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Fight For Forest Knolls

Crestmont Neighbors Unite Against Massive Development

By Charles Powell

Crestmont Drive is a hidden and virtually unknown street high up on the slope of Mt. Sutro behind UCSF. After the intersection with Devonshire Way, it is a no-exit cul-de-sac which winds around the hillside, with blind curves, narrowing as it descends for 2/10 of a mile. It is the longest no-exit street in San Francisco. In the evening, cars park on both sides of the narrow street, reducing it to a one lane street. The neighborhood consists of single family residences and duplexes. Children play in the street because there are no yards, and residents, young and old, walk in the street.

“...the developer refuses to even consider scaling down the project. The developer contends it just can’t make enough money building less than 34 units and that the neighborhood should be grateful that it is not developing over 60 units.”

Now, there is a plan to extend this street even further around another sharp turn to accommodate a massive 34-unit condominium project, which will include a large ten-unit building, and which will double the density of the neighborhood, adding to the street’s already overburdened parking situation. The developer of this proposed project is San Francisco Overlook Development, LLC. On March 7, 2013

the proposed project goes to the Planning Commission for approval. There is strong opposition to the project by the residents of Crestmont Drive and the residents of nearby Forest Knolls. The general feeling among these residents is that this project is totally irresponsible, and disregards both the safety and the character of the neighborhood. Making

Crestmont Drive even longer, when it is already the longest no-exit road in the city, and doubling or tripling the traffic on a street that is narrow and winding and has seen more than its share of accidents, is just wrong. Only last month, a small fire truck attempting to quickly respond to an emergency struck and damaged a legally-parked car because of the narrow

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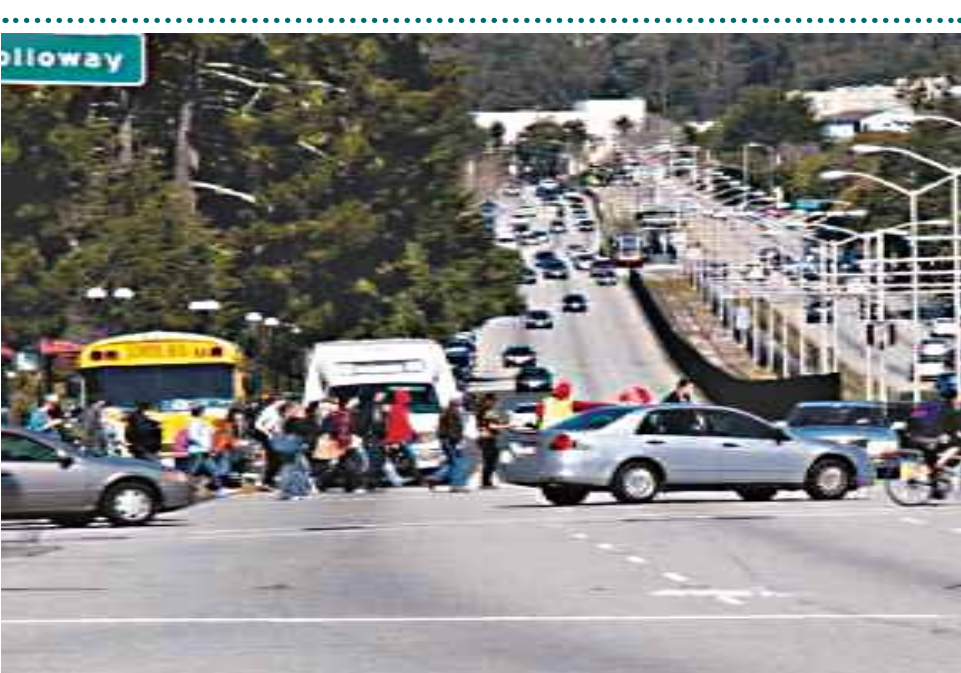
Nervous 19th Avenue Neighbors

Eye Agency’s Changes to Metro M-line

By Keith Burbank

The San Francisco County Transportation Authority is studying changes to the light rail M line near Stonestown Galleria and San Francisco State University. Some redesign has been approved, but the study is examining the possibility of further changes that would, for example, eliminate the need for new travel and turn lanes along 19th Avenue/State Road 1.

“Behind all this PR barrage,” said a critic who wishes to remain anonymous, “don’t miss the main point - MUNI wants to take west side houses through eminent domain to benefit the Parkmerced expansion.”



“We ... know 19th Avenue is very congested,” said Liz Brisson, transportation planner, SFCTA, which is leading the study. Exploring ways to create a reliable transit connection to the Daly City BART Station is another of the study’s objectives. Under the current options set forth in the study, the M-line would be moved to the west of 19th Avenue, some sections will be moved above grade or underground, and stops will be moved. The study area includes track from St. Francis Circle to the intersection of Broad Street and Capital Avenue. People affected by the changes include San Francisco State University students

and staff, customers and business owners at the Stonestown Galleria, Parkmerced residents, Mercy High School students and staff, and residents along the M-line from Ocean Avenue to the intersection of Broad Street and Orizaba Avenue. At least one option includes purchasing homes to allow changes to the line. “Behind all this PR barrage,” said a critic who wishes to remain anonymous, “don’t miss the main point - MUNI wants to take west side houses through eminent domain to benefit the Parkmerced expansion.” Sydney Mintz, a junior at San

Cont. p. 8

The High Cost of City Government

Voracious Management Salaries Rob the City’s Lowest-Paid Workers

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

Even while skyrocketing salaries for upper management in San Francisco City government now costs \$1.6 billion, excluding fringe benefits, the City has proposed imposing a “reverse pay equity” (pay cut) for 45 lower-paid job classification codes for new hires, creating a two-tiered salary structure for performing the same work. Bloated salaries for San Francisco’s top City managers contribute significantly to the purported \$4.4 billion in so-called unfunded City pension contributions, since City salaries drive pensions paid out. Inequities in salaries of City employees deserve a close look-see, since nearly one-quarter — 7,327 — of all City employees are half-time or less, employees who averaged just \$12,492 in annual base pay in FY 10-11. Fully 32 percent — 11,783 City employees — earned less than \$50,000 in base pay in calendar year 2012, averaging just \$22,491 in total pay. Contrast that to the glut of City

Cont. p. 3

“Warning: Taxpayers who want to know what our local government is up to with our tax dollars, extensive salary data is presented ahead, which clearly shows City Hall’s penchant for robbing from the lowest-paid in order to feed the voracious appetite of upper-management salaries. It’s a story of robbing from the poorest to feed the already rich.”

LAKE MERCED UPDATE

New Horizons for Lake Merced?

By Jerry Cadagan

One of the lesser-known works of the iconic and ageless progressive rock band, The Moody Blues was *New Horizons*. It was written and recorded in 1972, when all was well at Lake Merced. As our recent columns in the Observer have detailed, all has not been well at the lake for the last 20 or more years. Declining water levels (now almost under control); gross mismanagement by both the Recreation and Park Dept and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC has legal jurisdiction over the lake); a \$12 million pollution problem caused by the Pacific Rod & Gun Club due to total neglect by Rec & Park and SFPUC; no fishing concessionaire since 1999, and no effort to find one; rotten piers; the list is endless, and very sad. The lake was once a jewel of a resource, and declared by *Field &*

“...the lake is situated in District 7, which has a new Supervisor, Norman Yee, who has the ability to look at the lake and its problems with fresh eyes.”



Stream Magazine to be one of the finest urban lakes in the country. That’s far from the case now. But there are two potential “new horizons” that have a long shot of turning things around at the lake.

First, the lake is situated in District 7, which has a new Supervisor, Norman Yee, who has the ability to look at the lake and its problems with fresh eyes. The timing couldn’t be better, because last year the voters passed the \$195 million park bond, and the bond explicitly earmarks \$2 million for capital improvements at Lake Merced. But how that money is spent and who spends it will be critical. The lake is still under a convoluted two-headed monster management arrangement, with SFPUC having jurisdictional control and Rec & Park having been delegated (in 1950) ambiguous “recreational and park” responsibilities. (Lake Merced is not a park, as defined in the SF Park Code.) The bond documents don’t specifically say which agency controls the \$2 million. Because SFPUC has jurisdictional control, and because bond monies can only be spent on capital projects, it would be logical that SFPUC administer the \$2 million. But sadly, logic has seldom in the recent past prevailed in matters involving the lake. Supervisor Yee has the ability to change that, require some common sense, and see to it that SFPUC spends the money in a sensible way. There are crying needs, the biggest being a new boathouse for the numerous high school and adult rowers (scullers) who use the lake. Road and trail projects, and erosion control, should also be high priorities.

The second “new horizon” that has theoretical promise involves the five-member Commission of the SFPUC. After a year or so of urging by Lake Merced activists, the Commissioners have agreed to hold an in-depth workshop focused solely on Lake

Merced. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for March 26, to be held somewhere on the Harding Park golf course property. To date it has been apparent that the Commissioners, who understandably have had a lot on their plate with water, sewage and power issues, have been unable to focus on the lake and its many issues and problems. But it is their responsibility to do so and hopefully, by spending nearly a day doing it, they will conclude that some leadership from the top is needed to get things under control, starting with the two-headed management monster. Among the matters they ought to consider is having SFPUC take on 100% management control, designating a competent mid-level management person at SFPUC as the overall lake manager, and bringing back the highly competent professional fishing and recreational concessionaire company that left in 1999. We encourage those interested in the future of Lake Merced to email the SFPUC Commission Secretary (dhoo@swater.org) and ask to be put on a list of people to receive further information about the Lake Merced workshop.

It’s past time for San Francisco government (specifically Supervisor Yee and the SFPUC) to take the lead in restoring Lake Merced to its former glory. For the past 20 years all the heavy lifting has been done by volunteer non-profit organizations (CalTrout, Friends of Lake Merced, the Lake Merced Task Force, the Committee to Save Lake Merced) and individual volunteers too numerous to name. Faced with the frustrations of dealing with SFPUC and Rec & Park, those volunteers are now close to the “burn out” point. It’s time for the folks who are responsible for the lake to step up. Lake lovers and users shouldn’t hold their breath, but should hold out hope. And do contact the SFPUC Commissioners through the email address above and do contact Supervisor Yee at Norman.Yee@sfgov.org. Ask them to be proactive is assuring that the \$2 million bond money is spent wisely, and ask them to take steps to straighten out the disastrous two-headed management situation at the lake. And finally, do attend the March 26 SFPUC Commissioner Lake Merced Workshop and express yourselves.

Jerry Cadagan co-founded the Committee to Save Lake Merced in 1993.



Sunrise at Lake Merced can be a busy time, when rowers from around the City converge on the crumbling piers.

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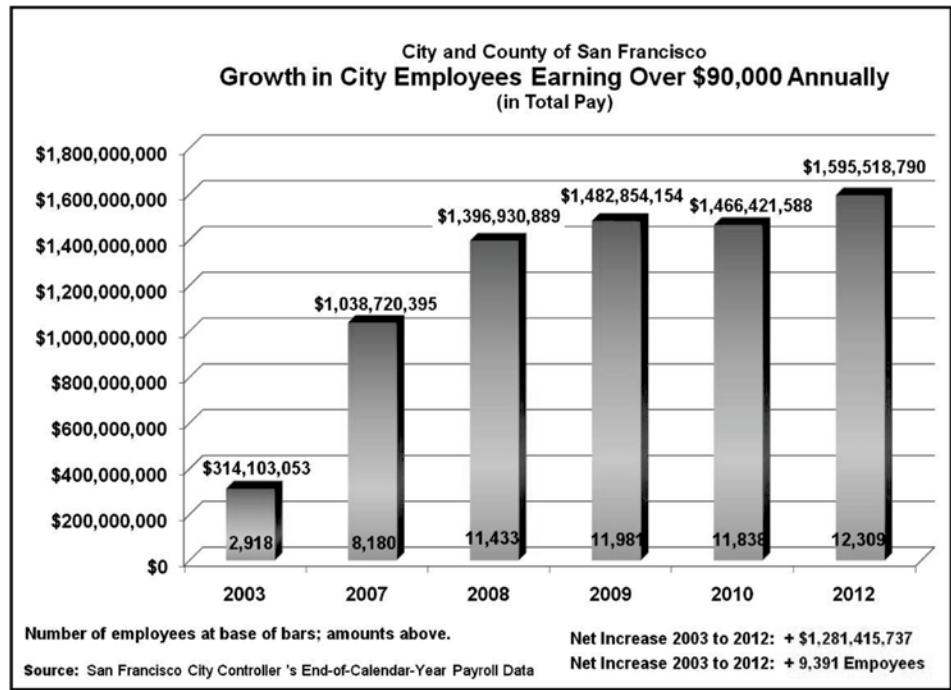
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City Salaries(Cont. from p. 1)

staff who in calendar year 2012 earned over \$100,000 in base pay — 7,864 such employees, or 21.6 percent — who averaged \$124,715 in base pay and averaged a staggering \$143,131 in total pay. Or contrast it to the 12,309 employees — 33.5% — who earned over \$90,000 in total pay in calendar year 2012, averaging \$110,473 in regular pay and \$129,622 in total pay.

Given the salary inequities between the lowest- and highest-paid City employees, the stench of probable political patronage using taxpayer funds begins to waft through the air.

Chops to the Lowest Paid

The City has proposed trimming 10% from new-hire salaries for payroll and personnel clerks, certified nursing assistants, and hospital eligibility workers, claiming they are overpaid compared to the Bay Area market. The City also proposes a seven-and-a-half percent pay cut for psychiatric technicians, child support officers, legal process clerks, legal secretaries, psychiatric social workers, and museum guards. The City also wants its pharmacists, custodians/porters, medical social workers, various health care workers, employment and training specialists, and diagnostic imaging technicians to take five percent new-hire pay cuts.

At the same time, the City is *not* proposing pay cuts from the 722 senior managers earning more than \$90,000 in base pay in the 0900-series of management job classifications, who averaged \$136,242 in base pay.

Between calendar years 2008 and 2012, the City has already eliminated 734 positions across the 45 job classifications the City now proposes to cut salaries of, pocketing \$20 million to \$30 million in base pay from the lost 734 positions, and probably transferring the

who are already averaging just \$12,389 in base pay.

