

Framing West Portal

By Keith Burbank

ast month a new business opened in West Portal, leasing a space that was vacant for only a short period of time. Marin Frames, which has 25-plus years of experience in the custom framing business, opened its second location on August 10th at 29 West Portal Avenue. Co-owners John Murphy and Christopher Scott are looking to use their expertise as artists and framers to help clients and art patrons choose the best way to conserve and display their artwork.

"Chris and I are both photographers," Murphy said. Each brings his artistic skills to the business and to client designs. He "hopes that with Marin Frames' help, the West Portal clients can raise their artwork to a whole new level of presentation and elegance, as they have done in San Rafael."

An August wine and cheese event served as the grand opening for their new retail establishment. The business was open the previous week to greet the neighborhood. Murphy said people have expressed a lot of interest in the store during the first couple of weeks, commenting especially on how great the store looks. "People like that there is new energy here."

Maryo Mogannam, president of the West Portal Merchant's Association, said it's nice to have someone lease the space so quickly. And it's nice to have another retailer in the neighborhood. "I wish them luck."

Murphy, who recently joined Scott as co-owner of Marin Frames, is a native of the West Portal area. "I grew up here," Murphy said. "West Portal was my stomping grounds." Murphy said he saw movies with friends in West Portal, shopped in at least one toy store in the neighborhood and took Muni to high school and downtown. Christopher Scott is a native San Franciscan, having grown up in both the Inner Sunset and Richmond districts. He trained as a framer with Frame of Mind in the mid-1980s.

Murphy said the choice of West Portal was one of timing, and most importantly, location. The two want customers to know they are glad to be in the neighborhood.

As at their San Rafael store, Marin Frames offers artists the ability to have original works scanned professionally, then have exhibition quality prints made to order. The company would like to expand that side of

He "hopes that with Marin Frames' help, the West Portal clients can raise their artwork to a whole new level of presentation and elegance, as they have done in San Rafael."

the business in West Portal. Besides the ability to create prints, the company specializes in shadowbox framing, hand gilding and traditional framing, as well as installation and white glove delivery. At Marin Frames, conservation is key; the company only uses conservation grade materials in all its frames.

According to Murphy, there is always a solution to a customer's needs and they are always up for a challenge. "We're very creative with our solutions."

Murphy and Scott are especially proud of work they have done for Cavallo Point, the prestigious spa, resort and restaurant just north of the Golden Gate Bridge. The company recently scanned, interpreted, printed and framed a 30-piece show for Gilles St. Martin of the America's Cup for a show currently on view at the Mercantile Gallery in Cavallo Point.

The West Portal store is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and Saturday; Friday, the store is open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m; and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Marin Frames is closed Monday. For more information see www.marinframes.com.

City College Feeling the Crunch



By John Rizzo, President, Board of Trustees

t surprised many, from students to the State Chancellor, when the Accrediting Commission for

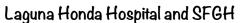
Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) announced that it would revoke City College's accreditation. True, the City College administration had not finished implementing the Board of Trustee's recovery plan. But it had made significant progress in all 14 categories of issues laid out by ACCJC.

The District is financially stable, with a budget surplus. We now have a healthy reserve fund that is larger than what the state requires. City College has enough money to spend on areas demanded by the Accrediting ComDoors are open at the Chinatown's new Campus — but for how long? mission, such as new technology for students,

beefed-up building maintenance, and the pay-down of the retiree health benefit liability.

The College has taken drastic action, including removing most administrators from their jobs, overhauling the

Although the College's budget is healthy this year, the accreditation decision has caused a 10% drop in enrollment. This could translate to a loss in state funding of over \$15 million next year. The most direct, tangible thing people can do to help is to take a class. You'll help stave off further dramatic cuts and earn life enrichment from some of the finest entity, forcing it to close its doors. But the Department of instructors in the state."



Squished Together: Misery Visits Company

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

ivthe Department of Public Health's budget goal of maximizing revenue in anticipation of Obamacare, it's probably not surprising the DPH decided to squish patients out of its Mental Health Rehabilitation Facility (MHRF) at SF General Hospital, squish them into Laguna Honda Hospital or out-ofcounty, squish non-ambulatory elderly two to a room into the spaced converted to housing at the MHRF, and squish outpatient dialysis services into Laguna Honda's decrepit old building.

Then came the shocker. For all the squishing, Mayor Ed Lee rewarded the department with a budget increase of \$200 million, pushing the department to almost \$2 billion this year.

MHRF Reconfiguration Dumped **Patients** Out-of-County

As reported in the Westside Observer's July issue, the DPH proposal to repurpose the MHRF/Behavioral Health Center into mere housing was ostensibly approved by the Board of Supervisors during the June 18 Bielenson hearing. Without voting to accept or reject the cuts, it just closed the hearing.

Despite the 34 patients at the MHRF to be relocated to Laguna Honda or "placed in the community," as Director





management structure, and imposing salary cuts. At the time of the June decision, the College was two-thirds through several year-long planning cycles requested by ACCJC. According to ACCJC itself, academic excellence was not an issue. In fact, the student success rate at City College is above the state average.

Perhaps because of this, the accrediting agency itself has recently come under fire from all levels of government. The Obama Administration said that ACCJC violated federal regulations in rendering its decision against City College. A bi-partisan committee of the state legislature ordered an audit of ACCJC. (The harshest critic was Republican Senator Jim Nielsen.) And San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera filed a lawsuit to block ACCJC action, and challenged the State of California's decision to delegate its authority to ACCJC.

So how does it affect the future of City College? The Department of Education could revoke ACCJC's authority - basically removing accreditation from the private

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Around the Town Mitch Bull

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RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR



uring the Westside Observer's summer hiatus, (and while my wife and I tried to catch Atlantic salmon as guest of a law school classmate on a river in Eastern Canada), BART employees engaged in a four and one half day strike in the first week of July. The adverse effect on BART's average daily 350,000 riders was grueling and debilitating, first to the riders, and then to the Bay-area economy. Thereafter, BART and its employee labor unions resumed bargaining for several weeks, but the labor unions planned in early August to resume their strike until the Governor, exercising

authority under California's statutes, sued in San Francisco Superior Court for imposition of a legally-authorized (by state law) court order suspending strike activity for 60 days. The 60 days expire at midnight on October 10th; BART and labor unions have reconvened bargaining sessions, all in private and not open to public observation.

their unions are subject to damages to governmental employees, represents abditaxpayers. Thereafter, in 1989, the Califorcation of responsibility and is illogical. per year increase in each of the next two nia Supreme Court held illegal a strike by An arbitrator doesn't answer to taxpayers years, and pension contributions of 7% police officers because public safety was or public employthreatened. Thus, only the legislature can ees unless desiring enact a law prohibiting a strike by BART or any other public agency employees. Don't hold your breath waiting for that to happen. This legislature won't do it despite public sentiment. Prepare for BART management to surrender, for BART fares to increase and a sales tax increase to be submitted to voters in San Francisco, Alameda and Contra Costa counties to supply the enormous amount of money (over \$1,000,000,000) BART needs to replace cars and other equipment, widen the Embarcadero Station platform and, of course, probably cover increased BART labor costs. A law school classmate of mine as a Professor of Labor Law at Yale 40 years ago proposed that bargaining between governmental employees and elected officials or representatives thereof should be open and public, not closed to the public behind conference room doors.

official to propose that for California. The ing the supposed current costs of such effect could be benign. The worst idea in the field is agreeing to transfer the decision making to a "neutral" arbitrator. Utilizing a neutral mediator to secure agreement constitutes a justifiable policy. Allowing an unelected arbitrator, however, to render a decision that binds taxpayers and

selection by unions as an arbitrator in the future. Don't be fooled into supporting the notion of an arbitrator to resolve the BART or any other governmental agency-employee dispute.

Regarding transportation, I note that the gaudy Transbay Terminal project cost is revealed already as over budget by at least

\$300,000,000. That doesn't include the expense of extending tracks from the present CalTrain terminal at Fourth and King Streets to the proposed pie-in-the-sky Transbay Terminal, a distance of 1.3 miles. I still wait for some elected public I recently requested public records showextension and received 153 pages of documents; dated March 2008, (over five and one-half years ago) stating the extension in 2007 dollars would cost \$1,801,622,823, including construction design, right of way acquisition and a reserve. Escalation at 4% per year is estimated as \$663,987,471.

BART employees contribute no money to their retirement system. BART asked that employees contribute a modest 2% for their pensions the first year of the contract, and 3, 4 and 5% in each of the following three years. BART increased its original proposal of an 8% pay raise over four years to 10% and on August 11 lowered its proposed employee pension contribution to 1% of just the base wage in the first year, and 2, 3 and 4% in three subsequent years. The labor unions rejected any contribution to the retirement system from employees, later demanded an 11.5% pay raise the first year, with a 5%

for each such year. That means a 21.5% pay raise over three

Public opinion surveys demonstrate the Bay area citizenry wants a legal prohibition against BART employee strikes. That's not surprising. California law prohibits police officers and firefighters from striking, historically, American and California common law and California court

decisions barred public employees from striking, including a strong California Supreme Court decision in 1949. In 1985, however, a divided California Supreme Court, in a case involving Los Angeles County Sanitation District employees, rewrote and judicially made new California law under the leadership of the late-Chief Justice Rose Bird, who, with two other California Supreme Court Justices, was recalled by voters a year later. In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt famously informed U.S. Post Office workers who

were contemplating a strike that no such right existed for government employees, and President Ronald Reagan in 1982 instantly fired FAA air traffic controllers who had struck. President Roosevelt declared that any strike by postal workers would be tantamount to a denial of governmental authority. Governmental employees, unlike private business employees, possess statutory civil service protections regarding discharge only after an administrative hearing before an independent hearing officer, and other beneficial conditions. In private industry, employment conditions are subject to collective bargaining; there exists no statutory civil service protection. As a practical matter, which even the Rose Bird California Supreme Court noted in 1985, because legislative bodies bear responsibility for governmental employee decision making, such as pension and health care benefits, the right to strike affords government employees "excessive bargaining leverage, resulting in a distortion of the public process and an improper delegation of legislative authority."

The Court could have mentioned that governmental employees can, and do, collectively through labor unions, or individually, donate to legislators' political campaigns. Those legislators can (and do) grant government employees pay and other benefits. That's not the case with private industry employees; managers don't become managers based upon employee votes. The California Supreme Court ruling, however, dismissed all the reasons for maintenance of California's historical bar on government employee strikes, including distortion of the political process. It simply made law by itself, allowing public employee strikes, with one exception: so called "essential public services." (The legislature had previously prohibited firefighter strikes). The court decided that only strikes by "public safety" employees are illegal, and that such employees and

Help Name the New Public Plaza in District 7

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A contest is underway to select the name of the future public plaza in the community. Entries are being accepted from September 1 until October 15. Visit **www.sfmta.com/phelan** to participate and for complete details and criteria.

Request a mail-in entry by calling 415.701.4790.

SUBMIT YOUR PLAZA NAME TODAY!

Can our City Spend? Yes We Can!

unicipal spending is up to \$7.9 billion this fiscal year, nearly \$10,000 per city resident. And City government is adding employees to its already bloated payroll. Yet, pension and healthcare costs remain long-term threats, the 2011 "reform" notwithstanding. What gives?

It seems nearly impossible to ade- with public funds. That quately address the monster issues of amounts to nearly \$8000 our leaders nibble, and crawl into a dark

The problem seems to be that the pubone who hopes one day to retire, or the oversees it all.

Page 4

pension and healthcare. City government per applicant. The typical solar installacontinues to assume that its pension fund tion costs \$15-20,000. Recently, with the will multiply as bunnies do. Like bunnies, program cut back due to tighter times, 61 (of 199) applicants got \$416,000, \$6820 apiece average. Ratepayer money goes to a hungry group of purveyors and installers, lic figure who tackles the elephant in the creating not only a way to bestow benefits room gets smushed. If you are a retired but also an interest group to lobby annucity employee, or one soon to retire, or ally for more solar funding. A bureaucracy

What renewable generation will be erected? Windmills off Ocean Beach? ... No plan has been put forward, other than to hire consultants to conjure up a plan?"

relative of one, pension and healthcare is right and rational thing gets creamed. The public official who weaves and dodges, or nibbles, survives. Promoting the general welfare is fine in theory, but if you want to get elected in this town, you deal with real interest groups, not real issues.

Similarly, the elected official who showers benefits on groups A-ZZZ gets votes and supporters. The elected official who withholds spending gets none. Guess who gets elected? Guess which practice prevails?

Today, even the so-called enterprise departments are in on the big spending game. Ten years ago SFPUC (water, power, and sewer) had no community benefits group. Today it certainly does, headed by an assistant general manager who makes nearly 200k. That's just salary. She makes more on the outside. She steers millions of dollars to "under-served" communities. In doing so it is recently said that she steered a no-bid contract to a company receiving annual compensation from it of more than \$10,000. That's a no-no.

