club...** the SNNA (San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association) is celebrating its 25 anniversary this year and several of our local publishers will be panelists at the Commonwealth Club's September 22<sup>nd</sup> program focusing on the role of neighborhood newspapers in helping to create healthy and informed environments and neighborhoods. Here in the Westside we are fortunate to have diverse and informative publications such as the *Ingleside Light*, the *West Portal Monthly*, the *Sunset Beacon*, the *Richmond ReView* and of course, the *Observer*. Did you know there are 15 neighborhood newspapers bringing local content to the neighborhoods in SF? Located at 595 Market Street, the doors open at 5:30 with the program starting at 6:00. It's free to members, \$7 students and \$20 general public.

Have an event, a neighborhood fact or just an observation to share? Drop us a line at [mitch@westsideobserver.com](mailto:mitch@westsideobserver.com) and share your ideas or just let us know what you think.



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## OPERA IN THE PARK • SF OPERA'S FREE CONCERT AL FRESCO IS SUNDAY, SEPT 7 • 1:30 PM



Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park Always an event to look forward to—it's free and open to the public—and usually brings 20,000 opera lovers as well as curious onlookers. Since 1971, an excellent sound system turns the sleepy, sylvan, Sharon Meadows into a truly sparkling open air theater.

The operatic wonder of the San Francisco Opera truly comes to life. Many bring along a blanket, while others take the opportunity to pack a picnic and enjoy an outing with family and friends. The combination of nature with singing and music is a splendid treat and one of the most popular events held at the Golden Gate Park. It is highly suggested to arrive early in order to claim a prime viewing location, but anywhere nearby is an enjoyable spot. Unlike Stern Grove, there is plenty of room to stretch out, even if you only arrive an hour early.

Lying back in the surrounding green, enjoy arias al fresco to celebrate the opening of San Francisco Opera's 92nd season with stars from the fall operas, accompanied by the acclaimed San Francisco Opera Orchestra, conducted by Music Director Nicola Luisotti.

The masses usually begin to arrive around 10 am bearing baskets, bottles and blankets for the rehearsals, even though the show doesn't start until 1:30.

**Parking** is a problem, so public transit is the hometown favored ticket, but parking is available at the UCSF Parnassus Campus's Millberry Union Public Garage, 500 Parnassus Avenue, located across from the Medical Sciences Building. You can take an elevator from your parking level all the way down to Irving Street.

**Food and beverages** will also be available for sale at the event.

**Accessibility:** The ADA parking and drop-off point for Sharon Meadow is located on Bowling Green Drive. Recommended route: MLK Jr. Drive to Nancy Pelosi Drive to Bowling Green Drive.

**Traffic Advisory:** Due to the Haight Street Music & Merchants Street Festival, Haight Street will be closed from Masonic to Stanyan, with side street closures from Waller to Page on Ashbury, Clayton, Cole, and Shrader. Please plan accordingly.

## September

### CALENDAR

#### EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

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

#### EVERY TUE & THU • JOB SEEKERS LAB

**Tue 10 am–1 pm & Thu 2 pm–5 pm** Internet-ready computers are available for resume, preparing job applications and/or searching for jobs. Handouts, books, some staff assistance. Bring a flash drive. Main Library, 100 Larkin, 6th Fl. 557-4277

#### EVERY TUE • COMPUTER SKILLS

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

#### EVERY TUES • QUE SYRAH HAPPY HOUR

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

#### EVERY THURS – NIGHTLIFE

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

#### JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

#### FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

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

#### FRIDAYS @ OFF THE GRID/FT. MASON

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

#### EVERY WED • FREE E-BOOKS

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

#### SUN • ASIAN ART MUSEUM FREE DAY

**Sun Sep 7 | 10 am-5 pm** | Every first Sunday is free at the Asian Art Museum (save \$12) -17,000 artworks spanning 6 thousand years. Special exhibitions may require separate charges. 200 Larkin St.

#### SUN • OPERA IN THE PARK

**Sun Sep 7 | 1:30 pm** | Arias al fresco celebrate the opening of SF Opera's 92nd season with stars from the fall operas, SF Opera Orchestra, conducted by Nicola Luisotti. Bring a picnic and enjoy this outdoor concert. Food and beverages will also be available for sale at the event. Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park.

#### MON • STAY ENGAGED FOR LIFE

**Mon Sep 8 | 1:30 – 3:30 pm** | Social engagement is a key to healthy aging. In this interactive class, led by Hope Levy of City College, learn what research and practice have uncovered about community engagement, creativity, life review, and flourishing in the context of the aging process. Main Library, 100 Larkin St. Latino/Hispanic Rms A & B.

#### TUE • POET DIANE FRANK

**Tue Sep 9 | 7:00 pm** | SF poet/novelist Diane Frank dances, plays cello, and creates her life as an art form. *Blackberries in the Dream House*, her first novel, won the Chelson Award for Fiction and was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Her new novel, *Yoga of the Impossible* has just been published. BookShop West Portal 80 W Portal Ave. 564-8080

#### THU • DIST COALITION MEETING

**Thu Sep 11 | 7-9 pm** | Meets 2nd Thu each month. Info: 586.8103 or ssuval@sbcglobal.net Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave.

#### SAT • DIAMOND HEIGHTS HEALTH FAIR

**Sat Sep 13 | 10 am–2 pm** | Music, games, prizes, SFPD Talking Car, Mounted Police and Dog Unit, Station 26 Fire Engine, disaster preparedness, health and social services information for people of all ages. Food trucks available. SF Police Academy, 350 Amber Dr.

#### SAT • SF PUC WATERSHED PLANNING

**Sat Sep 13 | 10 am–1:30 pm** | Plan and Play in Richmond, Sunset and Lake Merced. An interactive workshop which will use the award-winning watershed planning game to brainstorm grey and green stormwater management projects in the three San Francisco Westside urban watersheds: Richmond, Sunset and Lake Merced. Come plan and play! Sounty Fair Bldg, 1199 9th Ave. (GG Park) Lunch provided. Must RSVP sfwater.org/urbanwatersheds

#### TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

**Tue Sep 16 | 7 pm** | Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 3rd Tue of the month. Taraval Community Room, located at 2345 - 24th Ave. 759-3100.