This follows on the heels of “de-skilling” of clerical and secretarial employees in the 1440-series, who forfeited 452 positions between calendar years 2008 and 2012, allowing the City to pocket another \$13.4 million in salaries. “De-skilling” involves assigning the work of higher job classification clerical employees to lower-paid clerical staff — or alternatively, of handing the work of skilled clerical employees to highly-paid management staff, where the work is performed for much higher pay, if at all.

In FY 2010-11, the City’s 1,600 clerical employees in the 1400-series job classification codes averaged just \$42,026 in base pay, but the sad fact is that of those 1,600 clerical employees, 21 percent worked less than half-time and averaged just \$7,970 in base pay.

Combining the 452 clerical positions eliminated between calendar years 2008 and 2012, and the 734 positions already eliminated from the 45 job classification codes, the City has eliminated at least 1,186 lower-paid and part-time positions, pocketing between \$33 million and \$50 million, which the City then used to increase the number of, and salaries of, highly-paid managers.

Much of the work formerly performed by clerical workers has been given to far-higher-paid managers, although the City has attempted to hire so-called “as needed” public service aides to fill the gap. Knowledgeable and experienced clerical workers are being replaced by aides.

In the three-year period between FY 08-09 and FY 10-11, the City added 587 part-time public service aides in the 9900-series job classifications to replace the 452 clerical employees eliminated in

At the same time, the City is not proposing pay cuts from the 722 senior managers earning more than \$90,000 in base pay in the 0900-series of management job classifications, who averaged \$136,242 in base pay.

duties to higher-paid employees. Should its new pay cut proposal prevail for the 45 job classifications, the City *may* realize approximately \$13.7 million in additional “salary savings” — albeit, spread across several decades — through attrition and replacement with new hires who will be paid at the lower salaries.

At the end of June 2011, the 3,864 employees remaining in these 45 job classifications earned average base-pay salary of just \$49,061. Of the 3,864 remaining, fully 18%, nearly one-fifth, worked less than half-time status, averaging salaries of just \$12,389. Only 49.5 percent of employees in these job codes worked full-time, at an average salary of \$60,913. The City will likely convert many of the new hires in these job classifications to part-time status, and extract pay cuts of up to ten percent from half-time employees

the 1440-series, bringing the total number of public service aides to 1,309, of whom 1,211, 92.5 percent — work less than half-time (so the City doesn’t have to pay them any fringe benefits), and who averaged just \$4,590 (yes, less than \$5,000 each, on average) during FY 10-11.

The City has also forced many of the higher-skilled secretaries formerly in the 1440-series into the lower-paid 1406 Senior Clerk classification. During the same time period of the public service aide hiring binge, the City added 106 additional 1406 Senior Clerks, who now average just \$43,665 in base pay; 12.4 percent of the now 201 Senior Clerks work less than half time, averaging just \$10,543 in base pay annually.

Another example, to be clear, of

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RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR By Quentin Kopp



Photo: fogcityjournal.com

last month I devoted space to another set of contemporary astonishing developments engineered by the “City Family” which the Mayor and some 36,000 full time and part time city employees (an historical record) like to proclaim sanctimoniously from time to time, namely, a hidden (in the City Controller’s budget) \$1,000,000 appropriated “slush fund” enabling each supervisor to finance his or her own fancy projects within each supervisorial district. Each incumbent can spend \$100,000 of taxpayer money to ingratiate himself/herself to voters. (A non-incumbent can’t do that!) I noted the supervisors also appropriated funds to furnish themselves last year with a third administrative aide. Here’s the latest caper: The immediate past District 7 supervisor, Sean Elsbernd, spoke eloquently last year against using the appropriation for a third administrative aide, thus drawing admiration from superficial City Hall analysts, including one *Chronicle* reporter who hawk.” (With a government bird ried.) After last District 7 successor was not installed the lame-duck use of taxpayer “honey pot” for a District 7, benman Yee. Who hire as his third Why, of course, bernd’s administrative aide, one Olivia Scanlon. *Westside Observer* readers may remember the account of Ms. Scanlon asserting the Fifth Amendment right to not incriminate herself ... involving spurious charges against former Supervisor Tony Hall, which were based, in part, upon a falsified check stub...”

(I wonder if our City Hall press will ever write about this latest caper by the fiscal bird of prey.)

Another provocative tale emerged last month in our morning newspaper, reciting the fact that 572 city employees were paid more money than California’s Governor in 2012. The governor’s salary is \$173,987 annually. California’s Governor, of course, presides over a state yearly budget approximating \$110,000,000,000; San Francisco’s mayor, paid \$260,547 per year, operates within an annual budget of approximately \$7,600,000,000, itself a dizzying amount of money for an entity with only about 810,000 residents. That any California public official receives compensation in excess of the governor constitutes illogical policy. Other legislators and I thought so almost 20 years ago after I introduced a bill to bar any elected California public official from drawing an annual salary exceeding the governor’s. The State Senate approved my bill. After the then-Los Angeles County Sheriff, the then-Alameda County District Attorney and other elected public officials observed the possibility of Assembly approval, they “went to work” and overwhelmed my effort to secure passage in the lower house of the legislature. There’s a lesson there somewhere for politicians, present and future.

City Hall isn’t, however, the only venue for government anomalies. Last month the District Attorney lobbied the Board of Supervisors Budget and Finance Committee for an increase of \$750,000 solely for more domestic violence attorneys and so-called “Victim’s Rights Advocates.” According to the San Francisco Examiner, the District Attorney attributed the need to bestow more taxpayer money on his office to the Public Defender’s office refusing to persuade its impecunious clients to plead guilty to domestic violence charges at the Hall of Justice. Yet, the Examiner also found that Police Department domestic violence incident reports have decreased somewhat. How can that be, a citizen might ask: fewer domestic violence complaints are received by police, but the D.A. wants more domestic violence prosecutors. The answer probably lies in the superior professional performance of Public Defender Jeff Adachi’s deputies, who actually try and win such cases before San Francisco juries. (This D.A. has never prosecuted a jury trial.) Mr. Adachi demonstrated last month that in 2012 his deputies secured acquittals in 20 domestic violence jury trials, plus four deadlocked trials. Juries convicted his office’s clients in 13 trials. He also showed there were no convictions in cases of alleged domestic violence in which his deputies defended the accused in 2009 and only 9 in 2010. The conclusion is inescapable: Mr. Adachi and his deputies perform constitutional duties more effectively. Nevertheless, the Board of Supervisors will choose to reward ineffectiveness by appropriating almost \$700,000 more for the District Attorney to hire more lawyers to lose to Deputy Public Defenders in domestic violence jury trials, while the D.A. assails Adachi for not persuading his innocent-until-proven-guilty clients to plead guilty.

As I write, I do so in the context of the latest fad word, “sequestration,” and its reputed effects upon virtually all aspects of American life as measured by governmental services, military and otherwise. The “talking heads” and other alleged experts bemoan inability to obtain a “consensus” in Washington. Some news media claims are bewildering. Some presidential claims are also bewildering. For example, he referred last month to the loss of “first responders”, in automatic federal spending reductions initiated by his 2011 suggestion to solve a national debt problem. Except for federal activity, such as policing and fire-fighting in Federal parks and military bases, so-called “first responders” emanate from local fire departments, city, county or special district or some state agencies, not the Federal Government. I imagine we all love “consensus.” Some admire “pragmatism.” Consequently, I am reminded of Lady Margaret Thatcher’s 1981 comment as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom: “For me, pragmatism is not enough. Nor is that fashionable word ‘consensus’...”

To me, consensus seems to be the process of abandoning all beliefs, principles, values and policies in search of something in which no one believes, but towards no one objects- the process of avoiding the very issues that have to be solved, merely because you cannot get agreement on the way ahead. What great cause would have been fought and won under the banner ‘I stand for consensus’...?

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

Riotous Rates

By Steve Lawrence

Rates for water are expected to double by 2021—in eight years. Water rates have been zooming higher at much more than the rate of inflation. Increases pay for the \$4.6 billion Water System Improvement Program (WSIP). That program is scheduled to be completed in 2016, but now SFPUC has acknowledged that it will be more than two years late. The budget for the program is busted as well: for now by \$17.6 million. But this figure fails to tell the whole story. The entire program contingency fund is used up years before construction ends.

The budget for the program is busted as well: for now by \$17.6 million. But this figure fails to tell the whole story. The entire program contingency fund is used up years before construction ends.”



Why are rates set to increase so? Not only is there the cost of the improvement program, which should make the water system more reliable, but also SFPUC has morphed from a sleepy city department to Big Shot Money Bags. San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) needs no voter authorization to sell bonds (incur debt). Consequently, in challenging times for other city departments, SFPUC can step up. In recent years it has taken over fire protection duties, Lake Merced (from Rec & Park), the irrigation of golf courses, street sweeping costs, GoSolar, and much more. It has built itself a beautiful new office building, paying the city \$9.9 million for property for which the city paid \$2. It is bestowing “community benefits” throughout poor neighborhoods. Elected officials love spreading the wealth by bestowing community benefits; grateful beneficiaries support the officials. Even way out in Sunol, SFPUC throws parties for folks. At a recent meeting, SFPUC authorized \$400,000 for a demonstration garden and outdoor classroom, \$900,000 for an “interpretative facility” in Sunol providing information about the Alameda Creek watershed, and \$9,500,000 for “energy efficiency” for various other city departments. It’s got plenty of money and clout.

Still wonder why your water rates are going to double again?

Just gettin’ warmed up: The Sewer System Improvement Program (SSIP) is three times as costly to City ratepayers as is the WSIP. The SSIP is just being launched. Employees on one project can move on to the next. Sewer rates are already higher than water rates. You do the math. Or just reach for a drink—and probably not water.

The Revenue Bond Oversight Committee is supposed to oversee SFPUC’s spending of bond monies, insuring that the spending is proper. For the second year in a row, however, the RBOC has failed to issue an annual report about its work on time. So here we have the group that is supposed to insure that spending is copasetic, yet it is unable to follow its own rules and issue a simple annual report. That’s city government is a nutshell. Nut shell indeed.

Batting .333 with SFPUC. The SFPUC offers tours to the public that can be rewarding. But for the writer, over the past year only one in three actually panned out. That one, a tour of the new headquarters building at 525 Golden Gate, was impressive. I also registered for a tour of the Hetch Hetchy water system,

one that was to have taken me by van all the way to the source in the Sierras, but then was never contacted. Responding to a Facebook invitation that last minute places were available on a tour of the Oceanside Treatment Plant, the only way to submit one’s application was by mail. The tour was the next day. While one could fill out the application online, there was no way to submit it online. Bureaucratic SNAFU—situation normal, all fouled up.

Pension reef. Will San Francisco’s city employee pension fund hit a reef, and wreck like the Costa Concordia did in Italy, or will it negotiate choppy waters? That’s the big question. At nearly \$15 billion in size, and obligations more than a match, it’s no small matter.

The Civil Grand Jury opines that the pension fund, large though it is, is not large enough, embraces policies that threaten disastrous losses, and over-estimates future returns.

What to do? No easy fixes are proposed. The City should pay in over \$700 million, about ten percent of the City’s annual budget, over the next few years. No current office holder wants to forgo spreading the wealth today to shore up a pension fund that provides for the future. No friends won by withholding today; spend now, worry tomorrow. We’ve seen where this can lead—Stockton, San Bernardino, Detroit. But we’re different, right? It won’t happen to us, will it? Sail on!

Sail Away. It’s begun to look like our America’s Cup runneth far from over-full. Losses of \$20 million dollars are being forecast by our crystal ball gazers. As for the thousands of jobs? Blown away.

What happened? Twelve estimated entrants shrunk to a mere three. Sales taxes and hotel taxes generated may still make the event worthwhile, some city officials say.

So when does it all happen? On the Fourth of July (a Thursday this year) the grand, and long, event kicks off. The challenger, the “Louis Vuitton Cup” winner, is chosen in the last days of August. Then the defense of the Cup races, seventeen competitions, are scheduled for September 7-21.

Fleet Week? It could be canceled this year, a victim of the sequester. If it flies, Angels from October 10, fleet October 12.

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

My Two Cents / Will Durst

The barnacle on the belly of the awards ship: the 15th annual 2013 POLITICAL ANIMAL AWARDS

Hey! You! Yes, you. Sorry. Just trying to get your attention to impart an important warning here. For the next couple weeks, it’s imperative all you good folks out there stay alert and keep your wits about you. Remove the earbuds, no texting while walking and you’d be well advised to brandish a stainless steel umbrella on the street because it’s awards season and golden-plated statuettes are being tossed about like manhole covers during an underground methane explosion. We’ve made it through the Golden Globes and the Screen Actor Guild Awards, with the Grammys and Oscars right behind us, so this seems the perfect time to weigh in with the barnacle on the belly of the awards ship: the 15th



...it’s awards season and golden-plated statuettes are being tossed about like manhole covers during an underground methane explosion.

annual Will Durst Political Animal Awards.

THE BEST IMPRESSION OF REANIMATED HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN AWARD. And the winner is... oh, forgive me, that’s right, we’re all winners here. The award goes to Kentucky Senator Mitch McConnell.

BEST DIRECTION OF A COMEDY. To Mitt Romney’s campaign manager, Matt Rhoades.

THE HE SHOULD SWITCH TO DECAF AND REALLY SOON AWARD: Vice President Joe Biden.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE AWARD: Still picking shrapnel out of his widow’s peak, Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING LOUD ENOUGH TO PIERCE EARDRUMS ON A COUPLE DIFFERENT CONTINENTS AWARD. 3 way tie! Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro & Bashar Al- Assad.

THE YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN AWARD. To former Governor Sarah Palin, Fox News’ gain is Alaska’s loss.

HEART OF A PLUCKED CHICKEN AWARD. To Nevada Senator Harry Reid for avoiding the alteration of Senate filibuster rules given the opportunity.

THE IT’S BETTER TO BE LUCKY THAN GOOD AWARD. For the 2nd year in a row, POTUS Barack Obama.

THE YOUR FIFTEEN MINUTES WERE UP THIRTY MINUTES AGO AWARD. It’s a tie: Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio and Lindsay Lohan.