But it's tough when your job is to give out money to the "under-served" to remember that there are limits. You feel fortified with virtue. Beneficiaries love you. It's so easy when you spend others' money. Ratepayers' money.

With more and more spending by more and more city employees with ever bigger salaries and grandiose titles and perquisites, more wanton waste is bound to surface. Rules are bound to be skirted. Elected officials and their appointees know that goodies are best steered to those who know how to return a favor.

Consider GoSolar. As of early this year, \$17.1 million had been bestowed on 2158 applicants through this program, which improves private property

for the follow up research from our savvy readers.

But GoSolar is only a pilot fish. Once the be-all and end-all of your civic confinally launched, CleanPowerSF promises cerns. Like rent control for covered rent- a "robust local buildout" of facilities geners, no other issue comes close. Quickly erating renewable electricity, all for 11.5 you become a fanatic, a one-issue voter, cents per kilowatt hour. If there is a plan obsessed with the big pocketbook issue. for how to generate electricity cheaply The public official who tries to do the enough to supply it at that rate, it is well concealed.

> CleanPowerSF looks like a boondoggle: a well-intentioned, ill thought-out program, costs ballooning. It talks "100% renewable power" but much of the power is not renewable. It uses accounting trickery, so-called RECs, renewable energy credits. It does this to develop bonding capacity, i.e. more City bonds and debt.

CleanPowerSF is claiming to be the sword that slews global warming. Really? Electricity accounts for 24% of San Francisco's greenhouse gas emissions, according to an SFPUC document. CleanPower slews a lesser dragon. How powerful is its swift sword? CleanPowerSF promises to increase generation from renewables. But that promise is already disappointing with its proposed use of RECs (indulgencelike "credits"), and inclusion of big-hydro power (not renewable, and not reliable, varying from year to year). A qualifying "renewable" is biomass, which does not in which she was financially interested, even reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and may increase them. What renewable generation will be erected? Windmills off Ocean Beach? Solar PC has already occupied the prime sites, yet these don't generate electricity for anything close to as low as 11.5 cents per kilowatt hour, the rate proposed to be charged. "Robust local buildout" is the talk; but what is the walk? No plan has been put forward, other than to hire consultants to conjure up a plan. Isn't CleanPowerSF really about elected officials show-casing good intentions? No wonder the SFPUC Commission balks; it's a green pipe dream.

> In a free spending city it is good that there may be some sensible limits.

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

Letters to the Editor

In the July-August issue of the WSO, reporter George Wooding, quoted SF Planning Director John Rahaim that there were "only 7 planners in Chicago," at a neighborhood meeting, a reader wrote to inform us Chicago has a Planning Dept budget of \$193 million and 228 FTE employees. If anyone was mislead, we regret the error and thankful

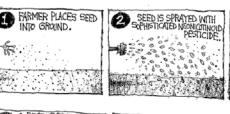
Turfwar

Correction

I so appreciate your articles concerning the oncoming loss of our real grass at the soccer fields by the Beach Chalet. I have voted and voted, and alas, we are going to receive artificial turf and eye jarring lighting and new parking. Where will the birds go? What will be the impact on our environment with lighting such as proposed? Realizing that exercise is very necessary for our children and adults alike, I remain stunned at the amount of money backing this project to put artificial turf where grass has been since the 1930's.

Suzanne Sandidge





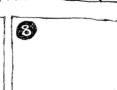
















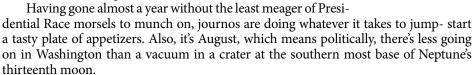




My 24 · Will Durst

LET THE PANTS SUIT DANCE.

t's time to address the burning question singeing the lips of every American this summer: What will happen to Bryan Cranston's pork pie hat after Breaking Bad ends its run? Okay, maybe that's number 2. The big one is who's going to be the Democratic Presidential candidate in November of 2016? 38 months and counting.



If you suspect this might all be a bit premature. YES. INDEED. YOU BET. Your instincts are correct sir. This sort of speculation normally doesn't kick into gear until a year and a half out; two years, tops, but the accelerated pace is today's norm. Rapid is the new sauntering. Welcome to Extreme Campaigning. 24/7.

Of course, they do have a point. President Barack Obama's second term has already entered its 7th month. It is more than an eighth over. The guy is history. Spent. Taking up space. Got the "How Can We Miss You If You Won't Go Away" Blues. Way beyond lame duck, he's a differently-abled turducken. A quadriplegic platypus. His goose is undergoing severe cookage.

Barack could nip the suspense in the bud by stepping down and giving Joe Biden a leg up. Because the job will not be Biden's for the taking. He's going to need a crowbar the size of Idaho to pry the nomination from a certain someone who's already spent 8 years in the White House. Albeit, in the East Wing. And not baking cookies thank you very much.

Even the GOP considers that former tenant their major threat since they've launched a couple preemptive strikes against the Clinton of Hillary. And isn't it refreshing to see them get past their internal squabbles to concentrate on what's really important to the Party?

They've threatened to boycott NBC and CNN if the networks run planned specials on the Former First Lady and have taken to calling her... too old. That's right. Republicans. The party of Reagan. Same guys that ran Bob Dole whose campaign slogan was "hey you punks, get off my lawn." Can't wait for them to charge her with being too white as well. And too rich.

Last time Hillary was the front-runner, it didn't turn out too well and other names being bandied about are: Andrew Cuomo, Rahm Emanuel and Cory Booker, who just locked up the Democratic slot for the New Jersey Senate special election to fill the seat vacated by the late Frank Lautenberg.

Booker may be the biggest wild card. Imagine Ms. Hill is sweating like a squad of Sumos in a sauna just thinking about a young charismatic fast-track black guy serving less than one full term in the Senate hijacking her coronation ceremony. Again.

His staff encouraged Bill Clinton to be Bill Clinton, with, "Let the Big Dawg Eat." This time, it's more of a "Let the Pants Suit Dance." And everyone better start paying attention or the handicapping of the 2020 race will begin as well. My money's on Chelsea.

Catch 5 time Emmy nominee, Will Durst's new one- man show "BoomeRaging: From LSD to OMG" every Tuesday until November, at the Marsh, San Francisco. Go to... themarsh. org for more info. Or willdurst.com.

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PO Box 27176, SF 94127 • 415 517-6331 Contributors: www.westsideobserver.com Linda Ayres-Frederick, Kevin Birmingham, Mitch

Publisher/Editor: Mitch Bull
mitch@westsideobserver.com
Editor: Doug Comstock
editor@westsideobserver.com

**Editor: Doug Comstock editor@westsideobserver.com

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**Editor: Doug Comstock editor@westsideobserver.com

**Editor: Doug Comstock editor.com

**Editor: editor@westsideobserver.com Lee Miller, Patrick Monette-Shaw, Sergio Nibbi, Dr. Maria Rivero, $\textbf{Ad Sales \bullet Mitch Bull} \quad \textit{John Rizzo}, \textit{George Wooding. Photos: Luke Thomas}.$

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Vote "No" on Measures B and C

Are 140-Foot-High Condos in West Portal Next?

By George Wooding

s San Francisco politicians continue the race to sell real estate to the highest bidder, two ballot measures on the November ballot, B and C, will have a huge impact on neighborhoods. If not rejected, a terrible precedent may be set, perhaps permitting 140-foothigh condos in West Portal and elsewhere.

David vs. Goliath

ington Park, Public Access and Housing Initiative." The measure is developer-funded and needed just 9,702 signatures to place on the ballot. Pacific Waterfront Properties (PWP) paid approximately \$300,000 to place it on the ballot. According to campaign disclosure statement Prop B has received \$464,990 through July 2013, and spent \$383,604. How much does it cost to fool voters about this boondoggle?

In stark contrast, measure C is a citizens' referendum against an ordinance passed by our errant Board of Supervisors to amend the zoning map for 8 Washington Street's height and bulk. "No Wall on the Waterfront" collected over 31,000 signatures; its campaign disclosure statement indicates it has received \$244,113, and has spent \$123,171.

Board's spot-zoning exemption to raise the height limits for 8 Washington, or to reject the spot-zoning from taking effect.

Both ballot measures affect the condo-Golden Gateway Swimming and Tennis Club affordable housing fund. on its triangular-shaped, 3.2-acre lot across Hidden: Teacher's Pension Fund from the Ferry Building, and erect 134 of the of San Francisco, ranging in price from \$2 million up to \$10 million.

With \$268 to \$750 million in projected condo sales, developers and a compliant Board of Supervisors, licking its chops over millions in property tax transfer revenue for City coffers, have foisted the 8 Washington project onto the waterfront. During Board hearings last summer probing the developer's profits and the City's benefits, Board president David Chiu estimated that the developers will net 11,250 middle class rent-controlled apart-\$200 million, a hefty 72% return.

Supporters of 8 Washington ginned up claims that \$140 million in today's dollars will be generated from the proposed 8 Washington echoing similar claims that the America's Cup to the City, claims that fizzled out.

The deal requires the City to pay the developer \$5 million for open-space improvements? Although Chiu introduced an amendment to remove it, his amendment failed on a 6-to-5 vote. The Board's budget analyst, Harvey Rose, revealed that the \$140 million in benefits to the City were overestimated by \$50 million. Supervisor Chiu's second motion suggested that if the benefits were \$50 million less than advertised, another \$14 million should be added the City's affordable housing fund lost by a 7-to-4 vote. Lowering the housing fund add-on to \$2 million also failed on a 6-to-5 vote.

Lessons Forgotten

84-feet high. The new exemptions will allow 8 Washington to be 136-feet high. The removed Embarcadero freeway was only 70-feet high. What was this crop of Supervisors thinking to height and bulk exemptions throughout the double the blight of the freeway's height?

In the early 1960's after allowing the 17-story Fontana Towers to be built at 1000 North Point Street, the public was so angry that the Board of Supervisors was forced to adopt 40-foot height limits.

Board of Supervisors [that] overwhelmingly approved permanent 40-foot height limits ney Casper Weinberger had argued that the 40-foot law 'will preserve for future generations one of the priceless assets of San Francisco, the whole relationship of the city to the Bay ... and particularly, the views enjoyed by the public from publicly owned lands, such as Coit Tower and other city-owned recreational Revolt Saves Waterfront Vistas.

Weinberger continued, "The Master Plan server.com

has for years provided that the height of build-Measure B is an initiative called "8 Wash- ings should generally follow the contour of the land, and that low rise buildings should be built on the low lands, such as the northern waterfront, and high rise at the tops of hills so that the loss of views, etc., will be minimized."

Our Board of Supervisors has forgotten past development mistakes. These same Supervisors, working with spot-zoning laws and profit-seeking developers, might easily approve a 140-foot condominium tower on By Keith Burbank West Portal Avenue, or on Ocean Avenue.

The 8 Washington project will also include nearly 400 parking spaces for just 134 condos (an embarrassment of riches for a "transitfirst" City), 20,000 square feet of restaurants, ground-level retail space, and a semi-public park. The developers struck a deal to pay an additional \$11 million into the City's Afford-The referendum asks voters to uphold the able Housing Fund, supposedly devoted to low-income housing that will not be located facility will become a destination for near the project. You can't build much with a paltry \$11 million, and no one knows where Franciscans seeking a good, reasonor when this housing will actually be built, or ably priced meal or libation in a hisminium development project to demolish the if the payment will just be deposited into the toric Union Square building," said

Simon Snellgrove, the owner of Pacific most expensive condominiums in the history Waterfront Partners, is simply the front man. Unfortunately, the project is primarily funded by the nation's second-largest pension fund State Teachers Retirement Fund (CalSTRS).

> Ostensibly a source of financial support for retired educators, the \$152.1 billion pension fund has approximately \$21.5 billion invested in real estate, but has a marginal record of successful investments. Investments in New York were a spectacular failure — recently losing over \$100 million to convert Stuyvesant Town, ments in New York City's Peter Cooper Village, into high-end luxury housing — among other underperforming assets.

In 2008, to get the 8 Washington deal, Calproject for the Port Authority and the City, STRS proposed making an equity contribution in the range of \$100 million, and agreed that a races would provide massive economic benefit construction loan, and guarantees were to be paid by CalSTRS. A 2009 Port Authority memorandum from Executive Director, Monique Moyer reveals that CalSTRS will have a 99 percent ownership interest in the 8 Washington project, which may be less at this time.

> CalSTRS currently has \$42 million invested in the 8 Washington project. If measure B fails and measure C succeeds, CalSTRS \$42 million investment will be in jeopardy. California teachers might want to start asking themselves if this is the best use of their retirement funds.

Meeting the Enemy

Pogo comic strip's Walt Kelly famously stated, "We have met the enemy and he is us." The new height exemptions are ridicu- Our citizens are fighting against a huge State is. Current zoning allows buildings to be pension fund and against our elected Board to keep our waterfront views for everyone, not just the wealthy.

