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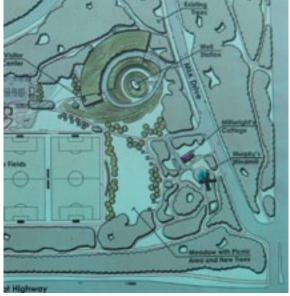
### GG Park's New Water Treatment Factory New Taraval Captain

By Greg Miller

he SF Public Utilities Commission has announced an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a new water treatment plant in the western part of Golden Gate Park. This factory will be located northeast of the historic (and soon to be restored) Murphy Windmill and Millwright's Cottage. The project includes approximately 40,000 square feet of buildings as well as new roads, parking, and lighting. The plant would filter and disinfect pre-treated sewer and storm water that will then be used to irrigate Golden

Gate Park, the Presidio Golf Course and Lincoln Park. Currently, potable water from the aquifer under Golden Gate Park is used for this irrigation. According to the PUC, the purpose of the project is to mix the aquifer water with Hetch Hetchy water to make drinking water for San Franciscans. The treated water from the recycling plant will then be used for irrigation. Estimated construction cost of the proposed project is \$109 million with construction planned for completion in 2015.

The placement of the plant aboveground in Golden Gate Park raises a number of issues about the location and design of the facility. According to the 1998 Golden Gate Park Master Plan, this



Park should be converted to recreation and parkland uses. The Master Plan also states that if a water treatment plant is installed, it must be placed completely underground with recreational uses on top of it. But the SFPUC is planning to many questions about this project: Why was this location selected? Why aren't the buildings being placed underground? Why are we giving up valuable parkland to what is essentially an industrial use? Why are we giving up open space to paving, buildings, parking, and lighting?

The factory will be built on what is now a construction yard. One argument given by the SFPUC in favor of the factory is that it will 'return' open space to part of the western end of Golden Gate the Park. But building a factory is not

#### **Commercialization Detracts From Recent Renovations**

By Kathy Howard, Friends of the Music Concourse



he Music Concourse has just finished millions of dollars of renovations, with the final stage being the renovation of the fountains. Unfortunately, the Department of Recreation and Park has chosen at this time to place numerous food, Segway, and bicycle vendors at the Bandshell, detracting from the historic character and the quality of this space. These changes have been instituted without filing the appropriate documentation with the Historic Preservation Commission as required by the landmark status of the area.

At a September meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission, FMC recommended that the Department present a long-term plan for both the area behind the Bandshell and the bus parking lot. We suggested consulting the Golden Gate Park Master Plan and

following the spirit of this design, which is that of an attractive, high-quality area to match the dignity and spirit of the overall Music Concourse.

The Music Concourse is a classic, peaceful space that provides a beautiful respite for San Franciscans and visitors alike from the pressures and commercialism that pervade our 21st century society. Recreation and Park has taken care that the original design and materials be preserved, and at great expense. We encourage RPD to also preserve the special feeling of the Music Concourse in its development of commercial opportunities next to the Bandshell. We look forward to working with the Department and the Historic Preservation Commission to continue to enhance this area that is so precious to so many San Franciscans.

Feedback: howard@westsideobserver.com

## **Announces First of** "Merchant Mondays"



araval Police Station's new Captain John Sanford plans a new community outreach effort. "I build large buildings above ground, at a would like to announce a new commuheight of 30 feet in some places. There are | nity engagement strategy." said Captain John Sanford, "every third Monday of each month I will have what is known as Merchant Mondays. This is my opportunity to meet with merchants in the Taraval District and discuss issues relevant to their business. Our discussion will include best practices, community relations, good neighbor strategies, loitering and crime problems that may adversely affect your business."

The meetings are planned to be moved around to different locations around the district to any merchant facilities that would like to host the monthly meeting. The first meeting, will be held at Taraval Police Station on Monday, October 18, 2010 @ 1:00 p.m. "We will discuss future locations and the best meeting time at our first meeting," Sanford said.

The general public will be invited to this first meeting, but the focus of the meeting is to discuss issues related to local merchants.

Check out our complete Police Blotter at www.westsideobserver.com/blotter

#### What does the City Spend?

Bv Steve Lawrence

an Francisco spends about \$8200 per resident per year. That is far more than the state spends on your behalf, and nearly what the federal government does.



Total City spending per year is over \$6.5 billion. That includes what is spent currently for benefits for retirees, but it does not include all that will need to be spent on those now working who will retire with pensions and life-time medical benefits. Also, the figure does not include schools and teachers.