THE WHY DOESN’T ANYBODY RETURN MY CALLS ANYMORE AWARD: Karl Rove, and it couldn’t happen to a nicer guy.

THE YOU CAN KEEP A GOOD MAN DOWN AWARD. Former Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown.

THE TAKING SIBLING RIVALRY TO A BRAND NEW LEVEL AWARD. The Harbaugh boys.

THE H.G. WELLS DATING SERVICE AWARD. Manti Te’o.

THE HEAD IN THE SAND LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. The coveted Ostrich goes to executive vice president of the NRA, Wayne LaPierre.

THE BEAT A DEAD HORSE UNTIL WE’RE ALL COVERED IN A FINE RED MIST AWARD. Another tie: Senators Lindsay Graham & John McCain who remain determined to get to the bottom of Chuck Hagel’s role in Benghazi.

THE GEORGE HAMILTON TANNING AWARD. For the 4th consecutive year, Speaker of the House John Boehner.

POP GOES THE WEASEL AWARD. Lance Armstrong.

THE SISYPHUS AWARD. Marco Rubio, who has been handed sole responsibility for dragging the entire Republican Party across the immigration reform line.

THE OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AWARD. Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal for suggesting the GOP “stop being the stupid party.”

THE RIP VAN WINKLE AWARD. To Hillary Clinton for the well deserved two year nap she’s about to take.

And finally, **THE CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS AWARD.** For the fastest most complete disappearance in political history, Mitt Romney. They must have powered him down, folded him up and placed him back into the original packaging.

5 time Emmy- nominee Will Durst’s e- book “Elect to Laugh!” published by Hyperink, is now available at Redroom.com, Amazon and many other fine virtual book retailers near you. Or go to willdurst.com for more info.



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The ideas and opinions expressed in these pages are strictly those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the staff or publisher of this paper. The Westside Observer is a free monthly newspaper serving the entire West of Twin Peaks area of San Francisco. Circulation is 20,000 copies, distributed 10 times a year. 12,000 are distributed -to-door, 1,500 are distributed via free distribution racks in the West of Twin Peaks area, as well as libraries and other key drop-off points (see westsideobserver.com/hardcopy.html).

Letters to the Editor

Farewell Fleishacker Pool

Somehow I missed this (*opportunity to respond to your request for input-ed.*). It’s an opportunity lost. Please know that I didn’t ignore you on purpose. I certainly would have responded.

Bottom line is that no one today cares enough to save it or to do anything with it. That should have been done years ago when the pool closed. It was a great building and would have provided historic space for anything from a restaurant

to a museum or even just shops. The city wasted a great resource.

I’ve been trying to sequester myself as much as possible to get *San Francisco’s Playland at the Beach: The Golden Years* finished. Unfortunately, my day job has been in overtime for almost two years now. I’m targeting the end of this month to send it to my publisher. I’m really excited about this book.

James R. Smith, Author: *Playland at the Beach: The Early Years*, Nov 2010

Wiener Slams The Door on Public Input

At a one hour meeting Friday March 1, District 8 Supervisor Scott Wiener made it clear that his third draft of legislation “speaks for itself” and will not undergo further modification requested by a coalition of groups urging changes.

Social Justice, Environmental and Preservation organizations coordinated by Our City campaign coordinator Eric Brooks enlisted lawyers and volunteers to evaluate and comment on Wiener’s legislation, initially announced at the Board of Supervisors in October and heard by the Planning Commission November 29.

Comments and feedback to the legislation was provided by groups such as the Sierra Club, Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods (CSFN), the Wild Equity Institute, The Center for Biological Diversity, San Francisco Preservation Consortium, San Francisco Tomorrow and many others.

Wiener has gone on the record saying “CEQA is an important environmental protection statute that, at times, can be used not to protect the environment but rather to oppose projects having nothing to do with the environment.” When challenged to identify specific projects that have demonstrated abuse of the process, the Supervisor reiterated his belief that the current process is “vague and chaotic, favoring those who are experienced in the process at the expense of the general public.”

A November 29 memo issued by Environmental Review Officer Bill Wycko at the behest of the Historic Preservation and Planning Commissions identifies only 48 actual CEQA appeals within a three year period, a segment of time that would typically see more than 15,000 permit requests of the Planning Department.

“Wiener’s legislation started as a solution looking for a problem,” said SFPC moderator Roland Salvato. “Then the Supervisor wasted his opportunity to work with a community coalition to add meaningful improvements [to the CEQA legislation]. He used the input meetings as a ‘check the box’ exercise to satisfy the Planning Commission.”

The proposed legislation is to be heard at the Planning Commission Thursday March 14. It is scheduled to be heard at the Historic Preservation Commission Wednesday March 20. It is likely the legislation will go to the Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee Monday March 25, and to the full Board of Supervisors for final discussion and approval Tuesday March 26.



Arizona Sky Village, Photo by Jim Richardson

Twinkle, twinkle little stars, we all wonder WHERE you are

By Kathy Howard, SF Ocean Edge

One of my fond memories from childhood is of summer evenings in the mountains. On clear nights, my mother would rush in from outdoors, saying, “Hey, kids, come look at this!” We’d run out in to the night and look up through the trees, and there would be a magnificent sky, awash in a myriad of stars - galaxies, constellations, and shining planets. It was beautiful and awe-inspiring, and it reminded us that there are other worlds out there, and that we are just a small part of the mysteries of the universe.

Perhaps the saddest part of this use of more and brighter lighting is that today’s children don’t know about the night sky.

What do we see today in San Francisco? On clear nights, we get excited if we can see just a few stars. The contrast between what is and what could be was highlighted in a “New York Times” Sunday Magazine photo spread a few weeks ago. Entitled, “Starry, Starry, Starry Night,” it shows photos of the night sky above different cities as they might look if there were no light pollution. Go online and look - San Francisco is photo number 11. What extraordinary beauty we are missing! The photographer, Thierry Cohen, states that we now have entire cities of people who have forgotten the night sky, and as a result “no longer understand nature.”

Our cities don’t have to be lighted so brightly, but outmoded ideas that more lighting is better have resulted in light pollution. According to the International Dark Sky Association, light pollution is caused by “excessive or inappropriate outdoor lighting.” Light pollution is a waste of energy from excessive lighting, where less lighting could actually help us to see better. Light pollution increases green house gasses, and it affects human health! Light pollution also harms ecosystems. For example, urban lighting

confuses birds and causes the deaths of tens of thousands of birds each year.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, bright light does not always increase safety. In fact, too-bright light makes it more difficult to see intruders who are hiding in the harsh shadows.

Perhaps the saddest part of this use of more and brighter lighting is that today’s children don’t know about the night sky. They are growing up without the stars to inspire them, without that contact with a nature that is bigger than their daily life indoors at home and at school, even bigger than the internet!

PBS recently premiered the documentary “The City Dark.” It is subtitled, “A Search for Night on a Planet that never Sleeps.” The film explains that the more isolated parts of the world have preserved their darkness and are attracting visitors for Astronomy Tourism. We should reflect on this - how ironic is it that we have to travel far from home in order to see what is actually right over our heads?

Note: If you are interested in attending a showing of “The City Dark” in the near future, contact SF Ocean Edge at www.sfoceanedge.org.

The Presidio Pays It Way, at a Cost to the City

By John Farrell

We all read recently that the Presidio Trust is now financially independent. However does anyone realize that it costs the City at least \$10 million a year in lost property tax revenue and well over \$100 million since the creation of the Trust. This \$100 million doesn’t even include other tax revenue lost such as a transfer tax of at least \$12.5 million from the recent sale of Lucasfilm’s to Disney in 2012 (2.5% transfer tax rate on a conservative \$500 million assessment value). An ownership transfer in CA includes a lease of 35 years or more. Lucasfilm had a 66 year lease at the Presidio that was transferred to Disney.



We all agree that the Presidio Trust itself is exempt. However, if Congress enacted the Presidio Trust Act to exempt third party use for private benefit in the Presidio, they do not have the authority to do so per Article 1 Section 8 of Constitution, which provides the Powers of US Congress. Therefore since Congress does not have the power to tax exempt third parties, then this provision is void.



In 1897, the State of California ceded to the United States exclusive jurisdiction on all lands held for military purposes which included the Presidio. Military installations are federal enclaves and are exempt from state authority. Per legal counsel of the State Board of Equalization, a “federal enclave” is a property over which the federal government holds exclusive jurisdiction.

In 1989 the federal government closed the Presidio as a U.S Army Post. Since the Presidio is no longer being used for military use, the federal government transferred jurisdiction to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) in 1994 to be used for natural, historic, cultural and recreational purposes.

The Presidio Trust was created by Congress in 1996 for a dual purpose: to rehabilitate and repurpose the Presidio’s historic buildings and environmental resources, and operate the site as a vibrant public park independent of annual taxpayer funds.

Per Section 103, Provision 9 of The Presidio Trust Act “The Trust and all properties administered by the Trust and all interest created under leases, concessions, permits and other agreements associated with the properties shall be exempt from all taxes and special assessments of every kind in the State of California, and its political subdivisions, including the City and County San Francisco.”

In California, any private party that leases, rents or makes payments for use of government owned property is subject to a possessory interest tax (property tax). For example, housing on Treasure Island, managed by John Stewart Property Management, is subject to possessory interest

tax. However, housing in the Presidio, also managed by John Stewart, is exempt from possessory interest per the Presidio Trust Act. Why should private users on other government owned properties be subject to possessory interest tax while those using the Presidio properties to their private benefit are not? This is unfair and inequitable taxation.

When asked why possessory interest taxes and transfer taxes are not applicable on Presidio Trust properties used by third party interests for private benefit, which would result in millions to the City annually, the answer is that the land is a “Federal Enclave” with “exclusive jurisdiction” or that the language in the Trust specifically disallows it.

Some have the opinion that the transfer of jurisdiction to the GGNRA negates the concept of “federal enclave” and “exclusive jurisdiction” since the Presidio is no longer used for military purposes and the power of “exclusive jurisdiction” is specifically for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenal, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings. Currently, under the Presidio Trust Act, some properties are being used for private benefit such as the Disney Museum, Lucasfilm, a golf course, a sporting goods store, restaurants and housing for more than 3500 people and not for needful federal purposes.

The City Attorney, as well as our Congressional Representative, has the opinion that all third party interests for private benefit created under leases, concessions, permits and other agreements under the Presidio Trust’s jurisdiction are tax exempt since Congress enacted

Cont. p. 17



MONEY MATTERS • By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan

Five Financial Disclosures You Must Tell Your Significant Other

There are few topics of conversation that are less romantic than finances, but if your relationship is getting serious, consider planning a date in the near future to discuss money. Understanding your own and your partner's financial history and habits before you make a formal commitment such as marriage, cohabitation, or a big joint purchase, can help alleviate a host of unpleasant surprises — and maybe some heartache — over the long term. To prepare for this conversation, make sure you can share the following things with the one you love.

Your credit score. Before lending you money, creditors assess what the risk may be in doing so. Your credit score, which can range from 300 to 850, helps them determine how likely you are to pay them back. A low score can negatively affect your eligibility to receive a loan or to finance a purchase. If you and your partner were to apply for a loan or credit account, your significant other may have to shoulder the debt if your personal credit score is unsuitable.

If you don't already know your credit score, request a report from a reputable credit-reporting agency, such as Equifax, Experian or TransUnion. These top three national agencies will provide you with a free report annually.

It takes more than one conversation to determine whether you and your significant other are genuinely and equally committed to an agreed-upon approach to finances, but starting with full financial disclosure is an important first step to a healthy relationship between you, your loved one, and your finances.

Your debt. Whether you carry student loan, credit card or other forms of debt, your financial obligations — or those of your partner — may affect your credit rating, day-to-day spending and ability to save for future financial goals. Understand and discuss exactly what you owe, and how it may impact your partner if you plan to combine finances in the future. If either of you has significant debt, being upfront about it can open lines of communication and help you evaluate together how your relationship may continue to grow despite financial hardship. If the amount you owe is too complex for you to determine on your own, meet with a financial, tax or legal professional who can help you to figure it out.

Your personal money values. This includes how you spend, save and manage finances. It also involves assessing how comfortable you are with investment risk, which ranges from conservative to aggressive. Because every relationship involves compromise, it's important to understand what falls inside, and outside, your financial comfort zone. Work to resolve areas of disagreement by deciding how you'll approach future financial situations together.

Your retirement goals. No matter what age you are, it's important to identify and discuss your dreams for tomorrow. Ask yourself such questions as:

- How career oriented am I?
- What would my ideal career path look like?
- Do I want to go into business for myself?
- What age would I like to retire?
- What type of lifestyle do I want in retirement?

Understanding and communicating your personal goals and dreams for the future will help you set expectations, and begin to think about the compatibility of your long-term plans. It will also help to determine how much you need to start saving today to reach your shared retirement goals.

An accurate picture of your overall financial situation. Before you can talk about your joint financial situation, you need to have a clear and accurate understanding of your own finances. Pull together your budget, insurance policies and investment information, including your 401(k) or other retirement plan statement, to share with each other.

It takes more than one conversation to determine whether you and your significant other are genuinely and equally committed to an agreed-upon approach to finances, but starting with full financial disclosure is an important first step to a healthy relationship between you, your loved one, and your finances.