> Will the Board of Supervisors allow more City, especially along the waterfront? Will we constantly fight the bad decisions of a developer-friendly Board? If so, West Portal may be next at bat.

To protect the height and bulk limits of San Francisco's 8 Washington development, Before the February 1964 vote of the and those of other neighborhoods throughout the City, vote NO on measure B.

To overturn the Board of Supervisors' (voting 9-to-1 in favor), neighborhood attor- height increase from 84 feet to 136 feet, please vote NO on measure C. A "No" vote means that citizens don't approve of the Supervisors' zoning exemptions and the project can't be built as currently approved.

> George Wooding, Midtown Terrace Homeowners Association

spaces' states Chris Carlsson's Height Limit Editor's note; this report has been shortened for print, the full version is available at: westsideob-

SF Press Club: A Museum Is Born



New life for the Press Club at 449 Powell Street, an old San Francisco institution

new museum has opened its doors in San Francisco. Dedicated mainly to the history of the city, but with some emphasis on California, the San Francisco History Museum opened this year at 449 Powell Street.

co-located with the Golden Gate Tap museum. Room and Golden Gate Grill.

We believe this massive new both visitors to the city and for San Man Kim, owner of the complex. Kim

The museum, which also serves to noted photographer Richard Hansen," welcome visitors to San Francisco, is according to a press release from the

> Other exhibits include presentations on the Gold Rush era, the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, Bethlehem Steel, and the Panama Pacific International Exposition, among others.

> Located on the second floor, the Golden Gate Tap Room offers more the 100 beers on tap, some from local breweries. It also has draft wine and appetizers. The bar includes plenty of seating, and numerous large-screen televisions. It also has games such as foosball, pinball machines, pool tables, and Skee-Ball.

> Joyce Kern, corporate liaison for the museum, bar and restaurant, said the tap room has provided an affordable local hangout for people who live and work in the area. People stop by after work, Kern said. "We all need a place that's affordable," she said. Beers start at a price of \$4.00 and appetizers





The building served as the home of the San Francisco Press Club from 1915 to 1952. Traveling journalists

also owns Lori's Diner and Sears Fine start at \$2.75. Groups can reserve sections of the tap room, and Kern said the tap room cannot take reservations fast enough.

On the third floor is the Golden stayed on the fourth floor in residen- Gate Grill, which includes memoratial-style rooms. Today, a 725-member bilia from Kim's travels. Two planes

...the museum has been selected as the first bricks and mortar location for the 1906 Earthquake collection of archivist Gladys Hansen and noted photographer Richard Hansen..."

group of journalists, San Francisco hang from the ceiling. The restaurant Bay Area Journalists, hosts meetings in the space.

The museum has exhibits representing San Francisco's history from its earliest days to the present. In the near future, the museum will include exhibits about the press club and Bay Area sports teams such as the San Francisco 49ers and San Francisco Giants.

Already the museum has been selected as the first "bricks and mortar location for the 1906 Earthquake collection of archivist Gladys Hansen and

serves mainly classic American fare, and visitors can look onto Powell Street to see and hear the cable cars going by. The restaurant charges from ten to \$14.00 for burgers and sandwiches. Entrees are priced from \$14.00

Open Mon-Sun 9 am. to 5 pm. \$5. for adults, \$3. students. Group rates available. The tap room is open seven days a week, noon to midnight and the restaurant is open daily from 8 am - 9 pm For more information about the museum, go to www.sfhistorymuseum.com.



Sept. 16 is Deadline to Appeal Property Assessment

The Assessor's Office announced that Monday, September 16, 2013, the filing period for a formal appeal of the 2013/2014 assessed property value will close. The period for appeals opened on Tuesday, July 2, 2013.

The appeals process as an opportunity for property owners to bring additional information to the table. However, the Assessor reports that there has been a decline in the number of appeals for the first time in over four years, with 2012/13 appeals decreasing to 5,500 from 6,399 in 2011/12. As home prices in San Francisco rise, this trend of declining appeals is likely to continue as homeowners see their property regain its base year value.

In order to appeal, property owners must complete the Application for Changed Assessment form (accessible by visiting www.sfgov.org/aab) together with a nonrefundable \$60 administrative processing fee and submit it no later than 9/16/2013 to the Assessment Appeals Board (AAB) at 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall, Room 405, San Francisco, 94102.

The Assessment Appeals Board is independently appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The role of the AAB is to equalize the valuation of the taxable property within San Francisco. Info: www.sfassessor.org Email: assessor@sfgov.org

City College (Cont. from p. 1)

Education has said that it doesn't have the authority to alter ACCJC's decision against City College. Neither does the State

The federal, state, and local actions could dramatically alter the way the state's 112 community colleges are accredited. But only the City Attorney's action is aimed directly at the decision against City College. He is asking the courts to overturn the decision against City College. This could happen.

But City College can't afford to wait for a decision by a court, and is pursuing three tracks on its own. First, through an appeal process, City College is asking ACCJC to reverse its decision to end accreditation. City College will make the case for what has been accomplished over the 13 months, including the work done since ACCJC's June decision. Staff and faculty -- who have been working without a contract since December 2012 and are earning less than they did 6 years ago — have put in tens of thousand of person-hours on accreditation-related efforts, often on their own time, while continuing to teach or provide support services.

Second, the College is continuing to roll out the recovery plan adopted by the Board of Trustees last October, hoping to finish the bulk of it before the appeal decision, which may occur in January.

Finally, we are working to find a new chancellor for the college. New leadership is required to finish the job. The Board of Trustees enacted every item that the current chancellor asked of it, including some very tough and unpopular choices, such as slashing pay, laying off workers, and dismantling decades-old power structures. But the chancellor has not been able to finish the mandates of the Board.

Administration acted too slowly for ACCJC and has not completed what the Board has directed. The procedures that the Board had authorized to be written

empty when ACCJC met in June. An overhaul of the payroll department isn't finished. And the financial software that the college runs on still hasn't been updated something that I first brought attention to three years ago in a series of hearings. I am working with College employees

were not completed. The hiring of new

managers took too long, with key slots still

and the state-appointed Special Trustee on an aggressive search for a new chancellor; we hope to complete this effort by October. City College needs a top manager who can get the operating procedures written, fill the hiring vacancies, finish the newly created planning cycles, and complete the other tasks that are actually needed for

We need someone who can resolve the lingering labor disputes and work with City College's 2500 employees to finish the job started last year. Collaboration with employees is required to make any College function, and more so in a stressful environment of rapid transformation.

Finally, there are the people of San Francisco. Although the College's budget is healthy this year, the accreditation decision has caused a 10% drop in enrollment. This could translate to a loss in state funding of over \$15 million next year. The most direct, tangible thing people can do to help is to take a class. You'll help stave off further dramatic cuts and earn life enrichment from some of the finest instructors in the state.

Classes are now in session at City College, which is still fully accredited. Whether it remains so past next July 14 depends on a number of efforts of a number of people – including the people of San Francisco.

John Rizzo is President of the Board of Trustees at City College

Editor's note: It's not too late to register for City College go to: CCSF.edu—late start, short-term and non-credit classes start all semester long.

Kopp (Cont. from p. 3)

That's not believable. A source informs me the current cost is probably about \$4,200,000,000, with a reserve and cost escalation. That's reminiscent of the Central Subway fiasco, which will cost taxpayers at least \$1,600,000,000 for 1.6 miles.

Former Board of Supervisors President and Democratic County Central Committee chairman Aaron Peskin told the truth in a July 29 communication to MTA General Manager Ed Reiskin, referring to a Willie Brown statement in the July 29 San Francisco Chronicle that the Transbay Terminal "over budget" revelation "should not come as a shock to anyone." Brown admitted; "We always knew the initial estimate was way under the real cost. Just like we never had a real cost for the Central Subway...in the world of and Judge Quentin Kopp lives in District 7

civic projects the first budget is really just a down payment. If people knew the real cost from the start, nothing would ever be approved. The idea is to get going. Start digging a hole and make it so big, there's no alternative to coming up with the money to fill it in." Mr. Peskin observed that decisions like the Central Subway... "end up having a profound, negative financial impact on San Francisco's municipal finances." Beware of progenitors of projects from the MUNI or MTA. Mr. Brown's confession speaks worlds for those who expect truth from public officials, but it also represents a casual acquaintanceship with probity sadly characteristic of many current public officials, elected and appointed.

Retired former Supervisor, State Senator

Check Us Out On The Web



www.westsideobserver.com

Laguna Honda (Cont. from p. 1)

of Public Health Barbara Garcia reported. These patients will be dumped out of county at the City's expense. What does "in the community" mean? Perhaps to the chagrin of City Attorney Dennis Herrera, who is suing Nevada for inappropriate patient dumping into San Francisco-is he concerned about San Francisco's own outbound patient dumping?

According a reliable, though anonymous source, at least one of the MHRF's

DPH's plan was to turn it into a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly, (RCFE), cramming 59 indigent, non-ambulatory seniors—two to a room—in the roughly 10 foot by 16 foot spaces. Squished into "housing" not much larger than a prison cell, with no in-house services or "therapeutic" activities. How will non-ambulatory elderly residents care for themselves without in-house services or activities?

But they'll be on an unlocked floor upstairs from an Adult Residential Facility (ARF) on the first floor that is also

...When patients need dialysis but there's no room in the outpatient center, they can end up being hospitalized. Hospitalizing a patient for dialysis can cost taxpayers thousands of dollars a day, whereas receiving the three-hour bloodcleansing treatment costs just hundreds of dollars..."

patients was admitted to a hospice, and 12 were admitted to Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH). Reportedly, the rest (of 36, not 34) "are being housed out of county" on the taxpayer's dime. A second source independently verified that 12 of the MHRF's patients have been transferred to LHH. The rest have reportedly either gone to other care facilities like Crestwood Hope and Idlywood, or to non-profits like LOSO House (operated by the Progress Foundation that has lucrative City contracts).

About half a dozen of the patients reportedly went AWOL (absent without leave) while out on passes, perhaps to avoid being squished into Laguna Honda, or squished out-of-county.

Another observer worries about transferred from the MHRF to other "less-restrictive" settings. Given its licensure, LHH is not a less restrictive setting, since it's licensed as a "distinct-part" skilled nursing facility attached to a hospital. This issue is of keen interest to the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, which forced Laguna Honda through a legal settlement into discharging its patients to less restrictive settings.

Dial "M" for Mayoral Veracity

When Supervisors London Breed and Malia Cohen pushed for information from DPH's Director Garcia during the Bielenson hearing in June, they may have been hoodwinked by Garcia's claim that the Mayor had restored "all" mental health cuts to his proposed two-year budget.

After that hearing, public records were requested for a list of mental health services restored by the Mayor.

Director Garcia did not respond to the request, a violation of SF's Sunshine Ordinance. Not a peep out of any of them about the mental health services restored by the Mayor. So much for veracity.

A second records request to the Mayor's Office, for all mental health services restored. Ten days later—in violation of Sunshine-the Mayor's Office of Communications responded: "no responsive records" suggesting the DPH, a source that hadn't previously responded.

A third records request to Deputy City Controller Monique Zmuda for any records of mental health services the Mayor restored prior to the hearing?

Six days later, Zmuda indicated that the office maintains records "only of services reduced." Does anyone really believe that the Mayor's Office of Communications or his Budget Director doesn't track programs added back by the Mayor in order to crank out media publicity?

Then Zmuda clammed up on August 10: "We have no documents that are responsive to your request."

All doors slammed shut. So much for City Hall's claims that it will provide data openly on its new "open data" web site.

There may be no point dialing "M." The Mayor's veracity? Did he restore all of the mental health cuts as Director Garcia led the Supervisors to believe?

Squishing Patients into the MHRF

When the MHRF beds on the second floor officially closed on August 15, unlocked, which houses residents who have basically been banned from regular board and care facilities due to behavioral issues. They will share the nearest Muni bus stop with patients of a methadone program that is also located on SFGH's campus. What could possibly go wrong?

The City will lose about 72 long-term mental health beds at the MHRF when half of its beds become respite beds. Since 2003, the Board of Supervisors has quietly acquiesced to "re-purposing" the \$40 million MHRF as "housing," fully cognizant of the loss of long-term mental health beds at private-sector hospitals throughout San Francisco.

Dial "D" for Dialysis

After Katie Worth's article "Dialysis DPH's claim that patients would be shortage creates expensive problem for city," in the Examiner in 2010, the crisis with dialysis services at SFGH and LHH as the Observer repeatedly noted—both failed to include space for dialysis patients in both their rebuild projects.