Half of what San Francisco spends goes to personnel — to the salaries and benefits of public employees and retirees. In San Francisco public employees make more than private employees do. They also receive better benefits, have a more secure job, and, probably, enjoy better working conditions with fewer demands.

During good times public employment expands. Politicians respond to demands of constituents, special interests, and unions of public employees to do and hire more. When the hard times come it att.com



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RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR

#### "The Prop Kopp" Takes on the Election...

ection 1 of the California Constitution proclaims that all political power "is inherent in the people." Section 2 declares that a United States citizen 18 years of age and resident in California may vote. Therefore, the message is unmistakable: Vote on November 2, 2010. There's plenty of material to arouse your curiosity, and, even, excitement. Besides the election of a United States Senator for six years, there's election of a Governor, a Lieutenant Governor, an Attor-

ney General, a State Treasurer, a State Controller, a State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a Board of Equalization member, a Secretary of State, a State Insurance Commissioner, members of the State Legislature, members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, members of the City College of San Francisco governing board, members of the San Francisco Board of Education, confirmation of three justices of the California Supreme Court, among others. There are also ballot propositions, State and local. Now that my First Amendment rights have been restored because of retirement from the Superior Court, I can resume a bygone practice of recommending support or opposition regarding propositions, which I now gladly do, while eschewing recommendations concerning individual candidates, with the exception of those public officers who directly involve law enforcement and the

Nine state ballot propositions are presented. Proposition 19 legalizes marijuana under California but not under Federal law and permits local governments to regulate and tax commercial production, distribution and sale of marijuana to persons 21 years old or older. I agree with the President of Mothers Against Drunk Driving that Proposition 19 constitutes a "jumbled legal nightmare that will make our highways, our workplaces and our communities less safe." Vote "No" on Proposition 19.

On the other hand, I recommend a "Yes" vote on Proposition 20, which merely extends to the reapportionment of California's Congressional districts the same concept Public Defender Jeff Adachi that voters approved in November 2008 as a constitutional amendment for reapportioning boundaries for the State Assembly, State Senate and Board of Equalization. A redistricting commission comprised of five Democrats, five Republicans and four voters registered with neither party, will approve new Congressional district boundaries under Proposition 20. It makes sense.

Proposition 21 represents the same genre of special tax abuse that has contributed to state budgetary crises almost year after year the past decade and longer. It adds 18 dollars per year as a vehicle license "surcharge," not for the state general fund or even Department of Motor Vehicles or California Highway Patrol expenses, but for a new fund to benefit operational costs of state parks and wildlife conservation activities. The vehicle registration fee represents a special fund to defray the costs of the Department of Motor Vehicles and California Highway Patrol, an easily understood connection between the fee (or tax) and the service to which proceeds of the fee are devoted. That's not true with raising such tax to apply it to state parks and wildlife conservation, even if California vehicles receive free admission to state parks and beaches as a result. Not all vehicle owners and licensed taxpayers use state parks and beaches. Maybe the term "ballot box budgeting" is now trite; that, however, is embodied by Proposition 21 and, however noble the motivation, implementation of Proposition 21 drives yet another nail in the ability of the legislature and governor to execute their constitutional budget balancing responsibilities. That's why I'm voting against Prop 21.

Proposition 22 constitutes yet another constitutional amendment effort to prohibit the state from borrowing or seizing funds otherwise designated for local transportation, redevelopment or similar projects and services. It would stop the state's ability to use gasoline tax proceeds to pay debt service on transportation bonds or redirect redevelopment property tax proceeds or vehicle license fee income to pay for state-imposed mandates on local governments. I have never been an admirer of the redevelopment process, which essentially takes real estate from one party and allows another to purchase it at a lower price. Contrarily, the Highway Users Tax account constitutes a genuine user fee; motor vehicle operators pay the state gasoline tax of 18 cents per gallon into a specific account, the proceeds of which are used to build and maintain streets and highways, with minor diversion for buses, trolley cars and other "public transit." The ballot argument against Proposition 22 implies that it confers state constitutional protection upon redevelopment agencies for the first time. That is untrue. The state constitution contains several redevelopment provisions. (Article XVI, Section 16) On balance, Proposition 22 is benign. Vote "Yes."