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



Forest Knolls (Cont. from p. 1)

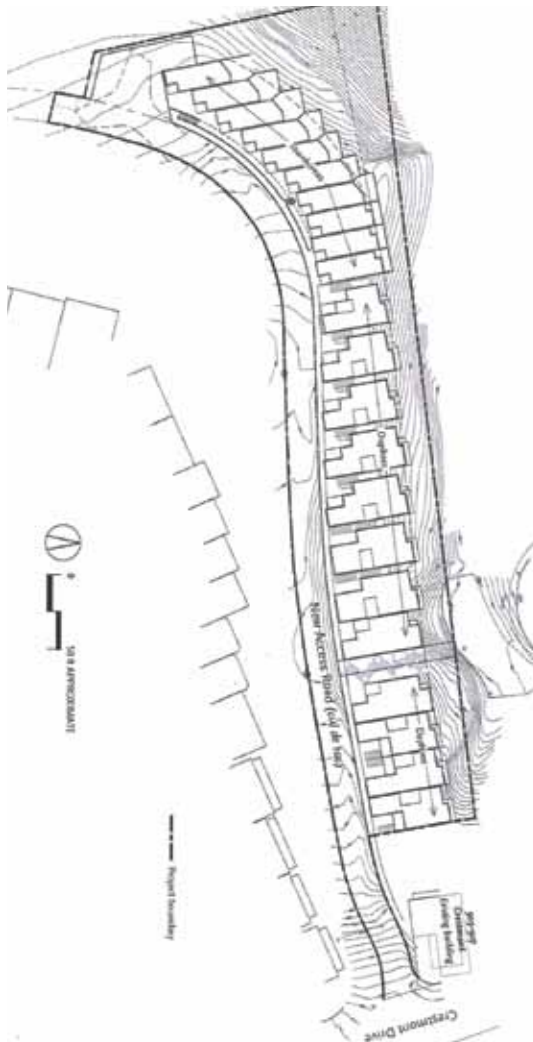
street. The consensus of neighborhood opinion is that the proposed project will create a disaster waiting to happen.

In violation of sound planning principles, this developer is proposing to load up the end of the dead-end Crestmont Drive cul-de-sac with a massive development. The new development would be located far from public transportation, requiring residents to use cars. The residents will be unable to use public transportation because the nearest bus stop is a steep quarter mile away. Every few years, the City has given notice of its intent to eliminate this bus route but has not yet managed to do so.

The Crestmont Drive neighborhood overwhelmingly believes that access is currently difficult and unsafe, and wonders how the developer and the city could even think of making Crestmont Drive much longer. Neighbors in the adjacent Forest Knolls area, of which Crestmont Drive is a continuation, are also upset about this project because of the increase in traffic that it will bring to their streets. Warren Drive, Christopher, Oak Park, and Devonshire Way are the major access routes to the proposed development and will be significantly affected. The neighborhood is not only worried about the increased traffic flow this development will bring, but is also concerned that it will be just the opening round of an even more massive development to come. The proposed Overlook Development condos occupy just one third of a larger hillside tract on the north and west slope of Mt. Sutro. If this project gets a green light, the path will be clear to extend the road even further. Nearby hillside lots behind the apartments and homes on Warren Drive will be open to additional high density housing, putting even more strain on an already burdened neighborhood.

Despite overwhelming opposition to the massiveness of the development, the developer refuses to even consider scaling down the project. The developer contends it just can't make enough money building less than 34 units and that the neighborhood should be grateful that it is not developing over 60 units. The developer has proposed installing speed bumps, signage, a possible butterfly garden, and other cosmetic changes in an attempt to appease the neighbors.

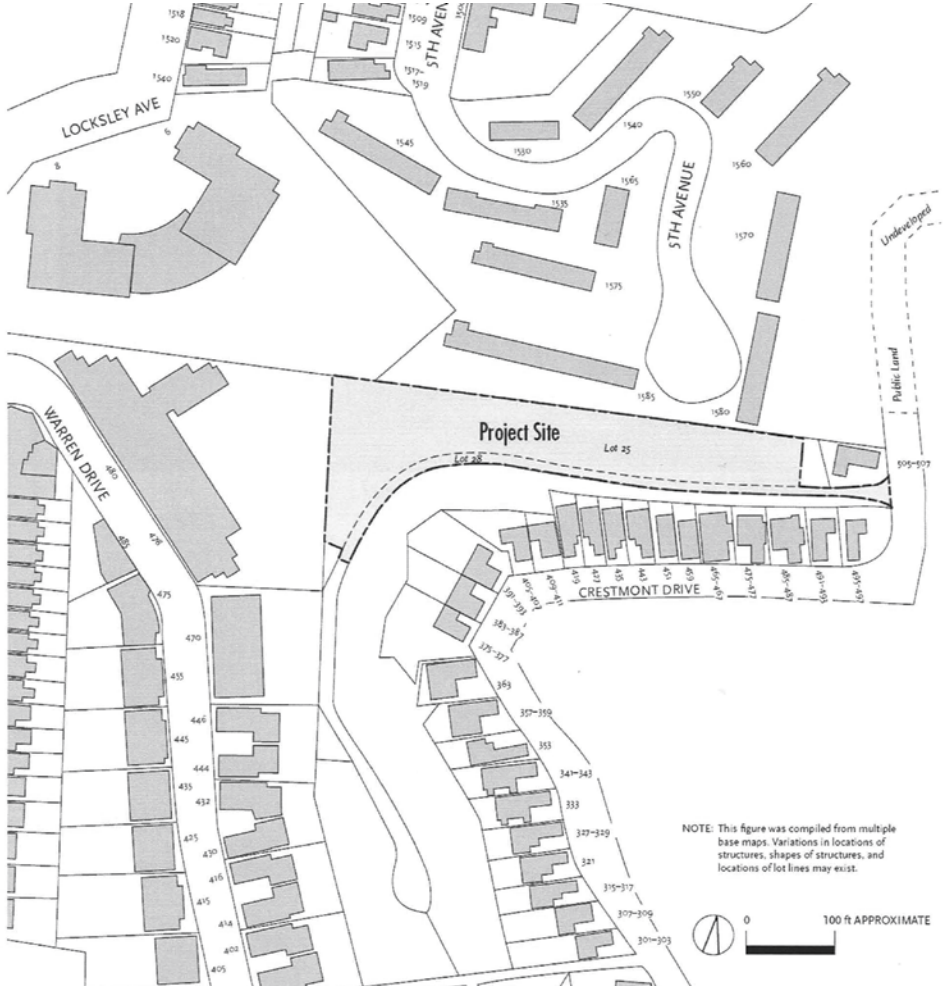
The Crestmont neighbors, along with the support of a neighborhood coalition, forced the developer to prepare a formal



Environmental Impact Report. The EIR states that the project will not have any significant impact on the neighborhood and that it will in fact improve the neighborhood. It further states that concerns regarding additional density, emergency access, traffic, fire, and parking, and building on one of the city's steepest hillsides, which has already been the scene of previous landslides and mudslides, are not significant factors which would require scaling down the massiveness of the project.

Building the proposed project is considered by an overwhelming majority of the Crestmont Drive and surrounding area residents as an act which will destroy the neighborhood and endanger the safety and quality of life of its residents. They believe the proposed project is just the beginning in this process of neighborhood destruction. Both the Crestmont neighbors and the neighbors in the adjoining neighborhoods urge you to attend the meeting at the Planning Commission on March 7, 2013 and express your views.

Additional information can be found at www.crestmontpreservation.org



March Training Opportunities:

North of Panhandle Neighborhood
USF Campus - McLaren Conference Center
Just 2 Days! Sat. March 9 & 16th, 8am-6pm

Duboce/Castro Neighborhood
Davies Hospital N. Tower, Auditorium
Thursdays 6:30pm-9:30pm
March 21 through April 25

April Training Opportunities:

Forest Hill/Midtown Terrace/GG Heights
Forest Hill Christian Church
Tuesdays 6:30pm-9:30pm
April 2 through May 7

Civic Center Neighborhood
Federal Building
Just 3 Classes! Mondays 9:00am-4:00pm
April 15 through April 29

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Simple Steps to Big Savings

Common Plumbing Leaks Waste Money

By Chandra Johnson, SFPUC Water Conservation Administrator



Drip, Drip, Drip.... Even a little water waste is something that should never be ignored. More than 1 trillion gallons of water are lost annually nationwide due to easy-to-fix leaks both inside and outside American homes. Here in San Francisco, it's estimated that one in five homes has an ongoing plumbing leak. That's why the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) is teaming up with the

U.S. EPA for national "Fix a Leak Week," March 18-24, as an annual reminder to check household plumbing fixtures and irrigation systems for leaks.

Routine fixture repairs are something we can all do to conserve water and can add up to big savings on water bills. San Franciscans are getting involved by putting a stop to hissing, running toilets and leaky fixtures. Common types of leaks found in the home include worn toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and showerheads. All are easily correctable and in most cases don't require a major investment. Homeowners and property managers with do-it-yourself – or "DIY" - know-how can take advantage of standard repair and replacement fixtures available free to San Francisco water customers, including toilet leak repair parts and high-efficiency showerheads.



If you need help getting started, the SFPUC provides free home and garden water surveys that help address both indoor and outdoor inefficiencies and undiscovered leaks that can increase water bills. These surveys are often the first step to improving household water efficiency. During the visit, a SFPUC water conservation expert will provide advice on how your household can reduce water use, as well as free high-efficiency showerheads, faucet aerators and toilet replacement parts and identify older toilets and clothes washing machines eligible for replacement through rebate programs. A recent SFPUC study showed homes that participated in a free water-use assessment and replaced at least one toilet fixture with a high-efficiency model, reduced annual water use by an average of 15 percent. In 2012, the SFPUC conducted more than 1,000 surveys in single-family homes throughout San Francisco, about 10 percent of which were households in Westside neighborhoods including Glen Park, West Portal and Lake Merced. This year the SFPUC hopes to see increased involvement from the Westside communities and plans to reach out to the City's top water-using accounts to encourage participation.

For more information on water conservation services and plumbing leak repairs, visit, www.sfwater.org/homeleaks or call (415) 551-4730. You can also join the SFPUC to kickoff "Fix a Leak Week" here at Lowe's Home Improvement on Saturday, March 16, 11 am – 4pm, 491 Bayshore Boulevard. Water conservation experts will be on hand to provide leak repair demonstrations, information on WaterSense® fixtures, rebates and home water-survey sign-ups.



Crime and Safety Focus

Homicide

On Friday, February 22, 2013, a 20-year-old man was shot and killed. The SFPD is actively investigating this case. Information that can be released is very limited. The San Francisco medical examiner's office identified the victim as San Francisco resident Lawrence Collins. He was found shot in the head at about 7:05 p.m. Friday in the 600 block of Capitol Avenue.



Captain Curtis Lum

Police spokesman Officer Albie Esparza said Collins was pronounced dead upon arrival.

No arrests have been made in the case. If you know anything about this homicide, please contact the SFPD. To leave an anonymous tip call (415) 242-9753 or to text a tip, text TIP411.

The officers at Taraval Station are aware of the situation and have been instructed to conduct high profile patrols in the area. Additionally, our TNT/plainclothes unit is working in the area.

The police department is aware of the concerns that incidents such as these may have on the community. We are doing our best to reduce the crimes and allay these concerns.

But we need your help. If you see something suspicious, call us. We respond to numerous calls for service everyday. If it is nothing, it's ok. If it is something, we have a better chance solving the case by stopping and arresting the suspect.

Hit & Run Vehicle and Suspect

On Sunday February 24, 2013 at around 2:05 AM two pedestrians were hit by a vehicle on Green and Fillmore Streets. The pedestrians were walking southbound on Fillmore when they were struck by a vehicle traveling westbound on Green causing serious injuries. The suspect fled the scene. The victims were transported to the hospital, one with life threatening injuries and one with non life threatening injuries. Video and debris found at the scene revealed the suspect vehicle to be a 2008 - 2012 Honda Accord sedan, dark in color with major damage to the right front headlight assembly, right fender, right side hood and passenger side windshield.



Similar Vehicle: Honda Accord

Anyone with information is asked to contact San Francisco Police anonymously at (415) 575-4444 or text-a-tip to TIP411 and begin the message with SFPD.



Speeding vehicles

Are there people driving too fast in your neighborhood? Email Officer Kwan at fred.kwan@sfgov.org and let him know. He will put Taraval Station's radar trailer in the area.

For traffic enforcement, email me at curtis.lum@sfgov.org.

Human trafficking

SFPD Special Victims Unit, Richmond Station and Taraval Station

From January 24-26, 2013, the SFPD Special Victims Unit, Richmond Station, and Taraval Station conducted an investigation on human trafficking. Two homes were investigated, one in the Richmond District and one in the Taraval District. Human trafficking victims were rescued. This investigation is on-going.



SFPD Seek Assistance 2005 Homicide - Gabriel Zavala

San Francisco Police Homicide Inspectors are seeking assistance in solving the 2005 murder of Mr. Gabriel Zavala.

The Mayor's Office has authorized a \$10,000.00 reward for information leading to the identification, apprehension, and conviction of the person (s) responsible for the murder of Mr. Gabriel Zavala which occurred in the early morning hours of Saturday February 26, 2005 on the 100 block of Valmar Street in San Francisco.

Mr. Zavala was 29 years old at the time of his death. He was employed as an engineer for the NASA Ames Research Facility, in Mountain View. He leaves behind a grieving wife, son, daughter, parents and sisters.

There may be persons who either witnessed the event, or may have information obtained from the suspect (s). We are urging witnesses to come forward.

San Francisco Police and family members of Gabriel Zavala will be available for the media to answer questions pertaining to the case on Tuesday February 26, 2013 on the 100 block of Valmar Street at 6:00 PM

Anyone with information is urged to contact Inspector Daniel Dedet, Robert Velarde, or Scott Warnke at the San Francisco Police Homicide Detail at (415) 553-1145, or the Department of Communications at (415) 553-1071, or call the SFPD



MUNI / 19th Ave (Cont. from p. 8,

Francisco State, said that of the options for the southern portion of the study, she favors option 1 because it forces the fewest people to give up their homes.