> Dialysis is a blood-filtration technique used on patients with kidney failure. Ms. Worth's report, three years ago, that dialysis centers in the City "increasingly exceed capacity, requiring some patients to be hospitalized for days or weeks, often on the public dime, while they wait for a spot at an outpatient clinic to receive the life-saving treatment. When patients need dialysis but there's no room in the outpatient center, they can end up being hospitalized. Hospitalizing a patient for dialysis can cost taxpayers thousands of dollars a day, whereas receiving the three-hour blood-cleansing treatment costs just hundreds of dollars, according to hospital officials."

> Did DPH wake up August 12th when it issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to install a 30-chair dialysis unit at LHH? It will take another 16 months before any successful bidder on the RFP will begin dialysis services, nearly five years after the Health Commission faced Ms. Worth's scathing report.

> Where were the meetings, the public dialogues, about whether LHH is the right location at which to place dialysis services prior to the release of the RFP? Why move dialysis services from SFGH's Building 100 (an admittedly unsafe building), to a possible seismically unsafe area in LHH?

> Potential bidders will have until October 21 to submit proposals, top vendors will be chosen on December 2, and the Health Commission and Board of Supervisors are tentatively scheduled to approve issuing a contract in January 2014. The "start date" of the 10-year dialysis contract award is expected for March 2014, with the build-out and opening of the dialysis center by the end of Decem-

> Is there a secret plan to seismically retrofit portions of LHH's old main building where the proposed outpatient dialysis center at LHH will be? Officials wanted to avoid Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) control and they knew that seismically bracing the old

> > *Cont. p. 18*

Hidden Gems of San Francisco

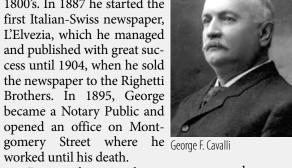
TAKE A BITE OUT OF HISTORY AT CAVALLI CAFE

By Matt McFetridge

anto Esposito bought Cavalli Cafe seven years ago and has never closed for one day. Why? He did not want to mess with history and a location that has been open since 1934, "Why change the name? And why change the phone number?" His cafe is famous for its cannoli (and other Italian pastries) and strong Italian coffee. He works fourteenhour days, down from eighteen when he first started, because he now has help baking his delicacies. His customers are tourists, locals, and Italian expats. The cafe is one of few places in North Beach where almost always one can hear the lovely romance language of Italian being spoken at all times.

But what hangs over Cafe Cavalli more than the aroma of coffee and can- Cavalli's first location noli is the larger than life persona of one Giorgio Cavalli. Cavalli came from Lacarno, the heart of the Italian region of Switzerland, and when asked what Cavalli meant to San Francisco, Santo replied, "What did Cavalli mean to the

United States?" Cavalli came to San Francisco in the late 1800's. In 1887 he started the first Italian-Swiss newspaper, L'Elvezia, which he managed and published with great success until 1904, when he sold the newspaper to the Righetti Brothers. In 1895, George became a Notary Public and opened an office on Montworked until his death.



books of entertainment and instructions for the immigrants from Switzerland, among them "The Book of the Immigrant" and an "Italian-English Grammar" for the study of the English language. Also a translator, he spoke 8 languages: German, Italian, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Slovenian and Greek. Eventually he opened a Liberia, or news stand, for the throngs of Italian immigrants who were homesick for Italian news. His first location sold Italian papers and magazines, and moved several times through the years; its third location is where City

location now houses the venerable North Beach watering hole Vesuvio, on Broadway and Columbus.

What the Swissbusinessman Italian realized is that not only San Francisco Italians, but also the entire Italian immigrant population of the United States, were starved for Italian news, so he began publishing an Italian language weekly Cavalli's second location then daily paper around

the turn of the century. He was the Italian version of William Randolph Hearst without the saber rattling, "People come here every day and tell me stories." Cavalli was a neighborhood icon who shipped his papers to every Italian enclave in the United States, and his legacy is still handled by Santo, "I get a phone call every day from every little mountain (village) in the United States, asking me about Italy. How do I spell this? Where do I go on vacation? Cavalli is the father of the Italian people in the United States." He loaned money to widows for funerals, he gave money to the poor, and mediated disputes between businessmen, neighbors and couples in need of guidance. He was like The Godfather's Vito Corleone without



the gangsterism.

Needless to say, Giorgio Cavalli was an operator, "He was a very smart man," Santo muses, "there would be no North Beach today without him." After the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, the

US-based Italian diaspora wanted to return to Italy. But Cavalli teamed up with some very powerful Italians to keep them here. "He and Gianinni (A.P. Giannini, founder of Bank of America) got together so the Italians wouldn't leave here," Santos

said. Simply put, Giannini loaned Italians money to rebuild their

During that time he wrote various homes and businesses, while Cavalli implored people not to make the voyage back to Italy, making North Beach the first neighborhood to come back from the quake and abandon its tent city in what is now Washington Square.

Cavalli's Liberia morphed Angiolina Cavalli into more than a newsstand. He sold books, records, ravioli and gnocchi makers, "people couldn't live without it." Cavalli figured out how to broadcast Italian radio live to his customers. "Italians had no idea what was going on in Italy," Lights Bookstore is now and its fourth added Santo, "look at the pictures." Sure





enough, there is a picture of Italians gathtening to one of fascist Benito Mussolini's fiery diatribes.

The Italian community eventually Americanized, and the need for an Italian language paper published in America diminished. The Internet has made importing Italian magazines and newspapers cost prohibitive (don't ask to plug your computer in at Cavalli, there are no

> outlets but there is wifi). But, Cafe Cavalli represents more than lovely Italian delicacies. "People left their souls in here. People still come by and tell me things," says Santo. "Restaurants like the Gold Spike come and go, because they're

just restaurants, but people have respect for this place.

Other places, they just disappear." The Cavalli legacy is still intact. In March of 1916, George Cavalli passed away and left Libreria Cavalli to Angiolina, one of his seven sisters. She changed the name to A. Cavalli & Company. She is now deceased, but her niece who is currently 106 and lives in an assisted living facility on Geary Street came in for a visit, "she speaks perfect Italian, and she had her first Cannoli here." Santo regrettably asked her if she could handle a cannoli at her age and got an icy stare.

Old timers and hipsters alike treked ered around Liberia Cavalli in 1931 lis- to Cafe Cavalli on the day this reporter drank coffee and chatted with Santo. The last thing Santo said was unforgettable, "everybody who comes here has something to say about this place, (and it usually is) that Cavalli should be around for another one hundred years." We can only hope, Santo.

> A.Cavalli Cafe, 1441 Stockton Street @ Columbus, 415-421-4219, http://www. cavallicafe.com

> 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 or call them at 415.793.1104



DHIIIIII Process URRERIA ITALIANA

Italian Americans listen to Italian radio broadcasts of fascist Benito Mussolini

MONEY MATTERS · By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan

Covering Essential Expenses in Retirement

oday's retirees face unique challenges — including prolonged periods of market uncertainty and longer average lifespans — which make thoughtfully planning for retirement more critical than ever. For most, feeling more confident about retirement comes down to the ability to pay for essential expenses — the predictable and recurring costs of life's



necessities. Some of the most common essential expenses include food, home maintenance costs, mortgage or rent payments, taxes and insurance premiums.

How can you cover these expenses?

Since markets will always fluctuate, having a concrete financial strategy that includes guaranteed or stable income sources can help you cover your essential expenses in all market environments. In fact, it's a good idea to aim to cover 100 percent of your essential expenses with these sources of income during retirement.

If you're nearing retirement, you may already have one or more sources of guaranteed or stable income in place, most notably Social Security. You may also have a defined benefit plan through your employer. Yet, no matter how strong these two sources of income may be, they might not be sufficient to cover your essential expenses in retirement. This means that you will likely have to rely on your savings to pay some of your

There are several financial solutions that offer guaranteed or stable income and can help you cover the gap between what you have in place and what you'll need, for example:

Annuities — Annuities can generate a reliable stream of income throughout retirement. Annuity contract guarantees are backed by the claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company. They can provide a stable income for a desired period of time, or for life. Some annuity contracts may also provide principle protection.

The unique features of annuities offer opportunities for tax deferred future income growth. There are also many different optional features and benefits that may be available for an additional cost with annuities. In return for the benefits they provide, annuities carry a surrender charge and other fees.

Bank deposits — Most savings accounts, Certificates of Deposit (CDs) and other deposit arrangements at a bank offer a set interest rate and return of principal, and are protected by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) for up to \$250,000 per account registration. (For more information, visit FDIC.gov.)

U.S. Government Securities — Savings bonds and United States Treasury Securities are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government. They may pay a stated interest rate, or be purchased at a discount of face value. There are many strategies that can be used to generate income with these instruments. Interest income from Treasury bonds is generally exempt from state and local income taxes, but is subject to federal income taxes.

Having the financial security you need to enjoy retirement takes planning and hard work. All of these investment choices can provide a regular stream of income over time, so you can count on payments to help you meet the challenges of an uncertain environment. Consider working with a financial professional who can help you find the best financial strategy for you based on your financial situation and goals.

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

An Accidental Artwork

By Katherine Howard

o hear Rasa Gustaitis tell it, her film about the Beach Chalet Soccer Fields came about almost by accident.

Shortly after she attended the California Coastal Commission's May 9 hearing on the proposed Beach Chalet soccer complex, she was walking on Ocean Beach with a friend, filmmaker Andrej Zdravic. She told him of her shock and dismay at the Commission approval of the City's urban style soccer complex project only a few hundred steps inland from beach.

"This project clearly violates the California Coastal Act," Rasa said. "The Commission's staff report made that clear, but the Commission scorned the recommendation. It also scorned the crowd of people who came prepared to speak. Hardly any of them were given a chance to step to the mike. Only the proponents were heard, with a very few exceptions."

Rasa has the expertise to understand the overwhelming negative impact of this project. She has been a journalist for over 40 years, and for more than half that time was editor of California Coast & Ocean, a quarterly magazine funded by the Coastal Conservancy.

Rasa suggested to Andrej that they step across the Great Highway for a look at the fields. At the Coastal Commission hearing, she had heard testimony that they were a swampy, gopher-ridden mess.

What they found instead was a sunny meadow surrounded by trees. Within it, girls' lacrosse teams were playing on grass. Birds soared above.

Andrej, who currently lives in Slovenia, is known internationally as an eco-filmmaker. He was in San Francisco

to supervise the installation of his multiscreen video work, "Ocean Wave—Time Horizon," at the newly relocated SF Exploratorium. He is always on the lookout for fresh footage of natural phenomena, especially waves, sand, wind, and trees. Andrej was saddened by the likely loss of the Golden Gate Park glade.

He brought his camera on their walk. "I asked Andrej to document with his camera what he saw with his eyes," said Rasa, "so that if the proposed field 'renovation' can't be stopped, we would at least have a historical record of what was destroyed."

They returned to film again in midmorning light. A soccer tournament was under way, with families watching while sitting on blankets outside the fence, wildflowers blooming behind them, ravens soaring above. Between the athletic fields and the Great Highway, a tree-shaded trail was busy with dog walkers and hikers.

"Before we finished editing the film, Andrej had to return to Slovenia," said Rasa. "He did not have time to add the narration. Never having made a film before, I asked a neighbor, Eli Noyes of Alligator Planet, for help. He agreed, then he did far more. He showed what we could expect if this outrageous project were built."

Eli is an animator, film director, graphic artist, and musician with a long record of awards, including an academyaward nomination. Generous with his talent on behalf of a worthy cause, he spent many hours on the film. As she said goodbye at the door of his studio, Rasa told him, "Had I known how long this would take I would never have asked you." Eli smiled and said, "I knew."

Through the passion and personal efforts of these three people who love nature, the film had grown from a simple document recording the loss of precious

Cont. p. 18

WHISTLEBLOWERS Dr. Maria Rivero & Dr. Derek Kerr

ETHICS COMMISSION TO WHISTLEBLOWERS: "D.O.A." he City Charter directs the Ethics Commission (Ethics; EC) to investigate Whistleblower Retaliation claims. Since June 1995, all have been Dead On Arrival. Diagnosing why they are dismissed is hampered by "confidentiality"; however, the notion that 100% are invalid is implausible. Like others, our retaliation complaints were dismissed, and then validated in litigation, resulting in a \$750,000 settlement and mandatory training in Whistleblower Rights for Laguna Honda Hospital executives. Most likely, Ethics rejects Whistleblower Retaliation claims automatically or intentionally. We can infer how it's done by dissecting other complaint dismissals.

money-laundering scheme involving City College officials in 2005, Ethics Executive Director John St. Croix instructed him to keep quiet. After the SF Chronicle exposed the scandal 18 months later, St. Croix told the SF Bay Guardian; "I don't know who dropped the ball. But at the time, we had less staff and there were a lot of things... we weren't doing." Although the College Chancellor and a deputy were convicted of illegal diversion of \$150,000 in public funds, Luby was forced out of his job. His 10/2/11 CitiReport article; Ethics Case Study in Scandal: City College Money Laundering details the cover-up.