Proposition 23 amends the California Health and Safety Code to suspend a justifiable environmental law enacted in 2006, preventing its operation until the state unemployment rate decreases to 5.5% or less for four consecutive calendar quarters! Prior legislation compels decreases in carbon dioxide emissions and is conceptually justified. Proposition 23 originates as an initiative funded by millions of dollars from two Texas oil companies. "Nuff said?" Vote against it.

new method of determining their income subject to California income taxation plus | in 2001 to \$140,000,000 in 2010 and will skyrocket to \$1,000,000,000 in 5 years, with the allows a business with available tax credits to transfer unused credits to another business in the same group. Proponents characterize the measure as ending \$1,700,000,000 in corporate tax "loopholes." I am bothered that Proposition 24, an initiative promulgated by the respected California Tax Reform Association, among others, represents another form of "ballot box budgeting" but I'm persuaded the repealed tax provisions do unfairly benefit large multi-state corporations. In my State Senate years, such corporations annually sought such legislation and obviously succeeded in 2008 and 2009. I'm voting for

enacted in 1935 as part of a compromise during institution of the state sales tax that requires a two-thirds majority of each house of the legislature to enact a state Budget Act each year. It mirrors a constitutional amendment I tried for four years to implement legislatively for voter approval, because it contains a strict provision that in any year in which the budget bill is not passed by the legislature by June 15, all legislators shall forfeit their salary or reimbursement for travel or living expenses until the budget bill is presented to the governor. It bars reimbursement for travel or living expenses or salary forfeited pursuant to the measure from being paid retroactively! (My bills also contained a requirement of five percent of general fund expenditure be placed in an annual reserve and the enactment date be changed from June 15 to June 30, the day before the beginning of the next fiscal year, but I'll gladly accept this truncated version). Proposition 25 should eliminate the indignity of disregard of the June 15 annual deadline for passage of a budget bill. Additionally, it does NOT change the constitutional requirement of a twothirds vote of the legislature to raise taxes. (Incidentally, only two other states require a super majority legislative vote to adopt an annual Budget Act.)

Speaking of taxes and fees, Proposition 26, yet another initiative constitutional amendment, expands to regulatory fees the doctrine that state taxes must be approved by

**News & Views** West of Twin Peaks Central Council

By Mitch Bull

he WOTPCC kicked off their new year with a standing room only crowd eager to see a debate over the future of city employee pensions and health care. Over 65 people attended the September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, at the Forest Hills clubhouse to see San Francisco Public Defender, Jeff Adachi, weigh in on his





Tim Paulson, Executive Director, SF Labor Council

"Yes on Prop B" stance against Tim Paulson, head of the San Francisco Labor Council, countering with his "No on B" stance.

Before the debate, Council President George Wooding opened the meeting at 7:30PM sharp by introducing the new Council officers: Blue Mudbhary, Recording Secretary, and Matt Chamberlain, Vice President. They join holdovers Wooding, Carolyn Squeri (Treasurer), and Avrum Shepard (Parliamentarian) to complete the Council

The San Francisco District Attorney's office was represented by Assistant DA Marissa Rodriguez, who spoke briefly to inform the attendees that the District Attorney's office will now be represented at every WOTPCC meeting to field questions and concerns from the members and guests. She also distributed information to interested parties on differences between the "Standard to Arrest and Standard to Convict" as related to making arrests and convicting those arrested in San Francisco.

#### From the presentations made, very different views of the fiscal future of the San Francisco Pension and Health Care system emerged.

Following a short Treasurer's report by Squeri, and a "Better Streets Planning" report by Shepard, Wooding gave a short report on the Laguna Honda Gift Fund debacle. Amid questions as to if the City Attorney has been given the information, it was determined that indeed, Herrera has the information, but a formal audit has not been completed and could be a very difficult process to complete due to the many accounts that were set up and the method in which the funds were moved around. To complicate matter, health chief Mitch Katz is expected to leave San Francisco to take over as the health chief for Los Angeles. As more information becomes available on LHH we will report it.

Dan of the Miraloma Park Improvement Club addressed the crowd asking for support in helping their organization deal with a homeowner on Teresita who is planning to install a large wind mill powered electric generator in the middle of a neighborhood.

Speakers related to election issues took "center stage" with explanations on Measure F, impacting the Board members of the SF Health System, which covers over 105,000 members and claims to only save \$30,000, yet cost over \$50,000 to put on the ballot. The projected savings wouldn't start until 2016.

As a preamble to the main debate on Prop B, a presentation based on the San Francisco Grand Jury findings was presented by a member of the Grand Jury.

Following the report on the Grand Jury findings, the presentations of both sides of the Proposition B debate started in earnest. Both Adachi and Paulson were given 12-minutes to make their cases, and then given time for rebuttal. Following, the floor was opened for questions and answers from the speakers.