#### THU • HISTORIAN TOM COLE

**Thu Sep 18 | 7 pm** | This is the story of San Francisco, a unique and rowdy tale with a legendary cast of characters. It tells of the Indians and the Spanish missions, the arrival of thousands of gold seekers and gamblers, crackbrains and dreamers, the building of the transcontinental railroad and the cable car, labor strife and political shenanigans, the 1906 earthquake and fire,

two World Wars, two World's Fairs, two great bridges, the beatniks and hippies and New Left—a story that is so marvelous and wild that it must be true. BookShop West Portal 80 W Portal Ave. 564-8080.

#### TUE • AUTHOR KELLY STANLEY

**Tue Sep 23 | 7 pm** | Through sordid back alleys and art galleries, from drag clubs to a Nazi costume ball, Miranda Corbie, private investigator and erstwhile escort journeys to San Francisco and Reno, where she's framed for a murder in *City of Ghosts*. BookShop West Portal 80 W Portal Ave. 564-8080

#### THU • SPUR - OCEAN BEACH WORKSHOP

**Wed Sep 24 | 6-8 pm** | Join Ocean Beach Master Plan team for workshop on the design for public access: parking lots and promenade along Seawall btwn Lincoln & Balboa and adapting to the rapidly-changing coastline South of Sloat Blvd. Location TBD, 781-8726

#### THU • FACEBOOK FOR JOB-SEEKERS

**Wed Sep 24 | 1:30-4 pm** | Learn to create a Facebook page, or update the one you've got! Join us for a hands-on class where you can learn the basics for a standout page. Main Library, 100 Larkin St.

#### WED • WALT WHITMAN

**Wed Sep 24 | 7–8:30 pm** | Whitman was the unabashed bard of our fledgling democracy. Tim Holt performs Whitman, his life and work in poetry and prose, celebrating the energy, sprawling expanse and diversity of America. Merced Library, 155 Winston Dr.

#### THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

**Thu Sep 25 | 7 pm** | Meets last Thu each month. SF State Warriors and Recology are invited. This meeting is at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street.

#### THU • REPUJADO: MEXICAN TIN ART

**Thu Sep 25 | 3–4 pm** | Create something beautiful by working a rounded tool on the back side of soft metal. Part of VIVA, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Ocean View Branch, 345 Randolph.

#### SAT • SHARP

**Mon Sep 29 | 7 pm** | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People. Last Mon of each month - sharpsf.com for details. 1736 9th Ave @ Moraga..

#### MON • CENTRAL COUNCIL

**Mon Sep 29** | West of Twin Peaks Central Council meets to discuss topics of interest to Westside residents. Meets the last Monday each month. but there are no meetings in July and August.

#### THU • AUTHOR MATT RICHTEL

**Thu Oct 2 | 7 pm** | From Pulitzer Prize-winning NY Times journalist Matt Richtel, a brilliant, narrative-driven exploration of technology's vast influence on the human mind and society, dramatically-told through the lens of a tragic "texting-while-driving" car crash that claimed the lives of two rocket scientists in 2006. BookShop West Portal 80 W Portal Ave. 564-8080

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At the Movies / By Don Lee Miller

AND SO IT GOES

Lounge singer Leah: Diane Keaton starts dating cur-mudgeonly real estate agent Oren Little: Michael Douglas. He finally sells the large mansion he lived in while married. He romances her in his unique manner. She proceeds cautiously, sort of a senior Annie Hall. Everything gets disrupted by a ten-year old granddaughter, Sarah: Sterling Jeris that Oren never knew about who is dropped into his care by his son when he's on the way to serve a six-month jail sentence. Knowing very little about girls, Oren turns to his neighbor Leah for support. Directed by Rob Reiner and written by Mark Andrus, this senior comedy is actually fun, thanks to the rapport of its stars. By her final number, Leah's singing has improved enough to be interesting. [Ms. Keaton began her career singing in the original Broadway production of *Hair*.] Sexual references. Profanity. Drug elements.

DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

San Francisco and Marin in this futuristic sci-fi drama are taken over by bands of apes, the not-too-friendly variety. Led by Malcolm: Jason Clarke and Dreyfus: Gary Oldham, the few human survivors try to get giant generators to function despite the interference of the apes. The tentative peace is held by Andy Serkis, leader of the apes, Caesar. Malcolm's mate, Ellie: Keri Russell treats the wounded Caesar. Director Matt Reeves and his writers, Mark Bombback and Rick Jaffa +4, provide a compelling tale. Intense sci-fi action and violence. Brief profanity.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY – 3-D

Adult Peter Quill: Chris Pratt steals a mysterious orb on the planet Moraq. He has to battle Korath: Djimon Hounsou and his men who report to Ronan the Accuser: Lee Pace that he failed to get the orb from Peter. Gamora: Zoe Saldana tries to take the orb from Peter, but Groot: voice of Vin Diesel and Rocket, a rodent: v.o. Bradley Cooper see that Peter is a wanted man and try to capture him for the bounty. When the foursome are arrested by Nova HQ and imprisoned in the Klyn, Drax: David Bautista, Groot and Rocket have a drunken brawl. The Collector: Benecio Del Toro separates the orb into two halves and reveals its powerful contents. Corpsman Dey: John C. Reilly and Nova Prime: Glenn Close round out the large supporting cast. If this sounds plot-heavy, there's lots of non-stop action with a large cast in the 121-minute film. Director/Head Writer James Gunn shares Marvel writing credit with Nicole Perlman + 2. Sci-fi action/violence. Some profanity.