Another way to bury complaints is to copy them to those accused. That's how Ethics handled whistleblower tips from 1995 until perhaps mid-2008. In a July 2006 memo, St. Croix admitted: "Prior to a few years ago, whenever a complaint was filed, staff would send a copy of the complaint to the Respondent." Two years later, on 8/7/08, the practice officially halted when the Board of Supervisors amended

Some complaints are simply covered Commissioners who "get spoon-fed by up. In an 11/4/08 SF Chronicle article staff." Complaint denials resulted from titled; Follow the Money, former Ethics staff's lack of investigative skills, their officer and whistleblower Oliver Luby turning down training offers, salaries that recounted that when he discovered a didn't draw good investigators, and a City Hall that was OK with it. In his 2/12/09 Bay Guardian piece, Watchdog Calls for Major Reform of Ethics Commission, Lynn saw no improvement. Little has changed. Without capable sleuths, reporting retaliation is futile.

Sham investigations also ensure dismissals. For example, willful violations of the Sunshine Ordinance are referred by the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force (SOTF) to Ethics for enforcement. These have been reflexively denied since 2004 when St. Croix was hired. In a 5/7/09 Fog City Journal expose, Ethics Commission Airs its Dirty Laundry, Lynn announced, "We now understand why the Ethics Commission has dismissed each of the Task Force's 14 referrals." He provides a video wherein St. Croix admits to ignoring complainants during investigations because, "There's not a lot of exculpatory information that's involved in talking to complainants...it's generally the respondent that has to provide the information..." Interviews were reserved for accused officials and the Whistleblower Protection Ordinance City Attorneys representing implicated

Such was the "culture of failure" described by the late Joe Lynn, a 5-year Ethics Officer who then served as Commissioner from 2003-2006 ... Lynn begins with "overpowering evidence of professional incompetence" among senior staff, and ends with incurious Commissioners who "get spoonfed by staff," and a City Hall that was OK with it"

ties. Until then, as *CitiReport* editor Larry Bush told the Board on 9/15/08; "...any employee who blew the whistle... immediately had their name turned over to their Department by the Ethics Commission." Historically, 43% of all Ethics complaints were referred back to implicated departments, or to other agencies like the Civil Service Commission and Human Resources. Nowadays, the numbers are withheld. These referred complaints are considered dismissed. And, if Ethics doesn't investigate them, their outcomes aren't seen in published Enforcement Summaries. Such invisible, untracked referrals multiply opportunities for whitewashes and reprisals.

Resources. When the Board of Supervisors drafted the Expanded Protections for Whistleblowers Ordinance in 2002, it addressed retaliation as follows; "The Ethics Commission may refer matters to the Department of Human Resources with a recommendation concerning reinstatement, restitution and discipline." Ominously, those crucial last 5 words were deleted when Ordinance 29-02 passed. Instead of an independent Ethics review, cases are slipped to an agency that tolerates managerial reprisals.

Inept investigations cannot substantiate wrongdoing, so complaints get dismissed by default. Such was the "culture of failure" described by the late Joe Lynn, a 5-year Ethics Officer who then served as Commissioner from 2003-2006. In an August 2007 Fog City Journal series titled; They're Back - Ethics Resumes Meltdowns, Lynn begins with "overpowering evidence of professional incompetence" among senior staff, and ends with incurious

to prevent disclosures of source identi- Departments. SOTF members and their audio-taped Hearings were disregarded. Warranted investigations were dropped to pursue vindictive ones, belying St. Croix's "old canard of funding problems as a justification for his procedures." In sum, Ethics investigations "uncover willful violations only if the respondent decides to confess." This evidentiary standard also dooms Whistleblower Retaliation claims.

While the Sunshine Ordinance promotes public access to government records and meetings, St. Croix wanted records of Sunshine investigations kept secret. In October 2009, retired lawyer Allen Grossman successfully sued Ethics to release files on 14 dismissed Sunshine complaints. Grossman found "very little A sure-fire way to neutralize retalia- in the files by way of analysis and investion complaints is to refer them to Human tigation" and some "specious reasons for dismissal." Afterwards, St. Croix's dismissals continued – albeit with shrewder, more detailed and oppositional analyses. Alarmed by ongoing denials of 18 consecutive Sunshine complaints, the 2010-11 Civil Grand Jury investigated. In San Francisco's Ethics Commission -The Sleeping Watchdog, it reported; "The Ethics Commissioners have relinquished their authority to the Executive Director concerning his recommendations for dismissal." Notoriously, Ethics dismissed 33 of 34 Sunshine complaints between October 2004 and October 2012, a record exceeded only by the 100% denial of retaliation claims.

> Next month, we'll examine other ways whistleblower complaints are dismissed by Ethics, including the role of the City and District Attorneys.

Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr, as senior physicians at Laguna Honda Hospital exposed wrongdoing by the DPH. Contact: DerekOnVanNess@aol.com



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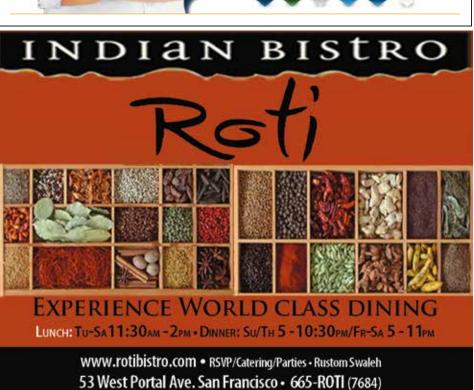
kho@vanguardsf.com <u>www.kevinho.co</u>













Help Us Plan The NEW

The Study has developed and evaluated improvement concepts for a west-side, grade-separated alignment of the M-Ocean View, prioritized by the community during prior planning processes. Concepts developed include a subway near Stonestown and San Francisco State University, a light rail undercrossing at 19th and Junipero Serra, or a light rail bridge over Junipero Serra near Font and Randolph.

19TH AVENUE TRANSIT STUDY

Learn more about improvement concepts under study and anticipated benefits.

Share your input!

COMMUNITY MEETING

TOWERS CONFERENCE CENTER 798 FONT BOULEVARD SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

ONLINE

- www.sfcta.org/19thave Faster and more reliable M-Ocean View
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- New and updated cycling facilities
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 with mussels and spaghetti with marinara sauce. The photo is the actual dish. Lobsters are 1/2 pound.

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Having a baby? Looking for a midwife/OB practice? The Women's



Monday, September 16

6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

St. Luke's Campus California Pacific Medical Center Griffin Room, 1st floor 3555 Cesar Chavez Street San Francisco

Call 415-641-6911 for more information and to reserve your space

cpmc.org/stlwomen

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chools are back in session, Labor Day has come and gone, and autumn has officially arrived. We're back in the swing after our August hiatus, and as the city never sleeps, here's a look at what's happening "around the town"...

Pigskin Preview '13... hats off to the 49ers as they are undefeated so far... I know the season starts this weekend...good luck to the red and gold as they start their quest for the Super Bowl in the last season at "the Stick." Cal welcomes new coach Sonny Dykes to the Pac 1, and Stanford starts by being ranked in the top 5 nationally...the Raiders, well, it may be a long season.

Summer Swoon ... July and August came and went and the Giants never broke from their funk, as the hitters never got things going. Let's celebrate the two World Series titles in 3 years and forget about this year.

A "bang up" start... Owner and chef Vittorio D'Urzo passes on his thanks to everyone in the neighborhood as there have been people waiting in line virtually everyday since he opened his namesake trattoria. The opening of the restaurant has been more than he expected and he is grateful for the response.

Racing on the Bay... The racing season for the America's Cup is finally here and the finals should help to make up for the non-competitive challenger rounds. The boats go over 50 mph and are extremely difficult to control in the shifting winds and currents of the SF Bay. With the crowds being as light as the sea-foam, try to see the action in person, or if not, catch it on TV. The ship-mounted cameras give a great view of the action.



Firefighters take a well deserved rest break from fighting the Rim Fire in Yosemite... The Twain Harte Chamber of Commerce held a spaghetti feed for firefighters and rescue personnel on Saturday evening in conjunc-

tion with the finale of their "Concerts in the Pines" event. More than 300 emergency personnel were treated to dinner and as groups left the area, back to the firelines, they sounded the horns on the rescue equipment as people in the crowd cheered, waved and gave the "thumbs up". Signs thanking the firefighters for helping to save Twain Harte and the surrounding Tuolumne County communities are visible everywhere.

With over 8000 firefighters and support personnel, 50+ helicopters and airplanes to drop water and retardant, the fire is now 80% contained but is expected to burn for 2-3 more weeks. The highway 120 corridor will look vastly different once it is reopened, but it is a testament to the thousands of personnel from all parts of California that prevented damage from being much greater and stopping the fire before it could burn Groveland, Camp Mather and the Hetch Hetchy area. (Photo by Alice Bull)

Assessed Property Value Appeals deadline ... On Monday, September 16, 2013, the City and County of San Francisco will close the filing period for a formal appeal of the 2013/2014 assessed property value. In order to appeal, property owners must complete the Application for Changed Assessment form (accessible by visiting www.sfgov. org/aab) together with a non-refundable \$60 administrative processing fee and submit it no later than 9/16/2013 to the Assessment Appeals Board (AAB) at 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall, Room 405, San Francisco, CA 94102.

Get rolling... A new twist on getting around town rolled out on August 29th with the launch of Bike Share. 350 brand new shiny bikes await you at approximately 35 stations centered around the waterfront, Market Street and Caltrain. You can't just hop on a bike and ride until you get tired though. You have to purchase an Annual Membership at bayareabikeshare.com or get a 24-Hour (\$9) or 3-Day Membership from any station using your credit or debit card. Annual Members receive a unique key in the mail. Use your key or the code the machine



spits out to unlock your bike, take a spin, then return it to any dock on the map. Bike Share programs have been wildly successful in cities like Washington, D.C., New York City, and Minneapolis. Still no plans to install a dock on the Westside though.

Finally... I want to thank owner Marco Petri and the team at Alfred's (on Merchant) for assisting my family during a truly scary moment. My wife, my mother and I were at Alfred's having a special dinner when suddenly, my wife was having great difficulty breathing as something was caught in her throat. Sensing the emergency, I quickly moved to get her out of the booth. As I assisted her out of the booth seating, a quick thinking staff person, Francisco, came up from behind, put his arms around my wife and lifted her up, basically accomplishing the Heimlich technique and clearing her windpipe. Once everyone realized that she was OK, we completed our delicious dinner. Although I have been trained in CPR and "choking rescue" and was ready to do it, the quick thinking of Francisco averted what could have been a tragedy. It truly was a scary few minutes.

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

* SEPTEMBER EVENTS *

EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

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

EVERY MON & TUE • JOB SEEKERS LAB

Mon 11 am - 2pm & Tue 10 am - 1 pm | Computers with Internet connection are available for independent work creating or updating your resume, preparing job applications and/or searching online for jobs. Some staff assistance. Bring a flash drive. Main Library, 100 Larkin, 5th Fl.

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 WED • FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING?

Every Wed | 7-8 am | Toastmasters helps you become a confidant public speaker. Tennessee Grill, 1128 Taraval. RSVP 564-6069

EVERY THURS - NIGHTLIFE

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

JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

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

TUE • PEOPLE OF PARKSIDE/SUNSET

Thu Sep 5 | 7 pm | Formerly Taraval Parkside Merchants Assn. Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave. 1st Thu each month.

THU/SAT • LEARN TAI CHI

Thu Sept 5 | 5:30pm & Sat Sept 7 | 10 am-12 Beginner Classes — Tai Chi, while of benefit to everyone, can be of special value for seniors who want to increase mobility and balance. PM DSG Studio | 564 Monterey Blvd, Studio A. Schedule: http://california. usa.taoist.org (San Francisco)

MON • LIFELONG LEARNING SF STATE

Mon Sept 9 | 21 courses are open to the public and tailor-made for people age 50 and up. Course highlights include: Digital Video for Novices, Ruth Asawa's San Francisco Fountains, Hitchcock on Both Sides of the Pond, Total Memory Workout, Transformations: Revisiting Fairytales, Improv as a Life Skill, Writers Workshop, Promoting Health and Movement Through Creative Expression, and "Fluid Dynamics" of San Francisco in Walks. All courses, except a watercolor painting class, will be held at SF State's Downtown Campus at 835 Market St. (at Powell St.). \$95 course, or \$550 for an unlimited number of courses in a year. For details or to enroll, visit: http://olli.sfsu.edu.