From the presentations made, very different views of the fiscal future of the San Francisco Pension and Health Care system emerged. On the one hand, Adachi stated his Proposition 24 repeals 2008 and 2009 laws that allowed multi-state businesses a case that pension and health care costs for city employees have risen from \$17,000,000 possibility that SF will end up like Vallejo, deeply in debt or bankrupted if action is not taken to address the issue. Paulson countered that the Pension system is one of the bes managed and funded systems in the country and is funded in the 97% range, and that the real issue is not pensions but an attempt by Adachi and the "Yes on B" proponents to take away health care benefits (through higher employee premiums) from the lower paid employees of San Francisco. Paulson also stated the Proposition is poorly written, and the wrong way to initiate compromise over the bargaining table. The union chief also pointed out "no elected official from Gavin Newsom to Nancy Pelosi is in support I'm also voting for Proposition 25, which changes the constitutional requirement of Proposition B." He also questioned the findings of the Grand Jury as predicated on old "Lehman Brother" numbers and not truly accurate. He also reiterated several times about the "give backs" that the union members in SF have contributed to save local services. (These givebacks and concessions have been documented over the past several

> Handouts were available to the meeting attendees showing both Pro and Con views of the debate, and local media and photographers were also in attendance with no less than four photographers and journalists covering the spirited debate and Q and A session. The final debate on Prop B really centers on the numbers quoted from both sides and what is the actual pension and health care financial picture.

> The final outcome on Proposition B will be determined by San Francisco voters on November 2, but it remains the "miracle of democracy" that we can engage in such debate and discourse in a free manner. The turnout certainly indicated that the local populace are very interested in the issues and will come out, in force, when great dialogue and information is being presented.

WOTPCC President Wooding adjourned the meting at 9:10 PM.

The next meeting of the WOTPCC will be the annual meeting on Monday, October 25th at 7:30

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#### Laundry List of Dirty and Dumb Election Politics

By George Wooding

t's easy to see why San Francisco voters don't always vote. We are often asked to vote "Yes" on "No" by the very same government employees that we pay to solve the issues that we end up being asked to vote on. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) the legislative branch — is required to be advocates for their constituency and to vote on legislation. The Mayor's office — the executive branch — oversees and manages the City.



Neither branch of City government plays well with each other, and haven't for a long

The dysfunction between the Mayor's office and the BOS is so bad that Supervisor Chris Daly introduced ballot Proposition C, which will amend City Charter Section 3.1 to force the Mayor to "appear in person, at one regularly scheduled meeting of the BOS each month to engage in formal policy discussions."

Did Proposition C actually need to be placed on the ballot? No. Do voters really need to determine if Supervisor Chris Daly should be spending more time with Gavin Newsom? Again, "No."

Ballot Proposition E, the Election Day Voter Registration Charter amendment sponsored by Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, proposes that voters be allowed to register to vote in exclusively municipal elections on the same day that they vote. If you're too lazy or dumb to register to vote before a municipal election, you shouldn't be voting.

No wonder fewer and fewer people vote in San Francisco. "Yes" means "No," and up means down. Heated political battles, personal feuds, and vendettas are casually thrown to the voters. Propositions are complex and contain hidden agendas, while intimidation keeps worthy propositions off of the ballot.

The Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's office need to work together and do a better job of legislating San Francisco's issues, and representing their constituencies. It should not be voters' responsibility to both legislate and keep City politics out of the gutter.

Ballot Measure I, the Saturday Voting Act ordinance, wants citizens to vote on Saturdays, rather than on Tuesdays.

Both of these measures should never have been placed on the ballot. Now, real voters — the citizens who actually take the time to register to vote before elections and vote on Tuesdays — are going to have to decide how big a waste of time Propositions "E" and

Proposition F is a charter amendment sponsored by Supervisor Sean Elsbernd. Elsbernd wants to alter the selection process for the seven-member Health Service System's board of directors. Three of the board members are appointed, and the four elected board members are currently serving five-year, overlapping terms to ensure that at least three Board members are knowledgeable and experienced in any given year.

Proposition F was designed to have board member terms expire in pairs and be elected in the same year.

The City Controller's Office states that City savings could be \$30,000 per year, starting in 2016 (in Controller-speak, this means that the City will lose money). Why is this a Charter amendment, and why was it placed on the ballot? Vote No.

Proposition H has almost nothing to do with the voters, or even with San Francisco. On June 15, Prop H was placed on the ballot with a single stroke of the pen by Mayor Newsom. Prop H amends the San Francisco Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code so that elected City officials can no longer be elected to the board of a political party's Central Committee. This is a one-horse town and the Democratic County Central Committee (DCCC) — which is controlled by former Board of Supervisors president Aaron Peskin —runs almost everything.