LUCY

Lucy: Scarlett Johansson doesn't know what she's in for when she accepts delivering drugs for Mr. Jang: Min Sik Choi. The plastic bag sewn inside her stomach leaks and her ability to utilize 100% full brain potential suddenly occurs, plus she gets the strength to bend metal and leap fathoms. With the aid of the foremost brain authority, Professor Norman: Morgan Freeman and the sympathetic French police captain Pierre Del Rio: Amr Waked, she tackles Mr. Jang and his deadly hoods. What a way to see Paris! Lucy fits Scarlet like a glove! Writer-director Luc Besson and Johansson have a real action-packed winner. Strong violence. Disturbing images. Sexuality.

PLANES: FIRE AND RESCUE

Internationally known aerial ace Dusty: voice of Dane Cook learns he has a damaged engine and may never race again. His alternative is to become a firefighting plane, joining the fire and rescue team (known as the Smokejumpers) headed by helicopter Blade Ranger: v.o. Ed Harris. When the team, including Lil' Dipper: v.o. Julie Bowen and Maru: v.o. Curtis Armstrong, must tackle an out-of-control forest fire, Dusty gets a taste of what it's like to be a real hero in this animated tale for kids of all ages. Director Roberts Gannaway and writer (characters): Jeffrey M. Howard have done an admirable job with their bright colored feature. Action. Some peril.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA

Fearless TV reporter April: Megan Fox and her cameraman Vernon: Will Arnett, tired of doing puff pieces, run afoul of Eric Sacks: William Fichtner, founder of the mighty conglomerate, Sacks Group,



and the evil Shredder: Tohoru Masamune, leader of the Foot Clan which is terrorizing Manhattan. Seems April's late father headed up Project Renaissance for Sachs when they zapped four baby turtles with mutagen and created the mighty foursome who rarely come out of their sewer hideout. Rat sensei Master Splinter: Danny Woodburn supervises them there, teaching them nin-jitsu. Leader Leonardo: Pete Plozek (voiced by Johnny Knoxville), witty Donatello: Jeremy Howard, rebellious Raphael: Alan Ritchson and goofy Michaelangelo: Noel Fisher comprise the title characters. At work, April reports to Bernadette: Whoopi Goldberg (in a serious role). The Foot Soldiers battle the Turtles. Guess who wins. Josh Appelbaum and André Nemec + 3 wrote the dark tale for Jonathan Liebesman's direction. Sci-fi action violence.

Don Lee Miller is at the Movies most of the time!



## SUMMER FUN AT THE CLIFF HOUSE



### Join us for these Cliff House Weekly Favorites

- Wine Lovers' Tuesday – Half Priced Bottled Wines\*
- Bistro Wednesday Nights – \$28 Three-Course Prix Fixe
- Friday Night Jazz in the Balcony Lounge
- Sunday Champagne Brunch Buffet

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

### Guided Historical Walks

Spend a memorable Saturday morning exploring Lands End. Start with a continental breakfast at the historic Cliff House then walk through Adolph Sutro's magical 'kingdom by the sea' with historian guide John A. Martini. Regarded as the ultimate authority on this part of the City's fabled past, John's walks will be offered on September 13 and October 11.

For more information and to make reservations please visit [www.cliffhouse.com/history/Johns\\_Walk.html](http://www.cliffhouse.com/history/Johns_Walk.html)

1090 Point Lobos 415-386-3330 [www.CliffHouse.com](http://www.CliffHouse.com)



Image: Women playing mah jongg in the Catskills, c. 1960. Collection of Harvey Abrams.

CONTEMPORARY  
JEWISH MUSEUM  
connecting art, people, and ideas

# PROJECT MAH JONGG

The game, the history, and  
the connections between  
Jewish and Chinese cultures.

Exhibition on view Jul 13–Oct 28  
Plan your visit at [thecjm.org](http://thecjm.org)

Project Mah Jongg was curated and is circulated by the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, New York. The exhibition is made possible through the generosity of the National Mah Jongg League. Additional support is provided by Sylvia Hassenfeld and Twice Arts Foundation. Exhibition design by Abbott Miller, Pentagram.

Supporting sponsorship for The CJM's presentation has been provided by Ascent Private Capital Management of U.S. Bank, Gloria and Jack Clumeck, and Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation, in memory of Ben and A. Jess Shenson.





**At the Theater / Flora Lynn Isaacson****Leading Ladies**

Our play opens with a clever abridged version of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, and then proceeds to tell the story about two English Shakespearean actors, Leo Clark (Craig Christianson) and Jack Gable (Robert Nelson), who find themselves down on their luck, so they are performing "Scenes from Shakespeare" in the Moose Lodge circuit in the Amish county of Pennsylvania.

When they hear that an old lady by the name of Florence (Christina Jacqua) in York, PA, is about to die and leave her fortune to her two long-lost English nephews, they resolve to pass themselves off as her beloved relatives and get the cash.

When they discover that "Max" and "Steve" are actually "Maxine" and "Stephen," they continue on undaunted, in drag. Leo falls for Florence's actual niece Meg (Laura Domingo), while Jack swoons over Florence's part-time aide, Audrey (Laura Espino).



Florence recovers just as the pair arrives, but they decide to keep on, both to try to outlast her health and to stay close to the objects of their interest. Leo convinces Meg, who is enamored with Shakespeare and a fan of Jack and Leo, to put on a production at Florence's estate, to give himself more of an opportunity to be with her, both as Leo and Maxine. Meanwhile, Meg's fiancé Duncan grows increasingly suspicious of the "leading ladies."

With this play, Ken Ludwig again proves his reputation as the master of American farce, so well established with "Lend Me a Tenor."

Craig Christianson steals the show as Leo Clark. His performance is varied, subtle and complex, far beyond such broad comedy. Leo's dialects are quite different for each facet of his character: Shakespearean actor, actor not performing, lover, woman and actress. Christianson's vocal performance never falters.

Robert Nelson as Jack Gable is in control at all times – knowing how much of Gable's frustration to show each of the other characters and how much to demonstrate to the audience. He has some priceless stage business as the deaf and dumb Stephanie about how she is to understand someone else speaking.

There are so many other highlights. This is a show in which the wise-cracks come only from smart alecks, and chief among them is Doc Myers, portrayed by the amazing Michael Walraven.