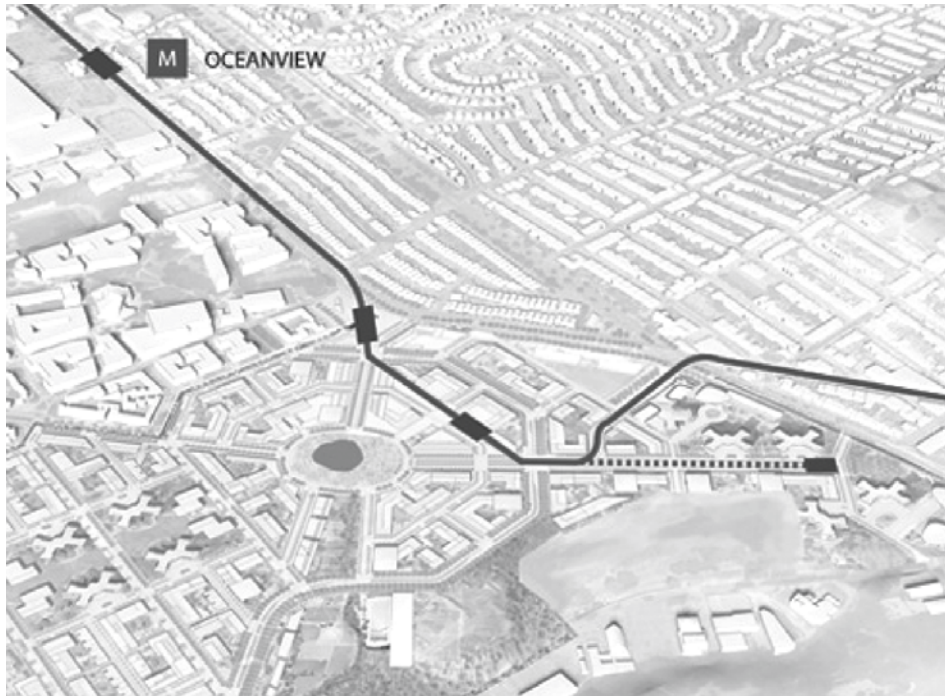
Fifty-five percent of all pedestrian fatalities in San Francisco take place on five percent of the streets in the City. Nineteenth Avenue is one of those streets. Many of the pedestrian crossings take place at 19th Avenue and Holloway, at San Francisco State University. One option put forth by the

**SFCTA Meeting
Wed., March 20
Merced Branch
Library, 7 p.m.**

SFCTA is keeping the M-line stop along the east side of the university, but moving the stop midway from the north and south ends. Brisson said at least some students are in favor of this option.

Besides affecting the current populations of residents and visitors to the area, the population of Parkmerced is expected to increase 15,000 by 2040, according to information from the SFCTA. Parkmerced is just south of San Francisco State University. The study is looking at routing the M-line through Parkmerced.

The agency has divided the study into north and south sections, with three options for each. Option one for the northern section includes large sections of underground track. Brisson said this is the most expensive of the options for the north side.



This illustration from the ParkMerced site shows projected changes to the M Oceanside rails.

The largest amount of funding for the study is coming from Caltrans, the California Department of Transportation. Matching funds are coming from Parkmerced, Stonestown Galleria, San Francisco State University and the SFCTA. The funding from SFCTA is being raised through a sales tax approved by voters in Proposition K.

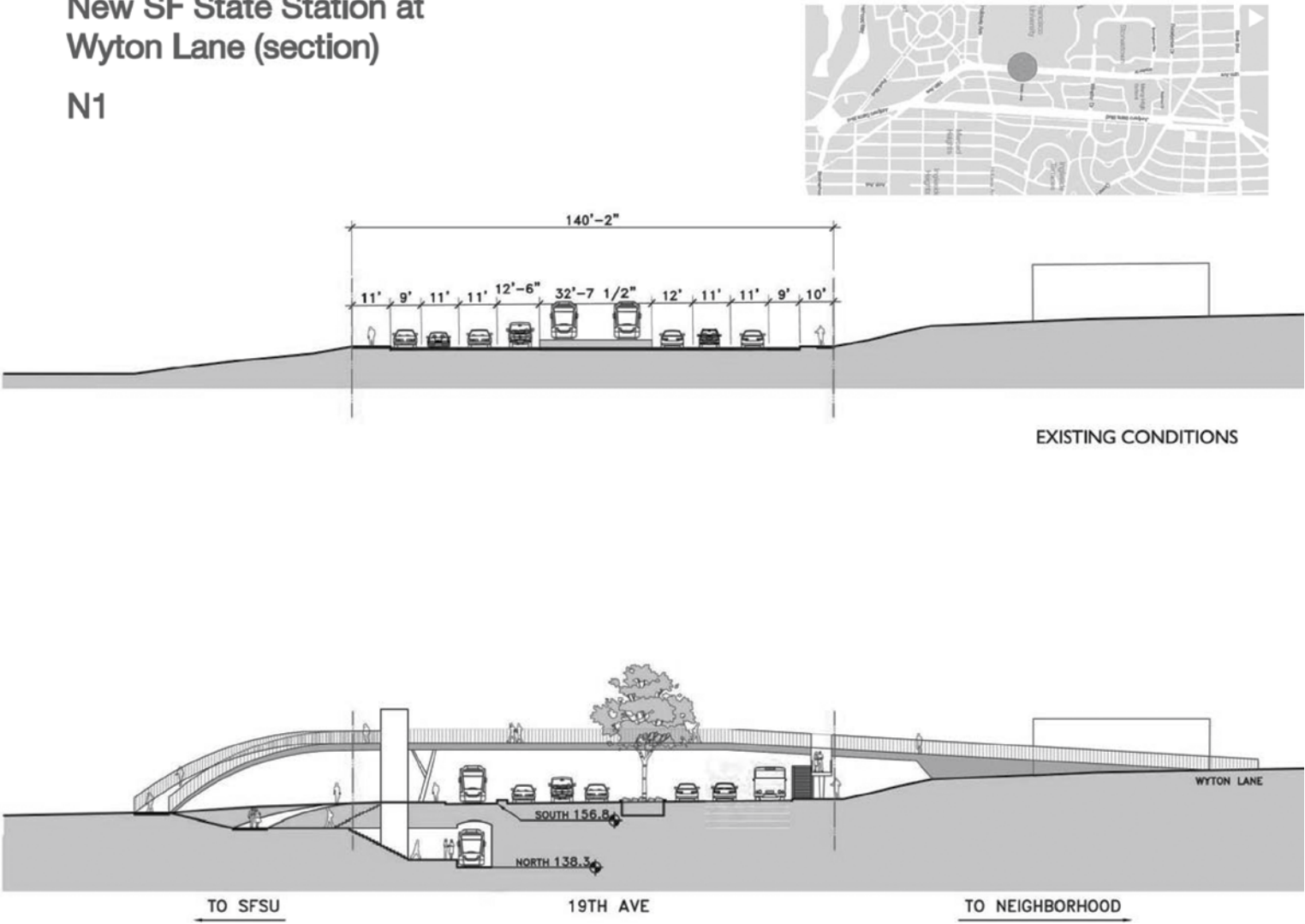
Besides reducing congestion along 19th Avenue, the proposals in the study would speed up the M-line. The average rate of speed through the study area is 8 miles per hour. Because of the benefits, the project has inspired a lot of community support, said Paul Rose, spokesperson, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency.

The SFCTA has held meetings with the San Francisco State University Neighborhood Task Force, the Merced Extension Triangle Neighborhood Association, and



This illustration from the ParkMerced site shows projected changes to the M Oceanside rails.

**New SF State Station at
Wyton Lane (section)
N1**



Option N1 shows undergrounding the northbound track and moving the southbound track to the west side of 19th Avenue



The current tracks on 19th Avenue

Parkmerced residents. Mid-February, the agency held the first of two community meetings. The agency expects to hold a second meeting in spring 2013.

The SFCTA manned tables at San Francisco State on February 20 and 21 to answer questions from students. A repeat of the first community meeting will be held at the Ocean View Branch Library March 2 at 1 p.m. Also, the SFCTA will be holding a meeting Wednesday, March 20 at the Merced Branch library, 7 p.m.

This spring the SFCTA will be looking at the tradeoffs among each of the three options. By summer the agency wants to have selected and refined one preferred concept based on the evaluation of tradeoffs and input from the public and organizations affected by the project.

Plans for the summer include identifying the steps, funding, roles of the agencies involved, and coordination for an environmental analysis, an engineering design, and construction.

Rose said the agencies conducting the study expect to finish it before the end of 2014, "in time for a preferred alternative."

"This project is good for all modes [of transportation]," Brisson said.

Keith Burbank is a local journalist.

To see all the options go to: www.sfcta.org/19th-avenue-transit-study-outreach-avenue

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WHISTLEBLOWERS / Dr. Maria Rivero & Dr. Derek Kerr

Exhuming Whistleblower Complaints

Buried whistleblower complaints haunt the SF Controller's Whistleblower Program (SFWP). In 2011-12, 344 complaints were "closed", most within 3 months. Still, 18 complaint investigations lingered over 6 months, with 3 dragged out beyond one year. Each year, about a dozen cases float in Limbo past 6 months, their stranding attributed to "complexity". Now, SFWP auditors are rushing to exhume — then close the lid — on buried tips.

SFWP Manager Steve Flaherty jolted the 11/29/12 meeting of the Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee (CBOBOC), the oversight body for the SFWP; all 18 long-stalled investigations had been "closed" in a 12 week scramble. For the first time, no complaints were over 6 months old! No reason was given for this abrupt turnaround, just a slew of excuses for past delays. Stone-walling, a common delaying tactic, wasn't mentioned. Instead, Some whistleblower complaints get lost for years. For example, our tips about tainted Health Department contracts that eventually recovered \$430,000 for taxpayers were punted to the Ethics Commission, the City and District Attorneys, then back to Ethics, for 26 months, even though the Controller is charged with overseeing City contracts. Further, the Charter authorizes the SFWP to concurrently investigate such referred complaints. In practice, the SFWP bars

Some whistleblower complaints get lost for years. For example, our tips about tainted Health Department contracts that eventually recovered \$430,000 for taxpayers were punted to the Ethics Commission, the City and District Attorneys, then back to Ethics, for 26 months, even though the Controller is charged with overseeing City contracts.

one message-point was emphasized, and echoed by Controller Rosenfield and CBOBOC member Madden: "Delays were not within the control of the Controller's staff." Reality got twisted in this denial of responsibility. The Controller can subpoena records, prod department heads, hire outside investigators, audit departments, and report non-compliant managers to the Board of Supervisors. Plus, the Controller must have orchestrated the speedy thaw of those 18 frozen cases.

Buried complaints are predictable because the SFWP outsources most investigations to the City departments named in the complaint. That was a key finding in the 2010-11 Civil Grand Jury report: "Whistling in the Dark - the San Francisco Whistleblower Program". Though the City Charter requires the SFWP to "track" referred complaints, here's what really happens: "(A complaint) goes to another department to investigate. The other department needs to get Human Resources involved, etc., etc., etc. Sometimes, the departments don't assign the same priority that we would like...but that's the world as it is." Thus spoke John Madden, the Controller's appointee to CBOBOC, and its liaison to the Controller's Whistleblower Program.

The SFWP is also required to refer about a dozen tips annually to City agencies that have primary jurisdiction. Here again, the SFWP avidly ships cases out, seemingly indifferent to the outcomes.

concurrent investigations, supposedly to cut costs, despite abundant voter-approved funding.

Given this tendency to dispatch tips, the energetic unearthing of 18 cold-cases was amazing. The SFWP, staffed by two part-time auditors, is part of the Controller's City Services Auditor (CSA) division. Both SFWP auditors faced more CSA duties because staffing had dropped below the usual 50 full-time jobs. CBOBOC's Jonathan Alloy asked why the CSA had just 44 staff when 63 positions were covered by its \$12.5 million budget. Rosenfield replied; "The goal is to fill the number of staff required to provide a meaningful body of work, rather than spend all the money we have because it's available," then promised to ramp up hiring. But overall staffing had fallen, while SFWP case closures rose from 200 last year - to 344. How did the SFWP close 70% more cases - plus 18 mummified complaints - without cutting corners?

Timely investigations are commendable, but racing to close cases doesn't ensure quality work. That's why military Whistleblower Programs require timeliness plus quality metrics. The SFWP hasn't presented any quality assessments of its investigations, or of those it refers out. Its auditors have great leeway in determining the "validity" of complaints, and the adequacy of departmental investigations. When CBOBOC's John Madden conducted the first and only review

Cont. p. 14

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL By Mitch Bull

Amid a glowing hearth, the WOTPCC meeting on February 25th got started in its new, temporary home, the Miraloma Park Clubhouse. President Matt Chamberlain assembled the gathering and kicked off the meeting at 7:35 PM with approximately 30 people in attendance.



Katlyn Walsh and Pat Collum presented plans for La Boulange to replace St. Francis Market on West Portal Ave at the Central Council Meeting held last Monday.

Following a brief welcome and the housekeeping items such as roll call, approval of the January meeting minutes and the financial report, the officers gave their reports. Of note, Avrum Shepard's transportation committee report gave an update on the SFCTA's study on the realignment of the MUNI lines on 19th Avenue. The County Transportation Authority has drawn up three initial alternatives for the N-Oceanview line; with options including the relocation of some transit stops and the elimination of others all together. It was also noted that these options are not finalized and the CTA is still soliciting feedback and community input.

Chamberlain started a small discussion, calling for volunteers to assist with the "Planning and Land Use Committee." Currently understaffed, this committee looks at items that are of great importance to the homeowners on the west side of the city that make up the membership of the WOTPCC. Estelle Smith of Sunnyside volunteered to help organize and lead the committee. These types of issues are important as problems have been reported with so-called "serial permitting" in both the Ingleside Terraces and Balboa Terrace areas.

Kailyn Walsh and Pat Collum, representing Café La Boulange, gave the crowd an overview of the planned café and bakery at 16 West Portal Avenue. The café, in the process of applying for a conditional use permit, will be built in the space that has been occupied by the St. Francis Market, whose month-to-month lease was not renewed by the owner of the

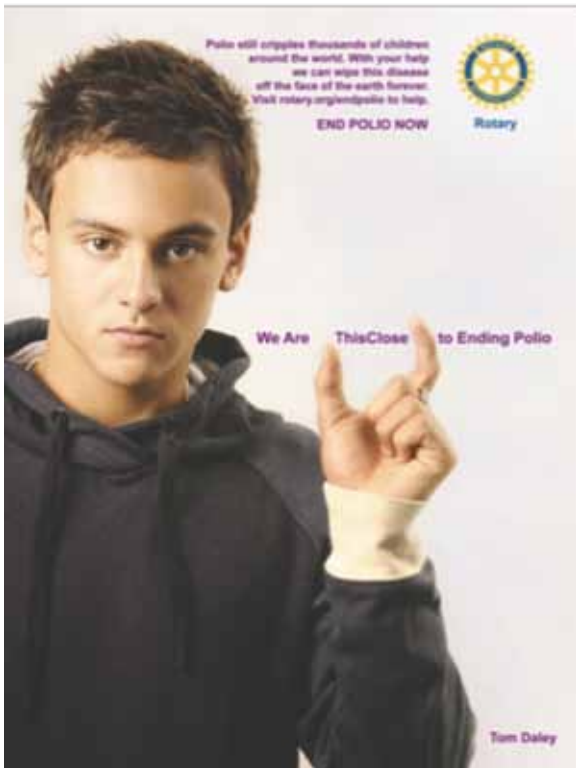
building.