Newsom and Peskin have had differences and on July 28, Peskin denied Newsom a seat on the DCCC. Peskin cited the DCCC legal council's decision that Newsom was ineligible for a seat on the DCCC, because "the statewide lieutenant governor post that he is running for is held by a Republican — Abel Maldonado. If Maldonado was a Dem-

ocrat, Newsom would be allowed a seat on the DCCC." The next day, Peskin grudgingly offered Newsom a temporary DCCC seat until November 2. If Newsom beats Maldonado, Newsom keeps his DCCC seat; if he loses,

Why is an internal Democratic Party policy issue on the ballot? Don't make the voters fight your battles. Vote "No" on Proposition H.

Party progressives — such as Supervisor John Avalos, labor unions, the Sierra Club, teachers, Senior Action Network, and the Tenants Unions — helped placed Proposition J, an ordinance, on the ballot. Prop J, The Hotel Fairness Initiative, closes loopholes in the hotel tax and will temporarily raise the hotel tax from 14% to 16% for three years. The anticipated annual \$38 million to \$45 million generated by closing the loopholes, and the hotel tax increase, will reportedly go back into the City's General Fund.

The word "temporary" is the dirtiest word in the English language. Any time someone involved in City politics tells you that something is temporary, you know you are

Mayor Newsom called Prop J "a job-killing tax that will harm the tourism business," and promptly introduced Proposition K to confuse voters and kill Proposition J. The provisions in Newsom's Proposition K are almost identical to Proposition J — with one glaring exception: Proposition K keeps the hotel tax at 14% and adds a "poison pill" that states, "In the event that another measure on the November 2, 2010 ballot seeks to affect prone area. Does Mr. Kopp think Mexico the overall rate of the Transient Occupancy Tax, any provisions of the other measure increasing the rate of tax or adding an additional surcharge shall be deemed to be in conflict with this measure. In the event that this measure receives a greater number of affirmative votes, the provisions of the other measure increasing the rate of tax or adding an additional surcharge shall be null and void, and the rate of tax plus all surcharges | PO Box 27176, SF 94127 • 415 517-6331 shall remain 14 percent.

Newsom is using dirty and deceptive political tactics, but he happens to be right: Higher hotel taxes will hurt the City's tourism business and generate less-than-expected revenue. Vote "Yes" on Proposition K, and "No" on Prop J.

Mayor Newsom introduced Proposition L, the Sit/Lie, Promotion of Civil Sidewalks ordinance, which amends the San Francisco Police Code. Prop L will make it illegal for people to continually sit and lie on sidewalks for extended periods of time. Newsom believes that "Present laws that prohibit the intentional, willful, or malicious obstruction of pedestrians do not adequately address the safety hazards, disruption and deterrence to pedestrian traffic caused by persons sitting or lying on sidewalks."



MY TWO CENTS By Will Durst

#### MAN OH MAN, I'M MAD.

an oh man, I'm mad. I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore. Take what? I don't know. And that makes me mad too. Angry. Riled up. Cranky. Irate. Livid. Bellicose. Splenetic. Which has something to do with the spleen. Think it involves leakage. Whatever it is, it can't be good and I got it.

I'm mad at everything and everybody, but especially at career politicians. Not to mention career pediatricians. From now on, one of my kids gets sick, I'm taking them to see some incensed old coot straight off the street carrying a misspelled sign. Experience is way overrated. Why can't US Senator be

I'm mad about paying taxes. Because I don't like paying taxes. I'm tired of my hard earned money wasted on silly things like roads and air traffic controllers and paramedics and pipeline inspectors. And flossing. I hate that too. Who needs teeth? Members of the lamestream media elite, that's who. So they can lie through them. Those guys I'm mad at because they keep running stories about me being mad.

I'm mad at the government's nit picking rules. Let corporations regulate themselves. They know what they're doing. I'm mad because I have to work two jobs just to get by and I'm mad rich people don't get more tax cuts. I'm mad about all the jobs that went overseas and I'm mad at unions demanding a living wage. I'm mad my life isn't better than my parents' and I'm mad I can't have everything now and force my children to pay for it. And knowing I'm confused just fuels my maddening.

I'm mad our Muslim President was born in Kenya. And don't bother me with your so- called facts. I know what I know and it makes me so mad I could just spit. So I do. Often. Right into the wind. And having the front of my shirt constantly moist just gooses the scale of how mad I am.

I'm mad at both of the parties. All of the parties. Political parties and birthday parties and tailgate parties. I'm mad at Democrats because they're the polar opposite of mad and I'm mad at Republicans because they're mad at me. And if my maddish spews hurt them, tough. Because they're not as mad as I am. I'm so mad I'll bite off both my hands one finger at a time if that's what it takes. To prove I'm mad. Which I am.