Laura Domingo walks a more subtle line as Meg. Neither hard-boiled nor dim-witted, Meg is serious and smart and concerned with the interplay of honor and desire. David Kester plays the Rev. Duncan Woolery as oily and superior.

Marie Meier's and Janice Deneau's costumes are wonderful, and Michael Walraven's set is a masterpiece. Superbly staged and paced by Kris Neely, *Leading Ladies* at the Novato Theater Company is magnificently realized.

*Leading Ladies* opened August 22<sup>nd</sup> — September 14<sup>th</sup>, at Novato Theater Company. Performances: Fri, Sat 8 p.m. and Sun 2 p.m. NTC is located at 5420 Nave Drive in Novato. For tickets, call 415-883-4488, or go online at [www.novatotheatercompany.org](http://www.novatotheatercompany.org).

Coming up next at NTC will be *Avenue Q*, with music and lyrics by Robert Lopez and Jeff Marx and book by Jeff Whitty, from October 9<sup>th</sup> through November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

*Flora Lynn Isaacson*

A message from

## PIER 70 NEIGHBORS SUPPORTING PROPOSITION F



Dear San Francisco neighbors,

We, members of the **Dogpatch Neighborhood Association** and **Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association** and longtime residents of the neighborhoods, write to urge you to support Proposition F, the ballot measure regarding revitalization of Pier 70.

Today, the area is a mix of vacant land and deteriorating buildings behind chain-linked and barbed wire fences that block waterfront access to the public.

For the past several years, we've been participating in an extensive community planning process that will support revitalization of the site with waterfront parks, housing affordable to low and middle income households, rehabilitation of historic buildings, space for local artists, and the creation of new jobs for San Franciscans.

Our respective neighborhood associations – the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association and the Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association – both recently endorsed Prop F. We hope you will join us.

Sincerely,

Dogpatch Neighborhood Association

**Janet Carpinelli**, President, DNA

**Susan Eslick**, Vice President, DNA

**Vanessa Aquino**, Board Member

**Jared Doumani**, Board Member

**David Siegel**, Board Member

Holly Allen, Joe Boss, Ellen Brin, Bernadette Doerr,

Adam Ferrall-Nunge, Lesley Grossblatt, Andrew Ho,

Alisha Holloway, Bruce Huie, Christopher Irion, Patricia

and Scott Kline, Bill Lapczynski, Tina Lindinger, Michael

Rhea, Mark Olsen and Kerry Rodgers, Robert Schooler,

Brian Simonson, Callista Shepherd Smith, Alison and

Mark Sullivan, Matt Svoboda, Stefan Kyle Watkins,

John Warner, *Dogpatch Café*, Marc Goldfine, *Dogpatch*

*Saloon*, Alex Goretsky, *La Stazione Coffee & Wine Bar*,

Mark Dwight, *Rickshaw Bags*

Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association

**JR Eppler**, President, Boosters

**Stacey Bartlett**, Board Member

**Joe Boss**, Board Member

**Keith Goldstein**, Board Member

**Carlin Holden**, Board Member

**Monisha Mustapha**, Board Member

**Lisa Schiller-Tehrani**, Board Member

**Maulik Shah**, Board Member

**Audrey Cole**, Past President

**John deCastro**, Past President

Bonnie Baron, Dan Crisafulli, Mara Iaconi, Jonathan

Kass and Sarah Lucas, Ron Miguel, Jake and Bethany

Millan, Judy Minton, Rose Marie Ostler, Jeremy and

Michelle Regenbogen, Ralph Wilson, Wai Yip,

Dr. Frank Gilson, *Potrero Chiropractors and Acupuncture*





# Combating Homelessness

Recent surveys on homelessness have found that there are approximately 600,000 homeless people in America; that New York City has 60,000 and San Francisco has about 6,400 single individuals and families living without a permanent residence. Another study found that different cities had various percentages of homeless living on the streets. San Francisco only houses 2700 of its homeless population, though it has and pays for enough housing units for 6,855 people/families at a cost of \$165 million per year (\$124 million from city and county money, the rest from federal or state contributions), which includes some counseling services and an additional 2,000 emergency shelter beds. This figure does not include city costs for medical care and does not include charitable efforts to provide food and shelter to San Francisco's homeless. When these costs are added, the total that is spent annually on our 6,000+ homeless is more than \$200 million or more than \$30,000 per homeless person per year and yet more than half of them (3400 - 4300 people) are sleeping on sidewalks and under bridges.

There are many good people working hard to help the homeless. The city has a program to coordinate with non-profits to find more residential opportunities for the needy. Good work is being done in the Tenderloin and the Mission to convert some sleazy hotels into attractive and safe homes for those so in need of them.

Every neighborhood now has homeless people sleeping on park benches or city sidewalks; raiding garbage cans for bits of food or recyclable bottles and cans; relieving themselves in public; using public bathrooms for bathing; dressed in rags and suffering in ways the rest of us could not bear nor should anyone have to. Many of the homeless here have health problems that only get worse with neglect. They wind up at San Francisco General Hospital needing in-patient or out-patient treatment for serious conditions like AIDS, cancer, diabetes, kidney failure, liver damage, pancreatitis or heart disease. Many suffer the effects of years of substance abuse.

There are many good people working hard to help the homeless. The city has a program to coordinate with non-profits to find more residential opportunities for the needy. Good work is being done in the Tenderloin and the Mission to convert some sleazy hotels into attractive and safe homes for those so in need of them. Charitable organizations are providing clothing and free food to thousands of people each day. Citizens are generously donating their clothing to non-profits and charities to clothe this population. The staff at San Francisco General provide excellent medical care to their homeless patients.

But none of this is enough. What should be done?

I have an idea. The homeless could first go to the soon-to-be old San Francisco General Hospital to apply for assistance. There they could be identified with basic information like name, birthdate, place of birth, Social Security number and any known medical information. Some might be missing from friend and family who would like to help them. Some might need immediate medical attention. Each person should get a complete physical, a warm shower or bath and a hot, tasty meal. While at SFGH, they can get clean clothing selected from the very large inventory already at the facility.