WED • GERSHWIN & AMERICAN POPS

Wed Sep 11 | 7 pm | Merced Arts & Culture Salon Tim Holt will perform the songs of George and Ira Gershwin, including "S Wonderful," "Do Do Do," and selections from Porgy and Bess. Tim will also discuss the work of other great composers from that era. Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

THU • BALLROOM PANCE CLASSES

Thu Sept 12 | Couples learn the Samba, Rhumba, Cha Cha, Mambo, Tango, Waltz, Swing and more! Forest Hill Christian Church, 250 Laguna Honda Blvd. Six lessons \$70 couple. Info: 661-2746.

THU • LAKESHORE ACRES MEETING

Thu Sept 12 | 7pm | Lakeshore Acres Improvement Club meets to discuss Sloat Blvd. safety improvements. Scottish Rite Auditorium, 19th Ave & Sloat.

THU • DIST COALITION MEETING

Thu Sept 12 | 7 pm-9 pm | Meets 2nd Thu each month. Info: 586.8103 or ssuval@sbcglobal.net Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave.

SAT • 20TH DANCING POETRY FESTIVAL

Sat Sept 14 | Noon to 4 pm | Music, dance, color, poetry. Artists Embassy International. Florence Gould Theater in the California Palace of the Legion of Honor Art Museum in Lincoln Park, 100 - 34th Ave. Tickets \$15/12/6: naticaaei@aol.com (510) 235-0361

TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

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

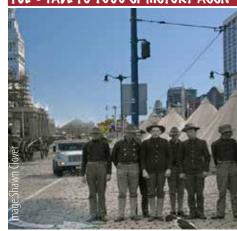
WED • ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION

Wed Sept 18 | 7 pm | Practical Skills for Adults -Retired nurse Arlene Jech, discusses elder abuse prevention among community-dwelling seniors as well as in nursing homes. As a nursing home inspector and supervisor, she inspected nursing homes for abuse as well as for compliance with state and federal regulations. Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

SAT • BANDERITAS DE PAPEL PICADO

Sat Sept 21 | 10:30 - 12 pm | "Banderitas de papel picado" (paper banners) are used in Mexico and the Southwestern United States as decorations for celebrations. We'll listen to Latin music as we make our own papel picado. Adults and children (ages 6 and up). West Portal Library, 355-2886.190 Lenox Way

TUE • FAPE TO 1906-SF HISTORY ASSN



Tue Sept 24 | 7:30 pm | Shawn Clover will show his unique historical photos faded into real-time loca-Catholic Church, 725 Diamond St. (at 24th St.)

TUE • PAPER FLOWER CRAFT

Tue Sept 24 | 4 pm | Join us as we celebrate Latino Hispanic Heritage by making colorful paper flowers! Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr.

TUE • RESUME WRITING

Tue Sept 24 | 10-12 pm | Get the job you want! Come learn how to write a resume or improve the one you have with tips and advice from experienced consultants. Main Library, 100 Larkin, Latino/Hispanic B

TUE • HOW TO USE LINKEDIN

Tue Sept 24 | 6-7:30 pm | The biggest professional network on the Internet — experts will take you step by step and tips for how to develop professionally. 5th Floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin. Free. 557-4277

SAT • AUTHOR ANNIE BARROWS

Sat Sept 28 | 11 am | lvy + Bean Take the Case. A special Saturday morning event with the delightful Annie Barrows. Bean decides to set up shop as a private investigator after watching a detective on TV, and she and lvy start looking for mysteries to solve. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. Info 564-8080

MON • SHARP

Mon Sept 30 | 7 pm | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People, Last Mon each month - sharpsf. com for details, 1736 9th Ave. @Moraga.

THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

Thu Sept 26 | 7 pm | Meets last Thu each month. SF State Warriors and Recology are invited. This meeting is at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street.

SUN • AUTHOR CHONCHUIR

Sun Sep 29 | 5pm | The Irish Literary & Historical Society welcomes acclaimed Irish author Nuala Ní Chonchúir. She will read from her fourth short story collection "Mother America". United Irish Cultural Center, Saint Francis



Room, 2700 45th Ave, \$5 (members free). www. ILHSsf.org. The Irish Literary & Historical Society (ILHS) of the San Francisco Bay Area, founded in 1945, provides an open, nonsectarian, and nonpolitical forum for the presentation and discussion of Irish and Irish-American culture. The ILHS Speaker Series exlores Irish arts, literature, history, society, and culture.

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



SF Opera's Free Concert Al Fresco is Sunday, Sept 8

Sharon Meadow, Golden Gate Park | Sunday, September 8, 2013 at 1:30 pm

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 91st 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 blantions as they are today. SF History Assn., St. Philip's kets 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.



At the Theater • By Flora Lynn Isaacson & Linda Ayres-Frederick

NO MAN'S LAND

Pinter Masterfully Engages Mind and Heart

atching a master actor at work is like drinking delicious ambrosia. It satisfies the thirst and even makes you a bit giddy. This is what it was to watch Sir Ian McKellen perform in Harold Pinter's No Man's Land at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. His colleagues delivered performances that were no less shabby: Billy Crudup, Patrick Stewart, Shuler Hensley. What could go wrong with such an illustrious cast? The answer: Nothing. Nothing at all!

Pinter's play about two elderly writers who bump into each other on the Hampstead Heath and later at a nearby pub engages the imagination and the heart as it examines the two very different fates each one has lived. Spooner (Ian McKellen) is a poet who like Icarus experienced his moments of acclaim while young but soon fell from grace (too close to the sun, eh?). He ends up cobbling together a group of writers and wannabes to meet monthly at the pub. Hirst (Patrick Stuart) is an essayist/poet who achieved both wealth and position enough to keep the best of liquor in his cabinet and two hired servants, Foster (Billy Crudup) and Briggs Flora Lynn Isaacson (Shuler Hensley) to care for him in his dotage.



Linda Ayres-Frederick

On Stephen Brimson Lewis' grand semi-circular interior set, the drinking begins. Seated in his leather-winged chair, Hirst holds court as the benevolent host to his visitor Spooner. Balancing bottle, glasses, and mackintosh, McKellan engages us as he and we attempt to figure out how these two know each other. Mixing drinks and metaphors, the verbiage spirals into the night like a sophisticated pissing contest, Spooner being the more verbose of the two by far. Yet with all his words, his physical comedy entertains and the mystery of his character remains. As the two keep drinking, Hirst gets

drunker (vodka followed by whiskey) and ends up crawling out of the room, leaving Spooner momentarily on his own. Foster (Crudup) enters with youthful panache and introduces himself as Hirst's son, caretaker and poet too.

Briggs makes his entrance and brings with him an element of foreboding menace. As a bodyguard with youth and stature on his side, he could easily overpower any intruder.

The shorter second act begins with Spooner alone waking up from a fetal position (recall same from McKellen's earlier Richard III), discovering the door to be locked and attempting to ready himself for the day in the suit that looked slept in before he slept in it. Enter Briggs with offer of breakfast from the master before Spooner has

the opportunity to proffer himself as a more learned companion to Hirst. Playing with themes of facts altered by memory and the loss of it, Pinter takes us into a realm where the "no man's land" that age delivers makes success and failure all relative. This was a not-to-be-missed



lan McKellan as Spooner in No Man's Land

performance.

While the run of No Man's Land at Berkeley Rep through August 31 was understandably sold out, tickets for each day's show were sometimes returned close to show time and made available for purchase. Roda Theatre, 2014 Addison St. Berkeley (510)647-2949. www.berkeleyrep.org

If you've the means to go, and missed the Berkeley run, No Man's Land will run on Broadway at The Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. NYC in repertory with Beckett's Waiting for Godot. Previews begin October 25 with an opening night on November 24. Buy tickets online at Telecharge.com Linda Ayres-Frederick

All's Well That Ends Well

Shakespeare's Problem Comedy at Marin Shakespeare

ccording to Director Robert Currier, in his curtain speech preceding the play, in 1895 George Bernard Shaw liked this play very much because it was not a sugar-coated comedy. Shaw viewed this play as being like real life.

To quote Marin Shakespeare dramaturg, Cathleen Sheehan, "All's Well That Ends Well invites us into a world strikingly different from the earlier, jubiliant, Elizabethan comedies. So different do we find this so called comedy that some resist the label entirely and refer to the play as a "problem play."

In this play, the characters are riddled with flaws and the ending, despite the title, is not a feel good, fairytale, happy-ever-after conclusion. The name of this play expresses the saying, "all's well that ends well," which means that problems don't matter as long as the outcome is good.

This production boasts five outstanding guest artists: Lucas McClure as Lavatch, the wise fool or clown, who also composed some orginal songs for this production; Jessica Powell as the Countess Rousillon, a great lady, as charming as old Lafeu; Scott Coopwood who is a true French gentleman; James Hiser as Parolles, companion to Bertram (Adam Magill), son of the Countess, a soldier with false bravado; and finally, Jack Powell as the King of France in an amazing performance.

In addition to these five Equity actors, we have rounding out the cast the leading romantic couple, Bertram and Helena (Carla Pauli), who are not romantic and shouldn't be a couple. Helena is determined in her desire to win Bertram and Bertram is not. To escape Helena, Bertram heads off to war in Italy with Parolles in tow. Helena then sets out to follow him and arrives in Florence in the guise of a pilgrim and lodges with a widow (Heather Cherry) whose daughter Diana (Luisa Frasconi) is the newest object of Bertram's affection. With Diana's help, Helena aims to trap Bertram, and therein lies the play.

Judging by Abra Berman's wonderful Costumes and Billie Cox's Sound Design, it would seem that Robert Currier set his play in the 1940's.

With an entire cast of skilled Shakespearean actors, Currier stresses the comedy and doesn't worry about the problem. So we're all in for an evening of fun!

All's Well That Ends Well runs Aug. 24 to Sep. 28, 2013. Performances are at Forest Meadows Amphitheatre, 890 Belle Avenue, Dominican University, San Rafael. For tickets, call 415-499-4488 or www.marinshakespeare.org\pages\ticketorder.php Flora Lynn Isaacson

Now At the Movies · By Don Lee Miller

Lee Daniels' THE BUTLER

This chronicle of the 1957-86 years that Cecil Gaines: Forest Whitaker served eight administrations as a butler in the White House is actually based on the life of Eugene Allen. Gaines' early life is spent on the cotton plantation owned by its matriarch: Vanessa Redgrave. After witnessing the rape of his mother and the brutal shooting of his father, he is moved from cotton-picker to serve in the main house. Once the adult Gaines is taken in by a



father figure: Clarence Williams III, he is apprenticed at an upscale hotel, there spotted by the White House Chief of Staff and soon is learning the ropes at the White House. Gaines is serving Eisenhower: Robin Williams when the Little Rock school ruckus occurs. He brings limitless meds to Kennedy: James Marsden, and hands the prune juice to the constipated, obscene Johnson: Liev Schreiber, conducting a state meeting from his toilet. There's Nixon: John Cusack as the house of cards is crumbling. Gaines serves as one of the six butlers, including Carter: Cuba Gooding, Jr. and James: Lenny Kravitz. The Reagans are portrayed by Alan Rickman and Jane Fonda. Throughout his career, Gaines returns home nightly to Gloria: Oprah Winfrey as she deals with problems including a battle with the bottle from feelings of neglect. Their older son becomes personally involved with colored sit-ins and riots during the Civil Rights movement. Strong disturbing violence. Profanity. Thematic elements. Sexual material. Smoking.

BLUE JASMINE

Jasmine: Cate Blanchett has lofty roots in Blanche duBois, Tennessee Williams' heroine in A Streetcar Named Desire. Jasmine in her prime glows from within, her ivory skin radiates Life, her smile entrances. Conversely, when she's feeling low, her blotchy and pale epidermis shows it, her eyes become puffy and reddened, her posture convolutes. The silk dress that looked perfect before becomes stained with sweat-soaked pits. Jasmine has been living the high life in Manhattan. Investment broker hubby Hal: Alec Baldwin has been absorbing her bills. Broke, she flies to San Francisco (first-class, with Vuitton matched luggage) to visit her sister Ginger: Sally Hawkins. Who'd thunk her unsophisticated auto mechanic boy-friend Chili: Bobby Cannavale could be the spitting image of Stanley? Film-maker/writer Woody Allen, 77, casts the strong supporting players with Ginger's bitter ex, Augie: Andrew Dice Clay; her current beau, pleasant Al: Louie C.K.; a well-to-do diplomat, Dwight: Peter Sarsgaard; and Dr Flicker: Michael Stuhlbarg (Hitchcock, Lincoln, Hugo). Allen uses flashbacks to fill in Jasmine's earlier life, enriching her present narcissistic slump. Mature thematic material. Sexual content. Profanity.

ELYSIUM

Set in 2154, where the very wealthy live on a wheel-shaped satellite and the poor scrounge for food on Earth, it's rough-going for the overcrowded Earth-bound humans. When Max takes a deadly assignment on Elysium, he meets cabinet-member Delacourt: Jodie Foster, who's playing life-and-death games with industrialist John Carlyle: William Fichtner. The cast is rounded out by Max's friend, Frey: 20-year old Alice Braga; Julio: Diego Luna (Milk); and Max's sidekick, Kruger: Sharlto Copley. Neil Blomkamp directs his own screenplay. Strong disturbing violence. Profanity.