I'm mad at immigrants for doing jobs that are beneath me. I'm mad at the French. I'm mad at French's mustard. I'm mad at people who put ketchup on hot dogs. I'm even mad at people who are mad at people who put ketchup on hot dogs. You can never hope to replicate the purity of my precious maditude.

Some folks don't ever get mad which makes me maddest of all. The hell is wrong with these people? These uppity madless ones. Oooh, they make me so mad. But they will be mad. Soon enough. Because my madness is going to bloom and grow until everyone is as mad as me. Which, is going to be tough. Because I'm really really mad. Did I mention I was mad? Good. Because I am. Mad, that is. Man oh man, I'm mad

Will Durst is a San Francisco based political columnist who also tells jokes sometimes. Feedback: durst@westsideobserver.com

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

spected and Disregarded I find the article Katrina?

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Re: Quentin Kopp's Degraded, Disre- will come to help us like they did during

too conservative. The author seems to 
The General fund should go first of all hide the reason why does the Government to Public Transit and why not? We preexist. Aren't we a big country that needs a tend to be a green city, so why not reward powerful and big Government? Does the those who do not jam our streets with author not know what just had happened cars? Somewhere in the article Mr. Kopp in the end of 2008? The biggest financial insinuates that money generated from gasmeltdown ever due to an anemic Govern- oline tax goes to Public Transit, as if it were ment that has no funds? Or the oil spill, a gift! Concerning the leitmotif of "Spe-Katrina, etc. We rather should call upon cial Interest", I am amazed that Mr. Kopp a powerful, well financed Government, seems to aim at UNIONS and those who since we live in a dangerously earthquake serve the people. I always believed that if

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> Sergio Nibbi, Blair Randall, , George Wooding. 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).

Don Lee Miller, Greg Miller, Patrick Monet-Shaw,

**AROUND THE TOWN Comings and Goings...** By Mitch Bull

#### Halloween, Elections, and other scary stuff....

utumn is here, and with the weather it seems that we just by-passed summer completely. I know that a summer in SF is more a state of mind than an actual weather pattern lasting more than 3 days, but this "summer" was really cool and uninspiring from a weather standpoint. At least the SF Giants made the season one of the most exciting in memory.

It's hard to believe that Halloween and Election Day are right around the corner, but the calendar says that it is so. The election has some very important Propositions that will affect pensions, MUNI, pot clubs, the ability to sit/lie on the sidewalk, as well as the normal **phalanx of propositions** that we are asked to support and reject. Throw in that we actually have some interesting candidates to vote for or reject, and this election sizes up as one that will impact California and San Francisco for years to come. Although Î do not believe in newspapers endorsing candidates (I think the voters should be able to do their homework and make the most informed choice) it is clear that one of our biggest hurdles is getting people to vote at all.

The advent of the absentee ballot and early voting is changing the way that campaigns are run and dollars spent. Absentee/early balloting may account for 15-20% of vote totals in some areas of the state. This is a large rise from years past when only the "snowbirds" or vacationers would bother to use the absentee method of voting. If you register early, it makes for an easy way to have your vote counted and frees your schedule from having to be in town on November 2. Although we may disagree on issues and candidates, there is no disputing that the ability to vote is one of the greatest gifts that we have. So, please vote and make your choices known. Check out "Quentin's Column" as he takes on the Propositions quite nicely.

#### Halloween will be fun and festive as the storefronts and windows on West Portal Avenue will become 20 by 24 inch "works of art" . . .

Halloween will be fun and festive as the storefronts and windows on West Portal Avenue will become 20 by 24 inch "works of art" in a contest where children will paint and decorate the merchant windows in a window painting and decoration contest. Sponsored by the West Portal Merchants Association and the local Rotary Club, students from the first grade to the 10th grade will be working in teams to create their works of art, and to bring a festive and "scary" feel to West Portal Avenue.

The artwork is expected to be completed by October 24th and will be on display for udging through **Halloween**, with an awards ceremony in early November to celebrate and acknowledge the artists.

I've heard that over **40 merchants have signed on** for the event so it should be a fun time and bring a spark of color to the Avenue. To sign on or to get other information you can contact either Elliot Wagner at 415.731.8080 (Dimitra's), or Bob Scully at 415.239.4562 with the SF –West Rotary Club. It should be a fun and festive event.