If the individuals are deemed to be permanently disabled or aged, eligibility workers at SFGH should evaluate whether they are eligible to government aid such as VA, OASDI, SSI, Medi-Cal and/or food stamps. These people could then be placed at Laguna Honda's old, now vacant hospital. It has capacity of more than 300 beds. It was closed when the new facility was built. The new one is more earthquake safe. The old one has never lost a patient to earthquake and probably never will. Patients here die on their own since they have advanced conditions that are often terminal.

If the individuals applying for homeless assistance are temporarily disabled, they could soon be housed at the old SFGH when the new hospital is completed next year. SFGH could house 300 temporarily disabled people providing them with a safe comfortable room and bathroom as well

as medical attention to bring them back to health. SFGH also has a large kitchen and dining room to feed the patients and even has small lunchrooms on every floor that could be available to them.

If the individuals are deemed employable, with no serious medical or psychological conditions, they need to be housed in safe, clean SROs, many of which are in the Tenderloin, SOMA, downtown and Mission districts or in well-managed housing project units. Those residences not already run by non-profits dedicated to helping the homeless should be brought up to code and decency.

Since these people are healthy enough to work, they should be given work to do in the City to partially pay back for all that they receive from it. They can help clean and fix their own buildings, pick up litter in the neighborhood, plant trees and help park workers keep the weeds from overwhelming them. Some can help feed the homeless. Others can assist other programs intended to help them. Some can collect recyclables that are not already in garbage cans. Those who can work should do so, not only to contribute to their community, but also as a way to come back into the mainstream, slowly but surely. It also gives them something to do and a feeling of worth, raising their self-esteem.

It would seem that most people who are homeless in San Francisco would jump at this idea. It is hard to imagine many preferring to live out on the streets instead of getting a chance to enjoy a more normal life. But those who do prefer the outdoor life should be discouraged from it. Those who are too mentally challenged to make this obvious choice, and are therefore a danger to themselves and possibly others, can be brought to SFGH on a 5150 (of the California Welfare and Institutions code). This allows them to be kept under observation for three days. During that time, these people can go through the same intake process. After three days of having nice warm meals, new clothes, a few warm baths or showers, and a clean comfy bed to sleep in, many of these people might want to join the program. Those who are healthy, no threat to themselves or others and still don't want in would be released, but advised that they must get housing on their own and not in city parks or on city sidewalks.

These ideas come with a price tag. Running the old SFGH and Laguna Honda will require additional staff and 24 hour coverage. Since all the patients at both facilities should be eligible to Medi-Cal, some of these costs should be reimbursed. The aged and permanently disabled would be eligible to Social Security benefits if they worked long enough, or SSI if they didn't. SSI pays \$877 or \$961 (if living in an SRO) a month per person. This money could go toward paying for their living costs. Food Stamps, now called SNAP,

Cont. p. 16

# Revisiting Power Deregulation

By Brian Browne



A review of U.S electricity prices shows that California ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> in high U.S. electricity costs at 13.05 cents per kilowatt hour, well above the national average of 9.9 cents per kilowatt hour. These data were provided from the Electric Power Annual Energy Information Administration as of June 26, 2013. This high price for California persuaded me that we must again revisit power deregulation.

Comparison of some state and district electricity prices		
Number	State/District	Cents per KW hour
1	Idaho	6.4
43	California	13.05
51	Hawaii	31.59
	National Average	9.9

A major battle is looming in our service area for automatic electric market share. PG&E has held a virtual closed monopoly. After the failure of California's most chaotic deregulation (aka Western U.S. Energy Crisis) attempt 2000-2001, and the return to business as (nearly) normal, Carol Migden had AB117 passed in 2002 (signed 9/24/2002) to enthuse competition into the state's power markets. Her idea of competition was to allow municipalities to establish community choice aggregation (CCA) districts. Municipalities electing to implement a CCA program under AB117 would automatically take over the customers currently enrolled in the current, resident-investor owned utility system. Customers wishing to stay with an investor owned utility, e.g. PG&E, would under AB 117 have to take administrative steps to "opt out" of the CCA.

In 1996 the California legislature unanimously passed AB1890 to deregulate California's power markets. The goals of AB1890 were to bring electric supply and demand into competitive price equilibrium and to achieve significant market efficiencies and price reductions. The California Public Utilities (CPUC) lifted caps on wholesale pricing and kept caps on retail prices while investor-owned utilities were encouraged to sell off their own power plants. These changes were often incompatible with the basic cornerstones of a true market. These changes were self-defeating and doomed this deregulatory effort from the start.

This legislative contradiction led to opportunistic gaming, market manipulation, and market chaos. At the time the San Francisco Mayor's Infrastructure Taskforce (TF) offered a viable solution: use the Hetch Hetchy hydro power to sell high and buy low while using city legal resources to investigate and pursue gamers. Ignored!

Hydro-power is like a tap. It can be turned on and off with a very small marginal cost. Large fossil fuel generators have a significantly higher start-up cost and turning them on and off is very costly. The TF engineers-economists recommended that the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) investigate and implement pump-storage to enhance the power output of the Hetch Hetchy system, whereby water used for hydro-power at peak times is collected in storage dams, and during off-peak periods when power prices from other sources (that cannot easily be turned off) recede, is used to pump the water back up for reuse at peak-pricing times. This approach fell on deaf ears at the SFPUC. I am convinced the SFPUC staff spent more time trying to quash my efforts on the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee (2003-2012) than considering viable market and efficiency alternatives.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) under David Freeman, California's Energy Czar, was ultimately given the task of buying up power contracts. To an outsider, its budget seemed near unlimited (later many contracts were renegotiated downwards). A little known debate between this author (at the request

of TF Honorable Chair, Mr. Rich Bodisco) and Mr. Freeman, in the presence of Messrs Burton, Brown, and other notable decision makers at City Hall, saw a clash between a continuation of enhancing the free market solution (buy low, sell high – perfect with a major hydro resource) envisioned in AB1890, versus a return to a very costly bureaucratic solution. No contest. Trust the bureaucrats more than the Invisible Hand.