Collum led the discussion with drawings of the site, showing the storefront and an overview of the 2675 square foot project, which is slated to open sometime in the fall, possibly in October. The café is planned to have a wine and beer license and will be open 7 days a week from 7AM to 7PM, featuring pastries, baked goods, salads, soups and open-faced sandwiches. The pair fielded questions from the audience relating to equal pay for male and female staff (yes), discounts for seniors and others (possibly), and will it be unionized (no). The owners will be sponsoring an informational open house in mid-March. Check the WOTPCC website for more details.

District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell took over the floor next, speaking on three items: An update on the SF City Budget, continuing efforts to address the city's long-term underfunded health care fund liability and his efforts to enact legislation that would make it easier for property owners to convert existing TIC (Tenancy in Common) units into stand-alone condominiums.

Farrell started with an overview of the budget deficit and how it has gotten smaller, from \$570,000,000 two years ago, to \$300,000,000 last year and an estimated \$140,000,000 this year, although it is expected to grow to \$180,000,000 with unforeseen increased costs associated with the opening of the new SF General Hospital emergency room. To sum it up, the supervisor said the city is doing much better, but that it is still in a "cost-cutting"

Cont. p. 15



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A very informative meeting took place last week at the West of Twin Peaks Central Council. Several speakers spoke to the group, which consists of representatives from each of the local neighborhood organizations and groups. If you don't know what the WOTPCC is about you should, as they have been representing homeowners and neighborhoods since 1939. It's a great place to find out what's going on in the back offices of the city's departments.

This was the first of the meetings — while the Forest Hill Clubhouse is being renovated — in their new location at the *Miraloma Park Clubhouse*, located at 350 O'Shaughnessy Blvd. It is held on the last Monday of the month at 7:30pm.

Several representatives of Café *La Boulange* were on hand to give a presentation about the proposed new café and bakery at 16 West Portal Avenue, to occupy the space most recently held by the St. Francis Market. The drawings and plans show a very well thought out operation that should fit in nicely in the neighborhood, possibly opening in the October-November timeframe. It really needs to be understood that the café did not push the market out; that was the doing of the landlord, who refused to extend the market's month-to-month lease. You would think there is space on the street for a vibrant market; maybe we could spare one less nail salon. Unfortunately in commercial space it's a "market rate" world.



Supervisor Mark Farrell addressed the Central Council at the meeting held at the Miraloma Park Clubhouse



Wet Wednesday... did you hear helicopters and sirens last Wednesday? Work crews descended on 15th Avenue and Wawona to see the damage and flooding caused by a ruptured water main at 3AM Wednesday morning. The 16-inch pipe burst under the street and unleashed tens of thousands of gallons of water and

mud into the houses, yards and cars located downhill from the break. A large sink-hole blocked a driveway on 15th Avenue. San Francisco Water Department officials said that the pipe was over 60 years old. The flooding is estimated to have damaged 23 homes and a dozen cars. Some houses were damaged and under two to three feet of water. News reports state that six buildings were yellow-tagged, but the residents will be allowed to stay in their homes while the cleanup and repairs progress. At this point there is no estimate when crews will be done with their cleanup or when repairs will be completed.

Supervisor Tang... At midday last Wednesday, Mayor Ed Lee appointed Katy Tang to the position of Supervisor for District 4, which includes the Parkside and Sunset neighborhoods. Ms. Tang replaces Supervisor Carmen Chu, whom Lee appointed to replace Phil Ting, as the SF Assessor-Recorder. Ting was elected to the state Assembly in November. Ms. Tang has served for five years as Chu's legislative aide and is a long-term resident of the Sunset District, having lived there since the age of one. She will face an election in November to try and retain the seat.



Eating Crow (or Raven)... well, our 49ers couldn't quite pull out the Super Bowl last month, so I took the ribbing from my siblings in Maryland and NY. Maybe next year... but changes are afoot as the team announced they have traded former starting quarterback Alex Smith to the Kansas City Chiefs. I wish him well in his new environment. A recent report on "charitable foundations" run by both athletes and non-athletes do not always measure up with their levels of donations compared to contributions. In many cases the charities give less than 60%, using the balance for administrative costs and overhead. Alex Smith's foundation was highlighted as an excellent example, by distributing 91% of donated funds to the recipients. That's what more charities should aspire to. Thanks Alex.

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.

❖ MARCH EVENTS ❖

EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

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

EVERY TUES • QUE SYRAH HAPPY HOUR

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

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

EVERY THURS • NIGHTLIFE

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

JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

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

THU • HIRSHFIELD & ARIN READINGS

Thu Mar 7 | 7 pm | Poets Jane Hirshfield (Come Thier) & Jennifer Arin (Ways We Hold) Hirshfield is a master at capturing a moment's essence and exchanging part of herself with its finite music. Arin delivers because for her, poetry is one small way we hold on. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. Info 564-8080.

SAT • SF BLUEGRASS

Sat Mar 9 | 9 pm | "Hillbilly Hoedown" (aka the after party) Featuring: The Earl Brothers; The Trespassers; Emily Bonn & The Vivants@CafeDuNord – 2170 Market Street, SF 8 pm doors open / 9 pm show. Advance tickets \$10 / At the door \$12 / 21 and older only. info:www.themusic-storesf.com

TUE • GREATER WEST PORTAL-GWPNA

Tue Mar 12 | 7:30 pm | West Portal Clubhouse, 139 Lenox Way. 2nd Tues each month. www.gwpna.org

WED • CANADIAN WOMENS CLUB

Wed Mar 13 | 11 am-Noon lunch | Stephanie Roades-Bickham, Speaker. Guests and gentlemen welcome. Cost: \$30. RSVP required: www.canadianwomensclub.org or President@canadianwomensclub.org Basque Cultural Ctr, 599 Railroad Ave, South San Francisco.

MON • FREE SQUARE DANCE LESSONS



Mon Mar 11, 18, 25 | 7–9:30 pm | Square dancing is a wonderful activity that provides light aerobic exercise, mental stimulation, and social interaction in a safe environment. Join the SF Caper Cutters for 3 free classes, then enroll for a new dancers class Apr 1. St. Paul's Church Hall, 1399 43rd Ave. @ Judah. Info: sfsquaredancing.org

TUE • AUTHOR CARA BLACK

Tue Mar 12 | 7 pm | Author Cara Black, will read from her latest Aimee Leduc adventure, *Murder Below Montparnasse*. Follow her to the cafés, thrift stores and art museums featured in the 13 books

that have made her Paris P.I. famous worldwide! BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. Info 564-8080.

VILLEANN PIPE CONCERT

Wed Mar 13 | 7 pm | Todd Denman performs uilleann pipes and tin whistle with Richard Mandell on guitar. A rare form of bagpipe native to Ireland, the uilleann pipes are bellows inflated, played while sitting, and have the largest musical and harmonic capacity of any bagpipes in the world. They are a social, indoor instrument with a rich 200-year history in Ireland. Todd has performed in Europe, Ireland and across the U.S., including the SF Symphony, and has been a CA Arts Council Touring Artist. His recordings have reached Top-10 charts and received wide acclaim—not to be missed! Merced Branch Library 155 Winston Drive (19th Ave)

THU • DIST COALITION MEETING

Thu Mar 14 | 7 pm–9 pm | Meets 2nd Thu each month. Info Susan at 586.8103 or ssuval@sbcglobal.net Taraval Station, 2345 24th Ave.

MON • SUNSET-PARKSIDE MEETING

Mon Mar 18 | 6 pm | SPEAK aims to educate residents on public safety, zoning, planning etc. 3201 Ulloa St. (Grace Lutheran) 3rd Mon each month. speak-sanfrancisco@yahoo.com

TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

Tue Mar 19 | 7 pm | Taraval District Police Station. 3rd Tue of the month. Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 2345 - 24th Ave 759-3100.

WED • 19TH AVE—M-OCEANVIEW



Wed Mar 20 | 7 pm | Community Meeting Re: Improvements to M-Ocean View and 19th Ave., SF Transportation Authority an effort to develop transportation improvements along the southern portion of the corridor. Draft concepts for potential changes to the M-Ocean View light rail line, pedestrian enhancements, and bus and shuttle improvements. Merced Branch Library 155 Winston Drive (at 19th Ave).

MON • SHARP

Mon Feb 25 | 7 pm | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People. This Monday: Supervisor Norman Yee, and the "Ellis-ing of 1637 Tenth Ave.—8 units—all out on the street. Last Mon each month. 1736 9th Ave. @Moraga.

MON • WOTP CENTRAL COUNCIL

Mon Mar 25 | 7:30 pm | West of Twin Peaks Central Council meets on 4th Monday each month for those interested in local issues. Miraloma Park Clubhouse, 350 O'Shaughnessy.

THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

Thu Mar 28 | 7 pm | Meets last Thu each month. This meeting is at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street, speaker Chester Fung, Principal Transportation Planner, SF Transportation Authority re: 19th Avenue Transit Study.

THU • AUTHOR JAQUELINE WINSPEAR

Thu Mar 28 | 7 pm | Meet the author of the NY Times bestselling series featuring private investigator Maisie Dobbs. Winspear will read from her latest novel, *Leaving Everything Most Loved*. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. Info 564-8080.

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

GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING: DUTCH PAINTINGS FROM THE MAURITSHUIS

Herbst Galleries | Jan. 26, - June 23

The de Young will be the first venue in the American tour of paintings from the Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, The Hague. This jewel box of a museum, housing one of the world's most prestigious collections of Dutch Golden Age paintings, has not lent a large body of works from its holdings in nearly 30 years. An extensive two-year renovation makes this extraordinary opportunity possible.

The exhibition features 35 paintings representing the range



of subject matter and technique characteristic of 17th-century painting in the Dutch Republic. Among the works traveling to the United States is the Mauritshuis' celebrated masterpiece *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Johannes Vermeer



and the enchanting *The Goldfinch* by Carel Fabritius. The painting *Vase of Flowers* by the gifted Rachel Ruysch, one of the few female painters of the Dutch Golden Age, is being restored especially for the American tour.

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Now At the Movies • By Don Lee Miller

BROKEN CITY

Ex-cop Billy Taggart: a solid Mark Wahlberg is framed by the crooked Mayor Nicholas Hostetler: Russell Crowe, with bad NY accent, worse hairpiece, and a ridiculous sprayed-on tan. Wahlberg could have used ‘Ted’ here! Hostetler hires private-eye Billy to shadow his wife, Cathleen: Catherine Zeta-Jones whom he suspects of an affair. The dirty graft-ridden urban land deal happens to be where Billy’s parents live. Others involved include Police Chief Carl Fairbanks: Jeffrey Wright, the election opposition Jack Valliant: Barry Pepper, and Paul: Kyle Chandler. This easily forgettable crime thriller drama, filmed in NYC and New Orleans, is directed by Allen Hughes and loosely scripted by Brian Tucker. Profanity. Sexual content. Violence.

HANSEL AND GRETEL 3-D

The siblings have grown into ruthless bounty hunters who seek and kill witches around the world. In Ausberg, Germany, Hansel: Jeremy Renner and Gretel: Gemma Arterton encounter a powerful shape-shifting Muriel: Famke Janssen as the Feast of the Blood Moon approaches and she is at her maximum power level. This feast requires the sacrifice of six males and six females, each with a different birth month. H&G prevent Sheriff Berringer: Peter Stormare from killing the lovely Mina: Pihla Viitala (she’s Finnish). They acquire a protégé, Ben: Thomas Mann, a local boy. For an interesting twist, Hansel is a diabetic who has to have his daily injection of insulin. We all know they had hypodermics several centuries back!? But wait, they have a

Gatling gun, too. Director-writer Tommy Wirkola has thrown elements from different centuries into the mix, clarifying white witches. The 3-D enhances the witchcraft special FX. Fantasy horror violence and gore. Brief sexuality/nudity. Profanity.

MAMA

A father Lucas: Nicolaj Coster-Waldau (Game of Thrones) is fleeing a murder scene with his two daughters, driving too fast on a twisting rural road in the snow, when he crashes near the family cabin. A mysterious ghost, Mama, saves them before the confused dad, with no light at the end of the tunnel, can continue his murderous spree. Five years later, Uncle Jeffrey: also NC-W discovers the feral wild kids who have existed on berries, etc. His hippie tattooed girlfriend Annabel: Oscar

nominee Jessica Chastain (Zero Dark Thirty) seems an unlikely sub-mother. Victoria, 8: Megan Charpentier and Lilly, 6: Isabelle Nélisse attempt to adjust to their new surroundings. Director Andrés Muschietti (protégé of Guillermo Del Toro) and co-writer with Neil Cross have woven this horror tale. With its PG-13 rating, it would have been more satisfying had it gone to an anticipated R. Goofs include four nighttime bedroom scenes with sunlight streaming in the window. Violence. Terror. Some scary material involving children. Thematic elements.

PARKER

When a job is flawed by a senseless killing by his new team, Parker: Jason Statham has no interest in their next heist so they try to kill him, and almost do. A good Samaritan finds him and repairs him. Florida real estate agent Leslie Rodgers: Jennifer Lopez lives at home with her mother Ascension: Patti LuPon. She is fascinated by her new wealthy Texan client Parker. On their tour of available properties, he finds Melander: Michael Chiklis and the rest of his gang. He determines they are going for a \$25-million jewelry robbery of the charity auction of a local society matron’s collection. Taylor Hackford’s film details how he stops them with the aid of Leslie. The screenplay by John J. McLaughlin is based on Donald E. Westlake’s novel. Strong violence, profanity throughout. Brief sexual content/nudity.