WE'RE THE MILLERS

When a drug dealer, David: Jason Sudeikis needs a family for a quick trip to Mexico to pick up two tons of weed, he hires them: a broke stripper, Rose: Jennifer Aniston, and two high school kids, Casey: Emma Roberts, and non-athlete Kenny: Wil Poulter. David's boss Brad: Ed Helms is rough on them. This comedy takes them south of the border and back. Rawson Marshall Thurber directs this road-trip adventure with the story/screenplay by Bob Fisher and Steve Faber, plus Sean Anders and John Morris: screenplay only. There's male nudity when Kenny gets bitten by a wasp on a testicle which swells. Crude sexual content. Pervasive profanity. Drug material.

San Francisco Village to host open house on September 28th

an Francisco Village – a citywide network empowering older San Franciscans - is organizing a local chapter in the Castro neighborhood. The group will kick off their organizing efforts with an open house on September 28th at the San Francisco LGBT Center. All residents of the Castro community are welcome to attend.

The September 28th open house will introduce San Francisco Village to Castro residents of all ages. While the Village actively serves San Franciscans 60 and older, there are also many volunteer opportunities available for residents younger than 60. The open house will feature an overview of the organization and the "Village Model," benefits of membership, as well as testimonials from current San Francisco Village members and volunteers.

"San Francisco Village has become a trusted advocate in helping hundreds of older San Franciscans navigate the transitions of getting older," says Kate Hoepke, San Francisco Village's executive director. "We're excited to begin organizing in the Castro neighborhood and look forward to cultivating new relationships as we work to enrich and enhance the experience of aging in San Francisco."

About San Francisco Village San Francisco Village is a nonprofit membership organization that empowers older adults to continue to live active and full lives in their own homes and neighborhoods. It enables older adults to stay in charge of their lives as they manage the transitions of getting older by proactively offering expert guidance, support and community for a reasonable monthly fee.

A lively and diverse group committed to connecting, sharing interests and friendship, having fun and discussing things that matter as they age. Our neighborhood circles help us connect to those members closest to us for everything from friendship to emergencies.

Info: Sept.28th open house, or to learn more please contact Kate Hoepke at info@sfvillage.org.

Visit on the web at www. sfvillage.com, or on Facebook at www. Facebook. com/sfvillage.

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THOUGHTS / By Jack Kaye



Security Agency has access to our emails and phone calls. Those concerned feel that their privacy has been violated and fear that they may have been targeted because of their personal importance, and that their intimate emails might be shared with strangers

who are overreaching their authority to indulge in some interesting reading and listening.

My letters were read by young interns. These 20-something-year-olds are trained to find the topic and then to mail back a form letter from their boss on the subject. The letter Senator Feinstein's young staff sent me was a letter saying the senator totally agreed with me ... My letters to the President were responded to with similar form responses disregarding my idea and repeating his own.

for more information about some products available on the web like men's shirts on sale for this week only, or a build your own BMW site, may be viewed by others. Some might fear that the funny cat videos we forward to friends could be intercepted and misinterpreted by spies desperate to get something on us because of our importance, making everything we do both sacred and subject to violation.

I have a different take. I have been writing my elected officials about problems that face us for years now with little success. When the housing crisis hit and millions of homeowners were unable or unwilling to pay their monthly mortgage payment because the value of their collateral, their homes, had declined, I sent out letters and emails with my suggestions. Never mind the fact that the home is the same home and provides the same value to its inhabitants. Never mind that many purchases made with credit become worth less than the debt they created, everything from clothing to appliances to electrical devices to cars. I had the solution and wrote to every official I could. My answer was to have the banks let these homeowners pay only interest at the current low rate on the remaining balance until the financial situation improves. The banks would lose no money nor would the taxpayer and the homeowner could cut the monthly payment in half and maintain a good credit rating. It was a win-win-win.

My letters were read by young interns. These 20-something-year-olds are trained to find the topic and then to mail back a form letter from their boss on the subject. The letter Senator Feinstein's young staff sent me was a letter saying the senator totally agreed with me that the government should spend tens of billions to pay down the troubled mortgages and subsidize the fees associated with refinance. My letters to the President were responded to with similar form responses disregarding my idea and repeating his own.

them my tax plan, which would eliminate all itemized deductions and credits for personal income taxes, replacing them all be. Maybe I could become an internawith a standard deduction, and counting tional folk hero, like loyal Americans Ed all income as equal, with only about five tax brackets. So if a household had income from earnings, Social Security, dividends, interest, unemployment insurance, etc., the amounts could be combined to one taxable total. (Currently, while earned income is fully taxable as is interest, Social Security is taxable only to a maximum of 85% and dividends are taxed at only 20%.) My plan would reduce fraud, simplify tax preparation, and make taxes fairer, getting the rich to pay more while getting more families to contribute something. This brilliant plan has also been ignored by our decision makers, who assure us that they are trying so hard to deal with these difficult problems.

I have also suggested ways of resolving the Israel-Palestine issue, as well as a fair way to deal with our almost ten million

Perhaps they fear that their requests document-free residents. I also have some thoughts on improving our education curricula. And if you want to know what our American car industry should be doing, read my take on it.

I have found it impossible to get a good idea to our political leaders.

I write long emails also to friends on both the far right and left. I argue each point with them online articulating what I think our government should be doing, like closing hundreds of our foreign bases, reducing foreign aid, cutting waste in government, (e.g. eliminating the penny and nickel, ending the blue Angels and Fleet Week, eliminating Saturday mail delivery, ending reimbursement for travel for training or conventions, etc.), simplifying our tax code, reversing outsourcing, dealing with the document-free resident problem, and immediately withdrawing from the Middle East.

I want NSA to read these emails and then show them to the President and our elected officials. Maybe they could also be shown online, and on the front page of all our major papers. If they also show my picture, I want it to be a very flattering one, maybe it could be retouched a bit to make me look younger with a full head of hair - red hair might be nice. And if you get into my educational background, please don't mention that I didn't graduate from Harvard; it's been the source of constant embarrassment.

And what about my phone calls? NSA agents are welcome to listen to my calls to and from friends and relatives. They can hear my review of a restaurant I recently visited, or my advice to one of my grown children. What do the spies think of my reviews? Would they go to one of my recommended places? Do they have suggestions of their own in which I might be interested? Do they agree with my advice to my kids? What would they advise? Maybe we could take my communications nationwide to get a sense of what the average American thinks of them. Huffington The same happened when I sent all of Post could take polls on my intercepted thoughts and opinions.

Oh what fun all that attention would Snowden and Private Brad Manning, without having to spend years in prison, as they surely will. But narcissists might feel it's well worth it.

And not to worry that terrorists' calls will not be intercepted. What damage could they do, anyway? Privacy trumps security any day.

So please, NSA, don't read or listen to my fellow Americans' communications, because surely they are precious. Just intercept mine. I'll make sure that the spelling and grammar are correct, and I will always speak clearly while making phone calls to friends and relatives. As an added incentive, I will try to always include some humor, the kind I think you spies would enjoy.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

Do you have a pinched nerve? We can help.

Dear friend,

Last year more Americans were killed by prescription drugs than by guns, AIDS, suicides and terrorists combined...But we'll get to that

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

17 years ago something happened that changed my life forever. I was a young woman living in Philadel-

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

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

ear infections, asthma, allergies or a number

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

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

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

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

Many people are beginning to under-It's hard to believe, I know, but it's true. stand that health comes from within. This is why chiropractic helps so many people. You see, your body can heal itself. Your body doesn't need any help; it just can't have any interference. With chiropractic, we don't add Let me start by explaining the photo in anything to the body or take anything from

> it. We find interference in the nervous system and remove it thus enhancing the healing capacities of the

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

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

Headaches •

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

Here is what some of your neighbors

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

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

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

Now...Find out for yourself and benefit from an AMAZING OFFER- Look, It should not cost you an arm and a leg to correct your health. You are going to write a check to someone for your health expenses, you may as well write a lesser on for chiropractic. AniI know you're smart. You want to get to the cause of the problem, and not just cover it up with drugs. When you are one of the first 20 people to call and schedule a new patient exam (by October 24th) you will receive that entire exam for \$37. That's with a consultation with the doctor, examination and x-rays... the whole ball of wax, and there are no hidden fees. But call right away because we expect to be flooded with calls as this exam costs \$317. Again there are only 20 of these slots so don't miss out. I hope that there's no misunderstanding about the quality of care just because I have a lower exam fee. You'll get great care at a great fee. I just offer that low exam fee to help more people who need care.

My qualifications:

I am a graduate of Palmer College of You see, it's not normal for kids to get Chiropractic, I have published articles in leading chiropractic journals and taught chiof other illnesses we see clear up in our office ropractic to chiropractors! I've been helping your neighbors in San Francisco since 2004. I've been entrusted to take care of tiny babies to athletes that you may know.

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

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

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

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

September 2013 ---WESTSIDE BSERVER Page 15



Living By

DESIGN

The wonderfully fashionable mix of a life well lived is right here at San Francisco Towers. Margaret finds time to help organize both our fundraiser fashion show and our annual holiday trunk show. Be our guest, come by and meet people like Margaret who still pursue their passions and are writing their next, best chapter right here. To learn more, or for your personal visit, please call 415.447.5527.



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Brugmansia

SF Botanical's One-of-a-kind cloud forest bursts into bloom

ne of the only outdoor botanical gardens in the world where the tropical cloud forest bloom can be seen Foggy San Francisco may not seem like the tropics to most, but for hundreds of rare and endangered plants native to the world's misty cloud forests, it feels like home. San Francisco Botanical Garden (SFBG) is one of the only outdoor botanical gardens in the world where the alluring beauties of these high elevation forests thrive, and fall is the best time to see the Garden's enchanting cloud forest bloom.

In the Mesoamerican Cloud Forest Garden, visitors can see a whole variety of delicate and unusual fuchsias dangling gracefully overhead, towering tree daisies, vibrant salvias and much more. This colorful jungle of flowering plants is representative of typical cloud forest plant communities in southern Mexico and throughout Central America.

October 1 - December 31, 2013; open every day 9 am to 5 pm (October through early November); 9 am to 4 pm (1st Sunday in November through December)

> At San Francisco Botanical Garden, Golden Gate Park

San Francisco Residents: FREE with Deppea splendens proof of residency

Non-residents: \$7 general, \$5 youth 12-17, seniors and students with ID; \$2 children 5-11; FREE for children 4 and under; families of 2 adults and one or more child pay just \$15

INFORMA-TION:

www.SFBotanicalGarden.org, (415) 661-1316



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Notes "NEW SHOWROOM -- The beautiful new showroom of the San Francisco Stonestown Branch, Cadillac Motor Car Division, opened last week at 20th - Avenue and Buckingham - Way. The 1953 El Dorado sports convertible is now on display along with other standard production Cadillacs, according to Lou Meara, Stonestown manager." Date 1953 May 20. By permission of the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

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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	be	low

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BRAIN FÜD

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

......

Some people's names (such as "Will Power") suggest a certain personality or career choice. Given below are some last names and professions (in no particular order). For each last name, your task is to think of a common first name, such that it suggests one of the given professions. Each last name and profession must be used just once.

Example: Sonny Day would suggest a meteorologist.

Last Names: Ball, King, Major, Mee, Soares, Turner

Professions: Paleontologist, Author, Musician, Plumber, Astrologer, Lawyer

The hint provides the first names.

Sue Mee - Lawyer (sue me) Dee Major - Musician (D Major)

Paige Turner - Author (page turner) Dinah Soares - Paleontologist (dinosaurs) Lee King - Plumber (leaking) Crystal Ball - Astrologer (crystal ball)

Answer









Julie Casson

Check Out Our Website!

Five Years of Award Winning Local News Your Finger Tips.







Letters (Cont. from p. 16)

It's great to see so many people care project would create an unwanted as much as I do about our precious precedent for future development of meadows.

Cheryl Richard, Noe Valley

70 Crestline

We are happy to report that the Board of Appeals upheld our appeal to prevent construction at 70 Crestline. your publications.

One of the Board's primary rea-Thanks for your great article sons for overturning the permit issued on Golden Gate Park's soccer fields! 5/15/13 was the fact that the proposed the 13 other open green spaces in Vista Francisco.

> There were 13 members of the public (including 12 TPENA members) who presented testimony at the hearing in support of our appeal.