Now is the time to rewind this poor decision. As Federico Pena and Eric Hogger state in their article "Time to try electricity deregulation again" (SFGate, May 30, 2012):

"Yet as California retrenched and limited customer flexibility, more than a dozen states across the country persisted with reforms in competitive markets for electricity, including Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Texas. Competition in these states and elsewhere is flourishing, providing cost savings and innovative products and services, including clean energy supplies and programs that allow customers to actively manage their energy use in response to market prices."

The current big debate in California, unfortunately, is not deregulation, but whether CCA should allow for customers to opt out of a CGA or an investor-owned utility. I have no problem with San Francisco establishing a CGA and competing with PG&E as long as there are other providers. I would like more choices. Other states and other countries have embraced power deregulation with good results.

The supply/demand balancing system for power coming into the Western United States is considerably more sophisticated and fine tuned in 2014 than in 1996-2001. The pivotal buyer/distributor for 80% of California's power is the California Independent System Operator (CISO) that provides open and non-discriminatory access to the bulk of California wholesale power grid. This system is analogous to the Air Traffic Controller who cannot discriminate between air-carriers and must balance the supply and demand for air and landing rights in near real time.

The CISO does its balancing in real time (power cannot be stored). The 2014 CISO system can handle a competitive market-driven power market. It is time to give Californians (especially San Franciscans) real choice in their power markets. In this area, the home of high-tech, it is easy to imagine the proliferation of apps and other devices that would move in and ensure greater choices and greater efficiencies. The CPUC and ISO could work with the state, municipalities, and districts to ensure the mandated or consumer preferred mix of green power.

1. Footnote – Nebraska Energy Office, Lincoln, NE

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



WEST OF TWIN PEAKS PROPERTIES SOLD SINCE 8/1/14

FACT: INVENTORY HAS NEVER BEEN LOWER WHEN COMPARED TO BUYER DEMAND

ADDRESS	TYPE	BEDS	BATHS	PK	ASKING	SOLD	%OF ASKING
289 San Marcos Ave	Forest Hill	5	4	2	1,795,000	1,785,000	99.44
94 Rockaway Ave	Forest Hill	3	2	1	995,000	995,000	100
992 Portola Dr	Forest Hill	3	2.5	1	888,000	1,115,000	125.56
296 Maywood Dr	Monterey	3	4	2	1,998,000	2,174,000	108.81
75 Fairfield Way	Mount David-	2	1	2	949,500	1,100,000	115.85
160 Kenwood Way	Mount David-	3	2	1	1,279,000	1,260,000	97
84 Manor Dr	Mount David-	4	2	1	1,275,000	1,425,000	111.76

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Then & Now



Construction of Parkmerced apartment buildings 1950 Oct. 21. Printed on back: "METROPOLITAN HOUSING PROJECT--There are 11 separate 13-story apartment buildings in this general view of the \$30,000,000 Metropolitan Life Housing project now nearing completion in the southwest corner of San Francisco between Junipero Serra Boulevard (in center of picture) and Lake Merced. With 2,000 apartment units to house over 5,000 persons they will be ready for occupancy by fall. Three two-deck garages will shelter 1,600 autos for residents. One garage is shown in left center just beyond boulevard."

Kaye (Cont. from p. 15)

provides \$189 a month for an individual and \$632 for a family of four. These benefits can go toward feeding the homeless recipient. Some might realize that with that much aid they could live well elsewhere, not needing to live in America's most expensive city. Relocation should be actively encouraged.

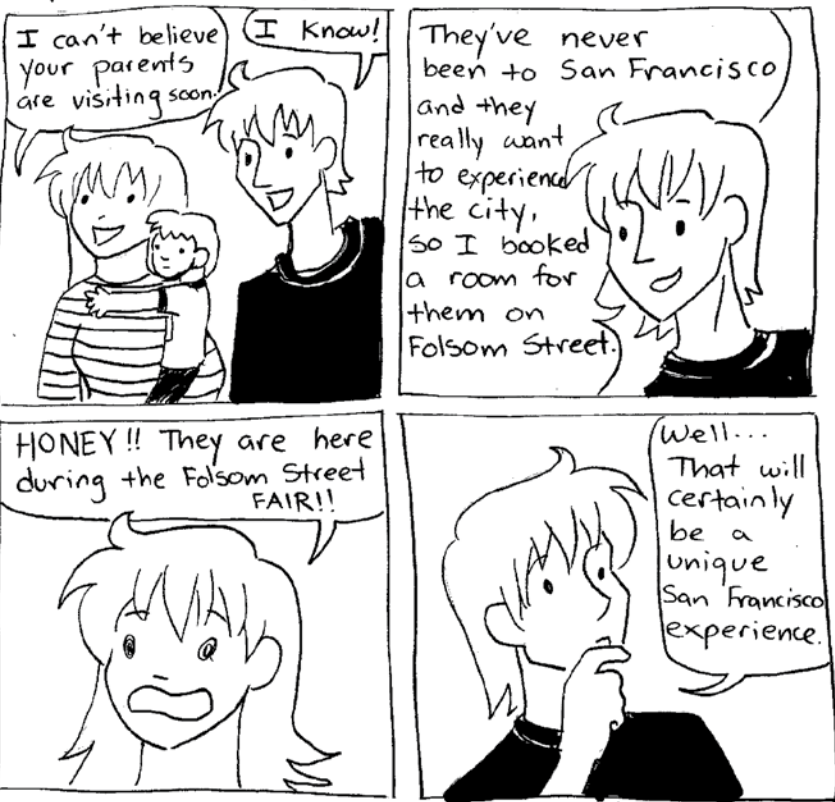
It will also be a challenge to get approval to use both facilities. People will say "but they are not completely earthquake safe. What if one of the patients is hurt in an earthquake that might possibly occur here in the next 50 years?" The answer has to be that these places have been in operation for decades and not one person has ever suffered from the effects of an earthquake, while they all suffer from very serious medical issues. The chances of a facility resident dying from an earthquake are less than one in ten million. The chances of one suffering without these facilities are almost 100%.