QUARTET

When opera diva Jean: Maggie Smith retires to the British home for retired musical talents Cedric: Michael Gambon, director of the annual residents’ gala for Verdi’s birthday has high hopes of reuniting the famous quartet for the occasion. Jean finds stoic tenor Reggie: Tom Courtenay (also her ex-husband), Wilf: Billy Connolly with the hots for the skirts, and alto Cissy: Pauline Collins whose memory is diminishing daily. The proceeds from the gala will keep the musical programs funded for the next year. All four leads create unique characters with tics. Remain seated for the end credits where director Dustin Hoffman embellishes the screenplay/play by Ronald Harwood with Then & Now photos of residents who are real opera/stage retirees prominent during the past bicentennial! Strong sexual content.

Awards: Winner: National Board of Review Award: 2012 Top Ten Independent Films; Hollywood Film

Festival: Hollywood Breakthrough Award: Hoffman, Directing; Chicago Int’l. Film Festival: Best Narrative Feature: Hoffman. Nominee: Golden Globes: Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture—Musical or Comedy: Maggie Smith.



RUST AND BONE

Alain: Mattias Schoenaertis and his young son, Sam, leave Belgium for Antibes where he becomes fascinated with the local Marineland whale trainer, Stéphanie: Marion Cotillard. When she suffers a horrible accident, she needs him more than ever. What started as a sexual relationship becomes much deeper and complex. Coitlard delivers her most earthy performance since her brilliant Oscar-winning turn as Edith Piaf in La Vie en Rose. Director Jacques Audiard achieves a level of magical visceral experience, aided by Andres Desplat’s background music. Strong sexual content. Graphic nudity. Violence. Profanity.

Awards: Winner: Best Film at 2012 London Film Festival. Nominee: Golden Globes: Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture—Drama: Coitlard.

WARM BODIES

The brain of young fighter Perry: Dave Franco (brother of James) is devoured by walking corpse/narrator R (he can’t remember his full first name): Nicholas Hoult in this post-apocalyptic urban zombies vs. the sparse surviving humans tale. R retains the memory of his meal/victim. He dwells in an airplane that he has converted into his own private home where he can play his collection of records with a leaning toward Springsteen. When R meets Perry’s girlfriend, Julie: Teresa Palmer, he has the urge to protect her; he trains her how to walk dead. She is the daughter of Gen. Grigio: John Malkovich, who leads the military force living in a walled-in city. They believe in shooting first. The R/Julie romance is strained but sweet; it helps that his condition may not be permanent. The “message” is pounded home several times. The love story possesses an endearing sense of humor. Written and directed by Jonathan Levine, this date movie is based on the novel by Isaac Marion. Some profanity. Zombie violence.

At the Theater • By Flora Lynn Isaacson



Remembering Annette Lust

DR. ANNETTE LUST, Longtime columnist for the *Westside Observer*, passed away on February 20, 2013. She died quickly, peacefully and surrounded by loved ones. Dr. Lust was professor emerita at Dominican University of California in San Rafael, where she taught mime, theatre production, dramatic literature, and French language and literature, and founded the Fringe of Marin that produces short works by Bay Area playwrights, directed and acted by Bay Area directors and actors.



Flora Lynn Isaacson

She was the author of *From the Greek Mimes to Marcel Marceau and Beyond*, a definitive work that chronicles the many visages of the art of mime, and received the Choice Outstanding Academic Book 2000 Award, and the George Freedly Memorial Award Finalist Place in 2000. She recently wrote *Bringing the Body to the Stage and Screen*, published in 2012.

An accomplished teacher and author, she received the Palmes Académiques from the French Government in 1973 for her teaching of French language and literature, her activity in French theatre and culture, and her publications on French mime and theatre. She was a member of the S.F. Bay Area Critics Circle for the selection of Theatre Awards, and served on the jury of the international Mimos Festival in Périgeux, France since 1990 for the Critics Jury Award for best performing group.

A former board member and vice-president and secretary of the National Association of Movement Theatre, Annette Lust was active in national and international organizations that promote the art of mime

She had a theatre column in the *Westside Observer* and on Forallevnts.com, occasionally wrote reviews for the S.F. Bay Times, and published articles on international theatre festivals and theatre book reviews for the Association of Movement Theatre Educators.

She is survived by two daughters, Eliane and Evelyne, both professional pianists, a son-in-law, Aaron Kernitz, a well-known composer, and two grandchildren, Jonah and Delphine.

Plans are afoot to organize a celebration of Annette’s dynamic life in the Spring when her family can all gather together — perhaps even in conjunction with the 2013 Fringe in April or May so that Annette’s wider circle might attend to toast her life.

She always said she just wanted a big, fun party when her time came!

Steel Magnolias

The Novato Theater Company currently presents *Steel Magnolias*, a story of love and trust among six very different women. This 1987 play by Robert Harling has a title which suggests the female characters are as delicate as magnolias, but as tough as steel.

The action of the play centers on

Truvy’s (Karen Clancy) beauty parlor in Chinquapin, Louisiana and the women who regularly gather there. The drama begins on the morning of Shelby’s (Erin Ashe) wedding and covers events over the next three years. We get a glimpse of the unlikely friendship between Clairee

WOTPCC (Cont. from p. 9)

mode.

The underfunded **long-term health care liability** of the city was the next topic, and is a major issue. Farrell said that the stated deficit of \$4,400,000,000 (4.4 billion) is based on a model predicting a 7%+ rate of return. With these rates being presently unattainable, he said the true deficit is probably in the 7 billion dollar range. This health care fund is to provide medical coverage for city employees and their spouses who worked for the city for at least 5 years and are over 50 years of age. Statements from those in attendance seemed to cast some doubt about the true liability cost for the city. Supervisor Farrell says that the fund supports tens of thousands of current and former employees. He expects the annual \$150,000,000 line item to grow to an annual cost to the city of \$500,000,000 if nothing is done and the liability is not addressed or restructured.


His final topic focused on legislation that he has introduced with District 8 Supervisor Scott Weiner to try and streamline the current backlogged lottery system to **convert TIC units to condos**. The “lottery” currently only allows 200 conversions with over 2400 property owners in the queue. Many of the property owners are saddled with higher property loan rates that are up to double for a TIC unit than what a comparable condo rate would be. As a result some of these homeowners are in danger of losing their investments through foreclosure, etc. Farrell sees the legislation as a way to help these 2400 property owners and promote home ownership in SF. The legislation seeks to implement fees to circumvent the “lottery” system. Tenant advocates are concerned about forced evictions, but Farrell says there are safeguards in place for those who are renting units in current TIC buildings and they would be guaranteed rent-controlled space in any building that would be converted. When asked if developers would benefit under the proposed legislation, Farrell did not seem to think this would be the case.

Sally Stephens was the final speaker for the evening, giving an update on UCSF’s plan to remove 20,000-30,000 trees on their property on Mt. Sutro. There is much debate over the ramifications of taking this large amount of forest down, as well as the need to do so. (Differing opinions exist on the relative health of the forest). Stephens cited the fact that San Francisco is ranked as the second worst large city in terms of urban forestation, behind only Jersey City, NJ. More details on opportunities to give public feedback can be found on the WOTPCC website.

The next meeting of the WOTPCC will be on Monday, March 25th at 7:30 PM at the Miraloma Park Clubhouse, located at 350 O’Shaughnessy Blvd.

For more information see the WOTPCC website (www.westoftwinpeaks.org).

SHARON THE HEALTH / By Sharon Caren



Last month was Sharon Caren’s last column. Sharon will be devoting her full-time attention to her many clients. We wish all of the best for her. Her previous columns — from June 2008 – February 2013 are available at: www.westsideobserver.com/columns/Caren.html

Theater (Cont. from p. 13)

(Laura J. Davies), the mayor’s wife and Ouiser (Shirley Nilsen Hall), the town grouch; Annelle’s (Ashley McKenna) transformation from a shy, anxious newcomer in town to a good-time girl and then to a revival-tent Christian and Truvy’s relationship with a man in her family. However, the main story line involves Shelby and her mother, M’Lynn (Susan Zelinsky).

Experienced Director Norman Hall and his wife Shirley Nilsen Hall have both been with NTC for many years. They have teamed up again to re-mix the 1992 production they did of the same play. Twenty-one years ago, Norman directed Shirley as Truvy, she is now playing Ouiser. Karen Clancy, now taking the role of Truvy played Annelle and Susan Zelinsky, who then played Shelby is now playing her mother, M’Lynn.

The realistic beauty parlor set is designed by Harry Reid. Finally, this is not a production which depends on individual performances as much as the ensemble working together. NTC’s Steel Magnolia’s is evidence that a thoughtful, committed production can pull magic out of a script that might otherwise seem a little bitter.

Steel Magnolias runs at Novato Theater Company through March 10, 2013. The location is St. Vincent’s School for Boys at 1 St. Vincent Drive, San Rafael, CA. Performances are at 8 p.m., Thursday-Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday. For tickets, call 883-4495 or go online at www.novatotheatercompany.org.

Coming up next at Novato Theater Company will be The Foreigner by Larry Shue, May 23-June 16, 2013.

(Editor’s note) Flora Lynn Isaacson will continue to write theater reviews for the West-side Observer and will endeavor to continue the work that Dr. Lust devoted much of her life to, the Fringe of Marin. “In the arts and in theater, the fringe is the outskirts,” Lust explained, “it’s that place out on the edge of the mainstream. The Fringe of Marin Festival gives audiences an opportunity to discover new works, to find undiscovered artists, writers and performers—people who are very, very talented, with interesting, spontaneous voices—and to give those artists important feedback, since many of these works are being performed here for the very first time anywhere.”

Remember When?



Sutro Forest. This undated photo simply noted as Sutro Forest is in the SF History Center collection, any observations about the date or perspective or a corresponding photo of the present would be welcomed by the Center. Send comments, etc to editor@westsideobserver.com. Permission to use this image was obtained from the San Francisco History Center, SF Public Library

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

Sudoku-fun!

Rules:
Each puzzle is a 9 by 9 grid of squares divided into nine 3 by 3 square blocks, with some of the numbers filled in for you.
The Object:
Fill in the blank squares so that each of the numbers 1 to 9 appears exactly once in each row,column and block.
Answer:
The answer appears below.

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

BRAIN FUD
A Real ‘Dead One’ – a riddle

I can be straight or not
I can be flat or round
I have three layers

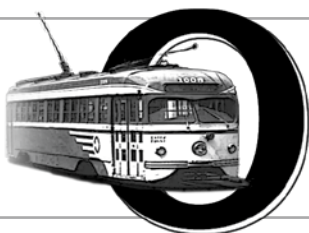
The rounder I am - the straighter I am
I can be a person’s trademark
I can be chemically challenged

Answer
Hair
Straight hair is round in shape
Wavy or curly hair is flat in shape (the curlier the hair the flatter)
Chemically challenged – permmed, tinted, or bleached
Hair consists of 3 layers - Cuticle (outer layer) Cortex (second layer) Medulla (center layer)

OPEN LATE



By Julie Casson



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City Salaries (Cont. from p. 3)

the part-time direction the City is headed in, is that 494, 21.2 %, of 2,330 Muni drivers earned average salaries in FY 10-11 of just \$11,030, having worked less than 1,040 hours, which is half-time, or 0.5 FTE (“full-time equivalent”) status.

Across all job classification codes in FY 10-11, fully 21.3 percent, 7,327 City employees, were half-time (or less), averaging just \$12,492 annually in base pay. They stand in stark contrast to the 7,864, or 21.6 percent, of employees who earned over \$100,000 in base pay and averaged \$143,131 in total pay.

San Francisco does have 379 City employees who were paid more in base pay in 2012 than the governor earned; those 379 averaged an astounding \$193,415 in base pay each, sucking out a combined \$78.6 million in total pay from the City’s payroll. They also reported that 195 City employees made more than \$200,000, and that one quarter of City employees make more than \$100,000 without overtime.

Excesses for the Highest Paid

After former Supervisor Tom Ammiano first noted in 2003 that City managers earning over \$90,000 were a problem, voracious management salaries have climbed steadily upward for over a decade. Indeed, on February 20, Matier and Ross lamented in the *San Francisco Chronicle* that the days when it was news that a handful of City managers were earning \$100,000-plus salaries were long gone — now such highly-compensated employees has somehow become acceptable.

Matier and Ross reported that approximately 572 San Francisco city employees are paid more than Governor Jerry Brown’s \$173,987. Indeed, San Francisco does have 379 City employees who were paid more in base pay in 2012 than the governor earned; those 379 averaged an astounding \$193,415 in base pay each, sucking out a combined \$78.6 million in total pay from the City’s payroll. They also reported that 195 City employees made more than \$200,000, and that one quarter of City employees make more than \$100,000 without overtime.

Across the decade since 2003, the City has added another 553 managers in the 0900-series job classification codes, bringing the total to 722 of such managers in 2012. Of the 722 managers, we have 570 in the 0922 to 0943 manager series (up to Manager VII), and another 131 Deputy

Directors of Departments and Department Heads (Deputy Directors I through V and Department Heads I through V) in the 0951 to 0965 series, even though the City’s core business has not changed sufficiently in the past decade to warrant the hiring of 533 more managers in these job classifications. This single increase costs taxpayers an additional \$82.4 million annually, and now costs at least \$101.5 million in base salary alone for the 722 incumbent senior managers.

Why does San Francisco need at least 722 senior managers — or more, since there are many other job classification codes that

include the word “manager” in their job titles — to run just (approximately) 60 City departments?

Matier and Ross failed to note that in the five years between 2007 and 2012, the City felt the need to add an additional 1,461 employees earning over \$150,000 in total pay, at an increased cost of \$269.3 million. The City now has 2,777 employees earning over \$150,000 annually in total pay, at a combined cost of \$496.1 million.

While City Hall turns a blind eye towards the City’s \$4.4 billion in purported unfunded pension contributions, it is simultaneously turning a blind eye to the ever-escalating unfunded liability of salaries for top City managers who apparently feel an entitlement to excessive salaries. Their top salaries drive top pensions, just as night follows day.

Until taxpayers say enough is enough, expect these City managers to keep earning far more than our State governor, the president of the United States, and private sector CEO’s, while the City’s lowest-paid workers are robbed of their jobs, or face drastic pay cuts.