Patricia Campe-Aguilar Thank you for covering our appeal in Donald Bateman, Co-Chairs, Twin Peaks Eastside Neighborhood Alliance (TPENA)

Older couple needs inexpensive in-law apartment, basement apartment or room with private entrance. We have no pets, no car and are non-smokers. We can be reached at 415.252.7303



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WEST OF TWIN PEAKS PROPERTIES SOLD SINCE 7/1/13

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

ADDRESS	NEIGHBORHOOD	BEDS	BATHS	PK	ASKING	SOLD	% OF ASKING
98 Taraval St	Forest Hill	4	3	2	1,495,000	1,450,000	96.99
1347 Portola Dr	St. Francis Wood	3	3	2	1,313,000	1,380,000	105.10
245 Santa Paula Ave	St. Francis Wood	5	3.5	2	2,198,000	2,000,000	90.99
228 Evelyn	Miraloma Park	3	1	1	699,000	695,000	102.96
350 Brentwood Ave	Monterey Heights	4	3.5	2	2,275,000	2,250,000	98.90
438 Colon Ave	Westwood Highlands	3	1	1	849,000	950,000	111.90
460 West Portal Ave	West Portal	3	1.5	1	951,000	1,150,000	120.93

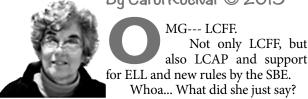
WHETHER BUYING OR SELLING, HAVING THE RIGHT ADVICE IS KEY AND I AM READY TO HELP YOU SUCCEED!



JENNIFER ROSDAIL DRE# 01349379 415.269.4663 www.ClientsInTheKnow.com jennifer@rosdail.com

California's New School Funding Formula-What's it all about?

By Carol Kocivar @ 2013



Sorry... That was a little "education speak" for a new way we fund California schools. Please... don't stop reading. I will NOT continue in this obscure code. I promise.

But what I will do is try to simplify one of the most significant changes in how we fund our schools. Really.

Starting this year, California school districts will get their money in a whole new package.

California used to send money to local school districts with detailed restrictions.

The folks in Sacramento would tell the local school districts:

You have to spend so much money in this category and so much in that. School safety and grade level counseling. Programs for X and programs for Y." Maybe even the square root of X and Y. (Just kidding.) More than 50 different programs.

P.S.: "You also have to fill out all this paperwork to prove you did what we told you to do."

Not any more.

School districts will now get to decide, with input from their local communities, how to use a lot of the money under a new system called the Local Control Funding Formula.

(Let me be particularly clear about the phrase "a lot of the money." This does not mean that schools get a lot of money. Far from it. In fact, California is still almost dead last in how it funds our schools. It means school boards

schools.

More money goes for kids with greater needs. This is a big deal because school districts with more English is that local communities know their student needs better ELL language learners, low-income students and foster children get more money. Even more money goes to school districts with 55 percent or more of students with higher educational needs.

Spending decisions are shifted from the state legis-Not only LCFF, but lature to local school boards

There is more flexibility by local communities on how money can be spent. (While most of the spending restrictions are gone, not all are. Schools still are required to dedicate money in some areas, for example: special education, child nutrition, and transportation.)

Funding plans are tied to student performance.

More parent and community engagement is required. LCFF is a huge philosophical shift in two very important areas.

Getting rid of a lot of categorical funding Categorical funding had grown into a cottage industry in Sacramento. The idea behind restricting spending to specific categories is well intentioned. It is to eliminate inequi-

The underlying premise of the new funding formula is that local communities know their student needs better than Sacramento – that decisions on how the money is spent should be controlled locally"

ties and ensure that ALL students throughout the state have opportunities, particularly those hardest to educate. Spending used to be targeted, for example, for physical education, counseling, libraries, gifted and talented education, high school class size reduction...

The system was complex. There were serious quesnow make a lot more decisions on how to spend it. Got it? tions about program overlaps, whether the needs of Here are the BIG ideas in this new way we fund our students were met, and if the administrative time and overhead was money well spent.

> The underlying premise of the new funding formula LCAP Local Control and Accountability Plan than Sacramento - that decisions on how the money is spent should be controlled locally.

As LCFF rolls out, an essential question is still relevant: Do ALL children receive a high quality comprehensive

education that includes the arts, physical education, civics, science, technology, engineering, and math?

More money for kids with higher needs For years, policy makers have struggled with how to provide additional instruction and programs to students who don't speak English, or who live in poverty or in foster care. LCFF recognizes that some children cost more to educate.

Now, instead of allocating funding based on just a head count of the children in schools, it also counts the needs of those students. This is the right thing to do.

But we need to be clear: It does not solve the on-going lack of funding for education in California.

What does LCFF mean for you? Now that additional funding decisions are to be made locally, it is more important for families and communities to be involved.

In the past decade, the most critical decisions that school boards made involved cuts:

Shorter school year

No summer school,

Fewer teachers and bigger classes

Cutting arts and music and counselors and nurses and librarians

School boards now need to know what parents and the community want and value at their schools. They must develop Local Control and Accountability Plans. On-the-ground guidance and insight from school communities is critical.

This is the time for PTAs and parent groups to play an essential role in helping parents understand how school funding has changed, how budgets are developed, and how decisions are made by school boards.

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

Resources

Legislative Analyst Overview of LCFF

California State PTA: School Finance

Translation of terms in first sentence: LCFF Local Control Funding Formula English Language Learner SBE State Board of Education

THE REAL ESTATE ANSWER MAN By Kevin Birmingham

I would like to legalize my in-law unit. Is this possible? Peggy Hirsch

A One of the largest problems for the Building Inspection Department, Rent Board and home-owners continues to be in-law units. It is estimated that there are approximately 30,000 illegal secondary units in San Francisco. Currently there is no way to legalize

these units; however they are regulated by the San Francisco Rent Stabilization Board. The Department of Building Inspection can require owners of property with in-law units to remove any and all non-permitted work, including kitchens.

The Board of Supervisors has tried three times in the past to create legislation to deal with in-laws, but nothing has come of it. It is very likely that legislation to legalize in-laws will be introduced at some point. This would be some sort of in-law amnesty or mandate, and would require broad support from members of the Board. There is no way that any potential legislation would not include input from the San Francisco Tenants Union, making this a powder keg that would pit home-owners against tenants' rights advocates.

Kevin Birmingham is a licensed real estate broker, have a question for the Real Estate Answer Man? Submit them to kevin@kevinbirmingham.com

Seeking Book Donations

The Reentry Division of the Adult Probation Department is seeking book donations to distribute to people on community supervision in San Francisco. We're looking for a wide variety of gently used books, including: nonfiction, children's books, and poetry.

Please, no magazines or textbooks. If you have books you'd like to donate to help promote literacy among people served by the Adult Probation Department, please contact Jennifer Scaife, Reentry Resources Coordinator, at (415) 241-4254 or reentry.council@sfgov.org.



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Crepes Contest

The San Francisco Restaurant Buzzword for 2013 is GLUTEN-FREE. Every restaurant is getting requests for menu items that contain no gluten. But what happens when a restaurant known for crepes gets this request?

Squat and Gobble, known for its savory and dessert crepes, is sponsoring a recipe contest for its customers to come up with a gluten-free crepe that they can put in all of its stores.

"We offer gluten-free items on our lunch and dinner menus," according to Issa Sweidan, managing partner for Squat and Gobble. "We know that there is some customer out there that knows how to make a delicious gluten-free crepe."

Applicants can use whichever filling they would like in the crepe, but the chefs are looking for a delicious gluten-free crepe that they can use with all of the Squat and Gobble crepe items.

The winner of the contest will receive \$300 and a dinner for two once a month for an entire year.

Rules can be found on the squat and Gobble website www.squatandgobble.com.

Accidental Artwork (Cont. from p. 8)

parkland to an eloquent visual statement of the beauty that will be destroyed by this project.

Rasa posted the 4-minute video "Beach Chalet Renovation - A Coastal Precedent?" on Youtube in hopes that a few people would watch it. What happened surprised everyone. Within weeks, the film garnered over 1,000 views, and climbing.

"One of the goals is to warn coastal zdravic communities that the Coastal Commission has been taken over by people who do not care about the coast," said Rasa. "Citizens

can no longer rely on this Commission to support them in fighting a project that is clearly against the Coastal Act."

Watch the video by typing in Beach Chalet Fields Renovation Youtube or www. youtube.com/watch?v=pAhM4x8CPow

Visit the Exploratorium and view Andrej Zdravic's multi-screen exhibit "Ocean Wave-Time Horizon": http://www. exploratorium.edu/arts/artists/andrej.

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

Laguna Honda (Cont. from p. 6)

administrative wings was way too costly.

LHH's replacement/remodel plans never intended to "bring the old buildings into seismic compliance, but rather mitigate some known vulnerabilities, such as removal of hollow clay tile walls and replace them with new concrete walls, and generally improve the life safety quotient for occupants of the old buildings.

That's it: Replacing an unknown number of hollow-clay walls with some concrete walls. How many? LHH referred this reporter to the DPW, who then suggested that OSHPD might not let drawings and specifications be released.

with a budget increase of \$200 million, pushing DPH's budget to about \$1.9 billion.

When you're sitting in a dialysis chair at LHH due to kidney failure when the next Big One hits, will your relatives be notified you've been squished in a seismically-unsafe building?

Or will the City simply claim it has no statistics, denying negligence, claiming misery was just visiting company?

Monette-Shaw is an open-government accountability advocate, a patient advocate, and a member of California's First Amendment Coalition. monette-shaw@westsideob-

Editor's note: the full version of Monet-Shaw's For all this, Mayor Lee rewarded DPH article is available at: westsideobserver.com





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Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi

Graduation Day

t took us less than three hours to travel from Boston to Woodstock, Vermont. We traversed three states in that short time, and with our ever-present I-Phone GPS we found our way to the lovely home that Bob and Meg had rented for the week-long celebration for Trevor's gradu-

ation. With threatening skies, a tent had been set up for the more than 50 graduates that arrived that evening with their party faces well in place. So many nice young people, with

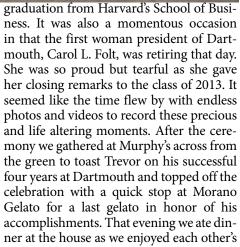
the adventures of their new careers awaiting them



With two days left to sightsee, we took full advantage of the opportunity and walked the town of Woodstock, visited Simon Pierce, the glass blowing factory and sparkling sales rooms that put Murano and Burano to shame, ate at its

gourmet restaurant, and attended an early evening reception at one of Trevor's classrooms. The following day we visited Billings Farm and Museum, a working dairy farm with displays of all the old farming and dairy tools and equipment that covered two full floors. And with all that fresh milk, we had to try their home made icecream on the way out. It was a bit too early for the 3 o'clock milking demonstration so we'll save that one for next time.

Although it rained every day of our stay, the weatherman blessed us with a beautifully sunny day for Sunday's graduation. The outdoor ceremony started at 9:30



company while trading stories of Trevor as a youngster. With two sets of grandparents in attendance the stories were warm and enjoyable but certainly not embarrassing.

would One expect such a nice story to have a perfect ending. We left Hanover at 12 noon on Monday for our

three hour drive to Logan Airport leaving shortly after 1 pm with the traditional toss-enough time to drop off the car and arrive ing in the air of all the caps followed by in plenty of time for our 4:30 flight to SFO. As we checked in, the attendant asked us where we were going and then in a rather embarrassed tone said "you have a delay, a rather long delay." As it turned out, a three hour delay was not all that bad considering all the joy of the last week. So we got home at 2:30 in the morning local time, a small price to pay for yet another smooth flight and an amazing adventure. Congratulations once again to Trevor, to his beautiful family and to old age. It's so nice to still be around to witness these marvelous moments, I guess old age has its benefits after all.....



am with the entrance procession, and ended cheers of joy and accomplishment. There were 1,019 graduates, preceded by the conferring of over 600 master's degrees ranging from business, engineering, public health and sciences as well as PhD's, and 101 young men and women receiving their MD degrees from the school of medicine. There were also seven honorary doctor's degrees presented, as well as five valedictorians, all of whom had achieved a straight 4.0 grade point average for their four years of study. The commencement address was given by Geoffrey Canada, honored earlier with an honorary doctorate degree. His speech was

moving and filled with emotion as he spoke of his work with thousands of underprivileged young kids in New York's Harlem Children's Zone, having given up a much higher paying job after his





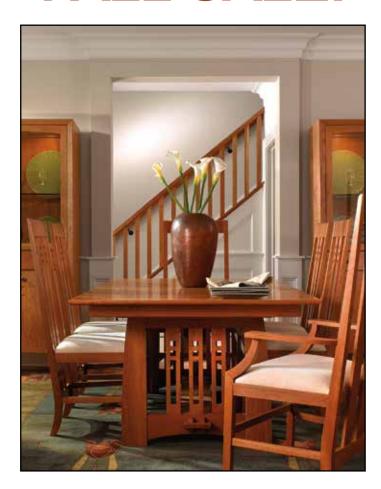
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