Are we there yet? - Last month I asked this questions in reference to the West Portal Avenue/St. Francis Circle project that seemed to be taking forever. As soon as we hit the press, the cones disappeared and the boulevard was again "Open for Business." The new MUNI equipment, the pedestrian crossings, the sparkle of new concrete and asphalt and having WPA open again is a joy to us drivers, and no doubt to the merchants who had to persevere through the construction. A big "Thank you" to the Merchants and to MUNI and the construction crews who kept things moving during the large and disruptive process. Please keep them in mind when you are shopping as the economy is still not humming along, and our small merchants and businesses are highly dependant on residents/shoppers within 1-2 miles of West Portal Avenue.

What about you? If you have an interesting snippet, or some other fact you'd like to get into the paper just drop it to us. You can reach me at: mitch@WestsideObserver. com. Be sure to check out the Observer online @ www.WestsideObserver.com.

#### City Spending (Cont. from p. 1)

is difficult to eliminate public employees; all possible steps are taken to avoid painful layoffs. This means that public employment tends to ratchet upward.

In good times and lean it is tempting to promise *future* benefits which do not come from current funds. Benefits ratchet up. For example, city retirees receive life-time medical benefits. How many private employers offer that?

Politicians shy from stopping the rise in public employment and its cost. It can be political suicide to defy unions of public employees, which control so much money and so many campaigners. It would be risky to defy special interests who demand more services, especially during good times, when most voters turn their attention to making their own hav while the sun shines.

How might the ratcheting up of city employment and spending be controlled? Perhaps the City Charter should limit public employment to some number per resident. Now there is on the order of one public employee for every twenty-eight residents, far more than in most cities across the nation. Perhaps this ratio should increase to no more than one City employee for each 35 residents. Compensation, too, might be limited to a percentage (perhaps 110%) of what is earned by the median private employee in the and scuttle any effective programs. Once million dollar campaign, "Care not Cash" City. That way those working for the public would not be far richer than those who again, I was confronted by the hard reali- or PROPOSITION N as the measure was support them. But at present there is no movement in the direction of such a Charter

Apart from paying salaries to City workers and benefits to retirees, how does the City spend its annual budget? Professional and contract services account for more than onethird of what does not go to present and retired City employees, so the City also spends large on independent contractors. Aid and grants consume about 9.4% of what the City spends; the City pays outsiders to do good works. Debt service consumes almost 10% of spending, and this percentage will rise.

Where does the City get its funds? Property taxes provide one-fifth. Charges for services bring in one-third. One dollar in six is from the State or Feds. Pavroll taxes. business taxes and fees, hotel room tax, and quite a number and variety of other sources bring in smaller sums of the more than six billion dollars needed to feed the hungry beast that is City government.

Does the City spend too much? This fiscal year's deficit is \$483 million; next year's is projected to be \$712 million. MUNI routinely collects about two dollars per five that it spends, yet no one proposes to increase the fare to five bucks. It is expensive to run a special City.

One City expense that is running wild is pension costs. Recently the Civil Grand Jury, which is a group of volunteer citizens, reported on how the City's pension expense is unsustainable. "The purpose of this report is to alert public officials and citizens that fundamental adjustments must be made to the City's employee pension program." In five years pension and health care costs will more than double, the Controller says. The Civil Grand Jury believes that the financial future of San Francisco is in jeopardy. Will citizens act in time?

In brief the program was as follows:

### IF You're Going To San Francisco....

By Former Supervisor Tony Hall

wasn't going to write a column about homelessness because my defecation. positions and programs that I initiated as a Supervisor were so maligned and twisted by the press and politicians who exploited the issue that I hate to get Department and all into it. But you, the good taxpayer and honest citizen, deserve to know what's going on, so here it is. Homelessness in San Francisco is still a

major issue despite all the time, energy and hours of service, and urging the City to money that the City has expended in the expand its contract with the JC DeCaux past five years. Regardless of what count or survey has been conducted or manipulated, the problem still exists, and the lat- to double the number shelter beds and est census shows that there are at least as many if not more homeless people in San Francisco today than ever before. The only difference is that now we have institutionalized the industry, costing the taxpayers many, many hundreds of millions of dollars more, with questionable results. Neither the homeless, nor the people footing the bill, are being helped.

Having been involved with a number of programs dealing with homelessness for court. at least 11 years before I became a Supervisor, I felt that I knew enough about the problem to be able to propose real, effective, and fair solutions to this most nagging and persistent of problems facing San hood or business associations.

pose programs that would enslave them need our help. Many genuinely have fallen behavior. on bad times - they certainly need our help. Many are just people who are "gaming the system" - they do not need our help.

people in a way that helps them on the road to administer effective and positive treatment are limited in a City of 800,000 people, without the State taking responsibility.

time working on this issue than I did

In January of 2002 I introduced legislation that banned the act of urinating and defecating on City streets. In the ensuing months, I was successful in getting it passed at the Board of Supervisors, albeit by a narrow vote. It set off a flurry of legislation by Board members who then realized that the subject of "Homelessness" increasingly uneasy about this problem.