Monette-Shaw is an open-government accountability advocate, a patient advocate, and a member of California’s First Amendment Coalition.
Feedback: monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com

Presidio (Cont. from p. 5)

legislation specifically in the Presidio Trust Act. This is unconstitutional.

We all agree that the Presidio Trust itself is exempt. However, if Congress enacted the Presidio Trust Act to exempt third party use for private benefit in the Presidio, they do not have the authority to do so per Article 1 Section 8 of Constitution, which provides the Powers of US Congress. Therefore since Congress does not have the power to tax exempt third parties, then this provision is void. The only power Congress has is through “exclusive jurisdiction” which is for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful buildings.

The state of CA ceded to the Federal government exclusive jurisdiction of Presidio lands for military use which is no longer the case. The issue before us is whether the transfer from the Department of Defense to the GGNRA caused a retrocession of jurisdiction to the State of CA in order to permit the City to tax the third party beneficiaries at the Presidio.

What do you think?

Should the City look further into this matter which could result in at least \$100 million in revenue to the City from current and back taxes and increase tax revenue annually to the City by a minimum of \$10 million. The Assessor could assess the tenants and the transfer of Lucasfilm to Disney and have a court decide. The City could obtain a judicial determination of the City’s right to tax possessory interest in Presidio properties held for private benefit. Or the City could file a declaratory relief action against one of the tenants in order to conserve resources with a more expeditious result to name a few.

Or just leave it the way it is. Unfair and inequitable taxation.

John Farrell, MBA, Broker/Realtor, Farrell Real Estate Investments DRE#00940255

Former Assistant Assessor, Budget and Special Projects, San Francisco

Now Here is Real Education Reform

By Carol Kocivar

It is no mystery that early childhood education is important.

Research supports it. Economics supports it. Parents support it.



“...early childhood education is about lowering the drop-out rates, about more children going to college and less children winding up in prison, about providing needed skills for employment, and about growing our economy.”

Yet until President Obama’s call to make high-quality preschool available to every child in America, other less data-driven reform agendas have dominated the airwaves.

It is time to change that conversation, because early childhood education is critical to the success of our children.

Why?

Because early childhood education is about lowering the drop-out rates, about more children going to college and less children winding up in prison, about providing needed skills for employment, and about growing our economy.

According to Linda Darling-Hammond, professor of education at Stanford, high quality pre-school programs — the kind that have teachers with degrees in early childhood education, and small class sizes, and hands-on learning, and parent outreach and education — provide those kinds of results.

Yet during this Great Recession, funding for our youngest students has

been cut.

California’s independent legislative analyst reports that “since 2008-09, the State’s childcare and development system has experienced notable reductions.

Overall funding has decreased by \$985 million (31 percent).

About one-quarter of slots have been eliminated (110,000 slots).”

State Schools Chief Tom Torlakson welcomes the call for making early learning a national priority: “We know that there are significant benefits to helping children start school excited and ready to learn—and that those benefits last the rest of their lives,” says Torlakson.

What can we do to help our children?

Let our elected officials know that this kind of reform is vital.

Let’s start early—for all children. This is where our investment needs to begin.

Feedback: kocivar@westsideobserver.com

Phyllis’ Findings / Phyllis Sherman

Phyllis will be back next month.



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THE REAL ESTATE ANSWER MAN *By Kevin Birmingham*



Q: Which home update will give you the most return when you sell your home? —Jeff Hubinsky

A: Paint and staging - they are far cheaper than remodeling, and will provide the most bang for the buck. The stager will often have other suggestions depending on your home - maybe your light fixtures need updating, or your floors refinished, etc. If you're going to go beyond that and remodel then focus on your kitchen and/or bathrooms.

Q: What is the most tax efficient structure through which to buy residential real estate? —Sasha Jones

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

A: As real estate professionals, we're constantly advised to not give advice on this subject, but to refer anyone who asks a question like this to a qualified CPA or attorney.

Q: What's the difference between a loan originator and mortgage broker? —James Klein

A: A mortgage loan originator is defined as one whom, for compensation or gain (or in the expectation of...), takes a residential mortgage loan application or offers to negotiate terms of a mortgage loan. This individual may work for either a bank or a brokerage, or an institution that facilitates both banking and brokering of mortgages.

Crime & Safety *(Cont. from p. 7)*

Anonymous Tip Line at (415) 575-4444 or "Text-a-Tip" at TIP411. Please reference "SFPD" in the subject line. Case Number 050 222 878



Aggravated Assault

San Francisco Police are seeking the public's help to identify a suspect involved in an aggravated assault that occurred on February 2nd at approximately 1:00 A.M. on Bartlett Street between 22nd and 23rd. The victim was walking southbound on Bartlett Street and the suspect was walking in the opposite direction. As the victim passed the suspect, the suspect punched the victim multiple times. The victim attempted to protect herself from the suspect by covering her face with her hands. The suspect fled the area and is at large. At this point in the investigation a robbery or sexual assault does not appear to be the motive.

Investigators from Special Victims Unit believe the suspect may be involved in an assault on January 6th. The assault occurred approximately 2:40 A.M. in the area of 23rd and Church Streets. The victim and suspect were also walking in opposite directions when the suspect lunged at the victim and threw her to the ground. The suspect straddled the victim and slammed her head into the ground. The suspect fled the area when the victim screamed for help.

Investigators believed the incidents may be connected because the suspect descriptions are similar as is the mode of attack. The suspect operated in similar fashion in both incidents. A sketch accompanies this press release. Anyone with any information is urged to contact SVU Inspector Rico Castillo at (415) 734-3004. Anyone who wants to leave an anonymous tip can call San Francisco

Police anonymously at (415) 575-4444, or text a tip to TIP411 with SFPD typed in at the beginning of the message.

"I Am More Than" Video Contest



To recognize Black History Month, the Teen Forum of the San Francisco Police Department, in conjunction with partner organizations including but not limited to Mo' Magic, and the Boys

and Girls Clubs, have organized a self expression contest for students to address bias and stereotyping. Students will have the opportunity to use their voice, creative artwork, speech, photos and any other creative avenues to express vision. The contest began on February 15, 2013 and will close on April 26, 2013 for final submission of entries. The committee will announce the winners during the "Week of the Child" at a press conference at 6:00 PM on May 17, 2013 at City Hall. San Francisco elected and appointed officials will further recognize the winners at the press conference. The winning video will be displayed on www.momagic.org for one year.

The contest is open to middle / high school students attending public, private, or home schools of San Francisco.

For more information and registration you can visit www.momagic.org

Mo' Magic is an outreach program of the SF Public Defender's Office at 1050 McAllister St. (415)567-0400, email: info@momagic.org

Traffic Stop Results in the Arrest of an Attempted Murder Suspect

On February 11, officers in the area of 3rd St. and Oakdale St. when they saw a silver VW vehicle pull up along side them at a stop light. The driver, Christopher Chiquillo, 19, San Francisco, was observed opening an alcoholic beverage and drinking it while waiting for the light to turn green.

The officers conducted a traffic stop, and determined that Chiquillo did not possess, a valid driver's license. Officers searched him and recovered several rounds of ammunition and a silver handgun on his person.

Investigating officers also determined that Chiquillo was involved in a domestic violence incident on February 10, 2013, just one day prior, where he had fired shots at the victim using a silver pistol.

Chiquillo was charged with possession of a prohibited weapon, domestic violence, traffic violation and attempted murder.



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Real Travel *By Sergio Nibbi*

Bread and Beaujolais

What a shame,
what a crying
shame! Under

threatening skies, the early morning walk to the Musee d'Orsay took less than 30 minutes. With a postcard-sized map from the front desk, we headed down the local streets rather than going to the boulevard along the Seine for a more direct route. Karen is the best navigator in the world, but she still hasn't gotten her bearings, and so just like an eagle scout I led her to the front door of the museum without a hitch. Our two day museum pass allowed us to go through the member's entrance and bypass the usually endless lines, and although security was tight we entered without a hitch. After checking our coats we briefly stopped by the information booth and made our way into the main building. The first thing I saw was placards proclaiming in no uncertain words, NO CAMERAS. Usually it might say "no flash" but they were very serious about not having any pictures taken. If ever there was a building that cried out to be photographed, this one was it. The d'Orsay was previously a train station that was scheduled to be demolished until it was converted into one of the most modern, beautiful buildings in all of Paris. The building is a piece of art all in itself and competes with the endless displays of world famous paintings and sculptures. From the 5th floor observation deck the entire building is



on display, and I must confess that I did sneak a quick photo with my I-phone. The top floor displays some of the world's most famous impressionist paintings, and for 5 Euros our ears were treated to colorful commentary on each painting and its artist. Our lunch at the Café Campana gave us a taste of the Croc Monsieur at its finest — it was not just a ham and cheese sandwich, it was extra special under the huge clock whose hands no longer move, but the setting was spectacular none the less.

The overcast turned into showers, and our next stop was a visit to Sainte Chapelle. With our umbrellas neatly tucked away at the hotel, we were considering a taxi when my keen eyes spotted



a couple of young men eagerly awaiting unsuspecting tourists to sell them a ride on their bicycle taxis. After a brief negotiation we jumped in, and not a minute too soon; it was raining. The two-story church is famous for its stained glass windows, and although the sun was not shining, we saw some of the most beautiful stained glass ever. The two-page card described each section of glass in the huge main window, and one could only imagine the amount of time and talent that went into each one. The walk back was drizzly but not impossible.

The following day we were picked up in the early afternoon for a ride to Monet's luscious gardens in Giverny to see his world famous Japanese bridge and water lily pond, the subject of so many of his famous paintings now worth millions of dollars each. Sim, our driver, was a professional photographer at one time, and we put him to work as he took endless photos of the two of us on the bridge, around the lily ponds, and in the main garden. The ride back was not bad until we hit the center of town, and then we



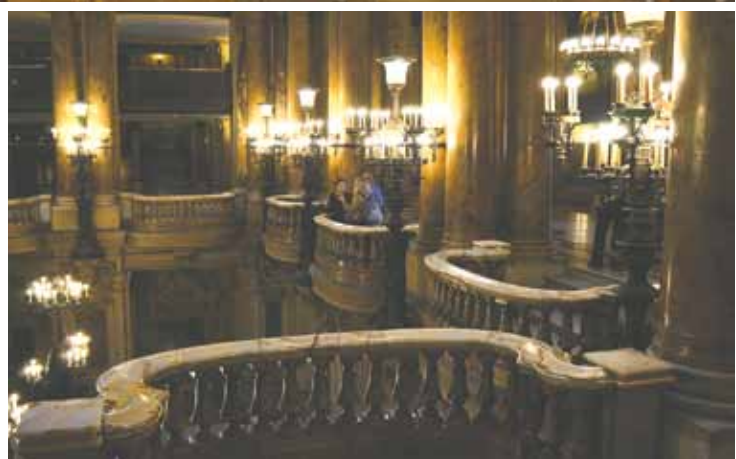
saw what some of the 30 million yearly visitors look like.

On Friday morning we put on our brave faces and decided to check out the Metro system. After a few hiccups we found our way to the Opera House and saw what Napoleon was really all about. Forget about the operas, this place is truly amazing all by itself. The marble stairs, railings and balconies are truly stunning. One can only imagine the beauty of opening night.

Across the street is one of the largest department stores in Paris called Galleries Lafayette, whose stained-glass dome and galleries is worthy of museum status. The top floor hosts a series of res-



taurants, and the self-service was more like Macy's, but a look at the beauty of the building itself soon dispelled that notion. A ride back on the Metro begged the question, "how come we don't have the same system in the Bay Area?"



Saturday we attended a croissant cooking class, and after four hours of mixing and kneading we decided that it's much easier to go to the local boulangerie and plunk down a couple of Euros than slave in the kitchen all day long.

The following day we met Jayne Louise, a beautiful young woman who is the daughter of a dear friend of ours, lives in Paris, and has been keeping an eye on us for the last couple of days. Monte Marte was our destination for the day, and after meeting her in front of the

pate, cheese and of course a nice bottle of wine and have a picnic in our room.

The next morning, we were picked up at 7:30 am for an overnight stay in the Loire Valley, with a few stops at a couple of chateaus along the way. We've seen and done a lot in the last week, and with the last few days left we want to enjoy it all. We'll miss the crowds and the traffic, but a couple of days in the country sound great right now. I wonder if the ice cream is just as good outside of Paris?



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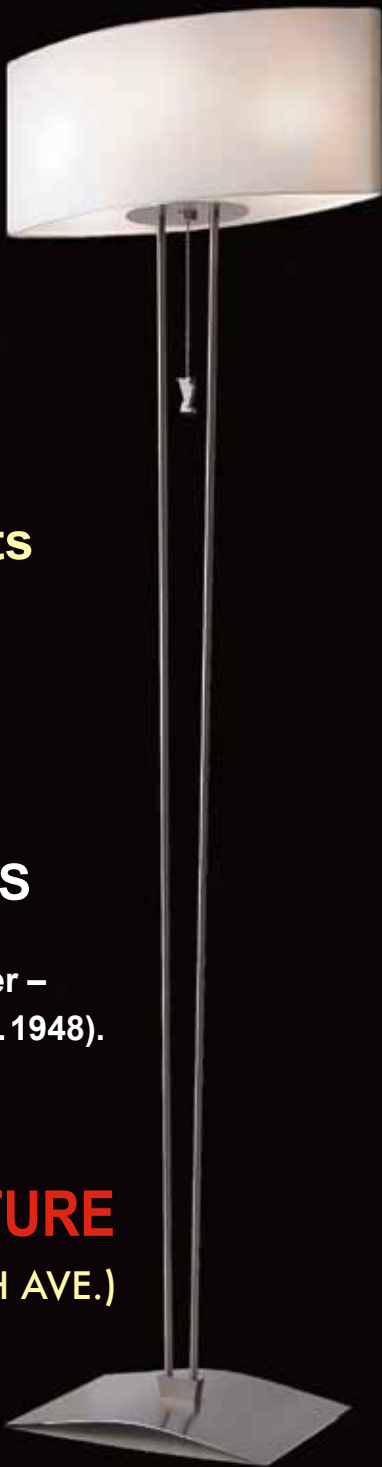
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