And homeless activists need to agree that this idea is much better than anything their people have now. They could really help by being advocates urging every homeless person living on the streets to come in out of the cold.

We are spending a lot of money to end homelessness. Let's end it.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

OPEN LATE



By Julie Casson

We're On The Web



www.westsideobserver.com

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.

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

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

Ethics vs Sunshine (Cont. from p. 7)

to have violated the Statement of Incompatible Activities (SIA) applicable to Task Force members when he spoke during a public meeting of the Ethics Commission by introducing himself during a public comment period as "David Pilpel, member of the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force."

The SIA applicable to Pilpel clearly provides that no officer may hold himself or herself out as a representative of the Task Force, or as an agent acting on behalf of the Task Force, unless authorized to do so. Pilpel had not requested or received a waiver known as an Advance Written Determination from either the Board of Supervisors, or from the Ethics Commission, exempting him from this SIA prohibition.

Pilpel appears to have directly interfered

with the Task Force's referral of Sunshine complaint #12-058, Dominic Maionchi vs. Recreation and Parks Department to the Ethics Commission in a case involving Rec and Park's General Manager Phil Ginsburg over failure to release public documents regarding leases of boat slips. Pilpel's testimony on April 28 deprived Maionchi of due process notice that Pilpel intended to advocate before the Ethics Commission to undercut and overturn a prior decision the full Task Force had previously ruled appropriate. Pilpel's testimony on April 28 helped convince the Ethics Commission to reject the complaint and return it to the Task Force for having named the so-called "wrong actor" (Department Head Ginsburg) in SOTF's referral for enforcement to Ethics. Pilpel's testimony ended up letting Ginsburg off the

Cont. p. 17



Ethics vs Sunshine (Cont. from p. 16)

hook when the Ethics Commission ruled against Maionchi.

A complaint about Pilpel’s probable violation the SIA filed by this author on June 22 with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors that was forwarded to the Ethics Commission on June 25, remains a pending Ethics complaint that has not been dismissed.

Notably, Ethics Commissioner Peter Keane observed on July 28 that the Ethics Commission may have erred on April 28 when it found Ginsburg had not violated the Sunshine Ordinance, after the Ethics Commission determined on July 28 that in a very similar case, John Rahaim, Director of the Planning Commission, had violated the Sunshine Ordinance, essentially involving the same underlying issue. Keane suggested that that the Ethics Commission may have erred in April “punting” the Maionchi matter involving Ginsburg back to the Task Force for “further factual information.”

A Second SIA Violation

On July 28, 2014, Member Pilpel again spoke before the Ethics Commission during public comment on Sunshine complaint #13-024, Mica Ringel vs. Planning Department being heard by the Commission. Although Pilpel claimed to be speaking as an individual, within the first minute-and-a-half of his testimony he switched from using the first person “I,” into using the third person “we,” again appearing to be speaking on behalf of, and representing, the Task Force.

Pilpel again questioned whether the “right” actor had been referred to the Ethics Commission, and suggested he wasn’t sure City Departments could be named as having violated the Sunshine Ordinance, rather than naming an individual who may have violated the Sunshine

Ordinance. The Ethics Commission had none of it with Pilpel’s line of reasoning. Instead, an Enforcement Summary posted on the Ethics Commission web site notes that on July 28, “The [Ethics] Commission found that John Rahaim, Director, Planning Department, non-willfully violated Sunshine Ordinance section 67.21(a). The Commission found that there was not sufficient evidence to support a finding that there was a violation of Sunshine Ordinance section 67.29-7. But the Commission ordered Director Rahaim to cease and desist from failing, without unreasonable delay, to permit public records to be inspected and examined. The Commission ordered [its] Executive Director [John St. Croix] to post on the Commission’s website the Commission’s finding that Director Rahaim violated the Sunshine Ordinance. The Commission ordered [its] Executive Director to issue a warning letter to Director Rahaim and inform the Planning Commission of the violation.”

The Ethics Commission can’t have it both ways, ruling against Maionchi and ruling for Ringel in two similar cases in which Department Heads had been named as responsible for Sunshine violations in Task Force referrals to the Ethics Commission.

Notice was received on August 15 that the second SIA complaint against Pilpel involving the Ethics Commission’s July 28 hearing was dismissed by the Ethics Commission’s Executive Director on August 13. In dismissing the second SIA complaint against Pilpel, St. Croix only cited Section III.A.1, “Activities that Conflict with Official Duties,” of the applicable SIA. St. Croix made no mention in his dismissal letter of Section III.B.1 of the SIA, “Restrictions That Apply to Officers or Employees in Specified Positions,” which

Cont. p. 18

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## First Quiz of the New School Year

By Carol Kocivar © 2014

School has just started. Time for the first quiz of the season. Ready?

Which school reform-- starting with the letter "C" in **bold** below-- needs to be moved much closer to the top of our "to do" list?

- **Charter** Schools
- **School Choice**
- **College and career** ready
- **Civic** Education

Please don't tell me you are stumped.

And please don't tell me that you really don't know what "civic education" means.

**Charters** and **school choice** and **college/career** get a lot more press. That, quite frankly, is the point. **Civics** has essentially been a little AWOL in our school reform efforts.

What is civics? Well, it is teaching our children how to be responsible citizens in a democracy.

As Thomas Jefferson said: "The qualifications for self government are not innate. They are the result of habit and training."

For too many kids and too many parents, the old song "Don't know much about

history..." is all too accurate.

A recent report by the California Task Force on K12 Civic Learning finds that "by nearly every measure—news readership, voting, political engagement, philanthropy, volunteering, church attendance—civic engagement has been declining since the end of World War II."

Civics is more than that class in 12th grade. It is about our values as a nation and our values in our communities. Learning these values cannot wait until the last year of school. It must start at home and in kindergarten.

### Civic Values

Demonstrate concern for the rights and well-being of others

Tolerate, appreciate and seek out a variety of perspectives

Have a sense of civic duty at local, state, national and global levels

Be aware of the power to act and be



predisposed to take action to change things for the better.

We have reached a bit of a crisis—in voting and civic knowledge as well as living those civic values.

The United States recently ranked 139th in voter participation of 172 democracies around the world.

Less than half of eligible young people ages 18-24 voted in the 2012 elections.

Just 13 percent of high school seniors showed a solid understanding of U.S. History

In California, less than 50 percent of high school seniors surveyed viewed active involvement in state and local issues as their responsibility\*

To address this, the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning is calling for the revitalization of civics-- starting in kindergarten.

What would a great civics education include?

Take a look on the web site: [www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/cltffinalreport.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/cltffinalreport.pdf)

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

### Ethics vs Sunshine (Cont. from p. 17)

provides that certain activities are also expressly prohibited for individual officers and employees holding specific positions, notwithstanding Section III.A.1.

Section III.B.1 expressly prohibits officers and members of the Task Force from providing advice concerning Sunshine Ordinance complaints to other entities, such as the Ethics Commission.

### Ex Parte Communications

St. Croix's dismissal of the second SIA complaint against Pilpel without considering SIA Section III.B.1, and without considering prohibitions against ex parte communications, is troubling.

The Ethics Commission Executive Director's dismissal of the second SIA complaint did also not address prohibitions against ex parte communications.

Once the full Task Force had ruled to refer a willful violation to the Ethics Commission for enforcement, Pilpel should not have engaged in ex parte communications with the Ethics Commission on July 28 by arguing during his testimony that the wrong "actor" had been named by the Task Force in the Ringel referral to Ethics.

Due to potential improprieties in the August 13 dismissal of Pilpel's probable second SIA violation, an appeal on the dismissal will be submitted to the Ethics Commission at its September 22 meeting.

While the Ethics Commission now seems to be taking back some of its oversight responsibilities and appear to be reigning in Mr. St. Croix somewhat, the problem of Task Force member David Pilpel violating ex parte communications restrictions remains. Both the Ethics Commission and the Sunshine Task Force need to reign in Pilpel, and implement Civil Grand Jury recommendations.

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. Feedback: <mailto:monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com>

Editor's note: this is a short version of the full article which will be available on the website: [westsideobserver.com](http://westsideobserver.com)

### The Six Proven Practices of Civic Learning

**Classroom instruction** in government, history, geography, law, democracy and economics, striking a balance between teaching important facts and documents—such as the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights—and demonstrating their relevance to today's society;

**Discussion of current events** and controversial issues, including their relevance to young people's lives;

**Service learning** experiences that are directly linked to curriculum and instruction and that give students a chance to apply what they are learning through informed civic action;

**Extracurricular activities** that give students opportunities to get involved in their schools, communities and local government and to work together toward common goals;

**Student participation** in school governance, to cultivate a sense of responsibility and give young people a real voice in how their classrooms and schools are run, and

**Simulations of democratic processes**, such as formal debates, voting, mock trials, Model United Nations and simulations of legislative deliberation.

Source: The California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning



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Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi



Taken for a Ride

For the residents of the Monterey Peninsula, it can be a real pain in the gas tank. For the local merchants it's a bonanza arriving on highly polished, chrome-plated wheels. Since 1950, the Concours d'Elegance has been a fixture in Pebble Beach, Carmel and neighboring cities of Pacific Grove and Seaside. With some of the finest cars from around the world being displayed, driven, raced and mostly admired, the weeklong celebration can sometimes be a bit annoying to those trying to cross the street or get to a scheduled appointment, but the glitz is golden. Highly organized and well managed, the traffic is kept moving by the local police departments with a helping hand from the California Highway Patrol.

The Concours d'Elegance, along with the Pebble Beach Road Races, has grown over the years to provide something for everyone. For the well-heeled collector, there are numerous auctions that provide opportunity to bid on hundreds of cars, many of which will exceed the million dollar mark; a Ferrari 250 GTO Berlinetta was just reported by Bonhams as having been sold for a record \$38,115,00. And if the cars don't turn you on, then how about all the extraordinary exhibits of automotive art. Having started in 1986 the Automotive Fine Arts Society presents an exhibition of its paintings and sculptures on the 18<sup>th</sup> Fairway at the Pebble Beach Golf Links. Not even at the old Bing Crosby pro-am could you have seen such



masterful works of art. A piece by Klaus Waggoner shows two Ferrari 250TRs finishing first and second at the Sebring Grand Prix in 1958 appropriately titled, "Redheads."

Not to be left out, the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion was held at Laguna Seca raceway, where more than 550 historic and period correct racecars competed over a four-day period with cars from all four corners of the globe.

Highlighting this year's festivities was the celebration of Maserati's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, held at Quail Lodge in Carmel Valley where more than 150 of the most important cars in history were showcased along with fine food and great wine to match this incredible gathering. Private jets, exotic cars and the obvious 3<sup>rd</sup> ingredient, beautiful women, all made for a showcase of the upper 1%, but all the big money doesn't always fall under the auctioneer's gavel. Last year over \$200,000 was raised for youth programs on the Monterey Peninsula.

In the Pacific Grove Concours Auto Rally, more than 200 participants showed off their classic and vintage cars to more than 8,000 spectators along the route through Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach, up Carmel's Ocean Avenue, and returning to Pacific Grove.



Although Fiat is this year's featured marque, the Aston Martins, Porsches, Lamborghinis, Bentleys and Rolls can certainly hold their own.

Up and down the streets, there was no denying the roar of one of those 25 Testa Rosa roadsters was a very distinctive part of the weeklong festivities. The sounds and thrills are undeniable, but what am I to say as I drive around in my Ford Fusion Electric? No roar, no splash, and no seven figures, but the only number that counts for me is the 81 miles per gallon that I averaged with my last fill-up. God bless the super-rich for the show that they just put on. We all enjoyed it but in the end I'm just as happy waving to the next gas station on my way to the power plug in my garage. Now I only hope that PG&E doesn't pull the plug.

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