This banning of urination and defecation was my lead piece in a comprehensive seven point homeless program that I had been working on for the prior year, and the legislative process.

1. An ordinance urination and 2. A resolution

urging the Recreation and Park

other City departments to open up closed rest rooms, and to expand their

Company to provide additional facilities.

3. An ordinance making it City policy accompanying storage facilities to accommodate 5% of the City's population.

4. An ordinance that prohibited sleeping on the sidewalk.

5. An ordinance requiring the police Department and the District Attorney to post on website statistics relating to the enforcement of quality of life violations.

6. A resolution urging the Superior Court to create a special "quality of life"

7. A resolution amending the composition of the Local Homeless Coordinating Board by adding four new seats: 2 from the hospitality industry, and 2 from neighbor-

When I introduced the above pro-In my research and studies, I came to gram, I reminded my colleagues that this realize that many of the poor unfortunates was a "call to action." This was a situation classified in the "homeless" category were that had to be addressed as soon as posindividuals who, for whatever reasons, sible, and the very fact that we could not need our help. I also came to realize that do everything was not an excuse to do there was a fine line between helping and nothing. We must try to assist the many hurting them, as it was very easy to pro- addicted and mentally handicapped people on our streets, as well as those who in a way of life that would preclude them have fallen on tough times, but we must from ever breaking the cycle of homeless- not fall into the trap of tolerating a situaness. Many people are homeless because tion that is unhealthy, unhappy and unfair they are addicted substance abusers - they to all concerned. We must help where we need our help. Many are suffering from a can, but the bottom line is we must estabstate of mental illness or depression - they lish and enforce minimal standards of civil

Well, wouldn't you just know it? In the following months and years, homeless programs were flying all over the place by Identifying and treating the specific those hungry for publicity and political needs of each of these of these groups of advancement. It was during this period of time that our present mayor decided back to a positive and productive lifestyle he had better make his move or be left is the answer. I also realize that resources in the dust by those who were truly trying to do something about the homeless problem. After picking the brains of those who actually knew about the problem, he Indeed, as a Supervisor, I spent more devised a questionable program with a catchy title and introduced it to the media anything else. I also spent an inordinate rather than try to vet it through the legisamount of time trying to educate and lative process of the Board of Supervisors, share with my colleagues on the Board my where it would be subject to scrutiny, anaideas, and I solicited their input because lyzed, and if necessary, amended. Backed I was a strong believer that a collective by an incredible amount of special intereffort on the part of all Board members est money and hype, his media campaign was absolutely necessary to rectify the sit- took off, and lo and behold, here we are six uation in our City. Little did I know that years later spending 10 times as much to the political ambitions of a few of them service the same number of homeless that would undermine any meaningful results we had in our City as in 2004. The multities that politics introduces into any issue, known when placed on the ballot, was one and the damage that it can do to the com- of the biggest and most expensive con jobs ever sold to the public. That program catapulted our current mayor into his present position.

When I opposed Care not Cash as a Supervisor, I was unmercifully bashed by the mainstream press, and the subject of numerous hit pieces and mailers by "campaign Newsom," portraying me as being soft on the homeless in my own district. I made for good print. It certainly was the knew I would be hit hard, but I was willing hot topic of the day, and a great way to to stand up and at least be honest to the advance one's political career. It was also public. PROP N was a very misleading and very obvious that the public was becoming complicated piece of legislation, and the true facts and the eventual costs associated with the measure were only brought out after hours and hours of tedious legislative analysis and testimony by experts. It was no wonder that the package was easily sold on January 14th of 2002, I presented it to to the voters who were hungry for some the Board for their constructive input and kind of action. They don't have the time to amendments as it wound its way through look into every detail, and I believe that is why we have elected representatives to do that work for them.

Feedback: lawrence@westsideobserver.com

Cont. p. 18

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#### **Selling Reality**

he market in our area has entered the busy period before the end of the year. While it might sound too early to be talking about the end of the year, selling real estate requires a time frame that stretches for a minimum of a month once the buyer and seller enter into a contract. Between preparation, marketing and escrow selling a home can take

I remember when we bought, thinking that this is one of the longest deferred gratification processes in America. Buying a car or just about anything else in America, you can go in, put down no money, sign some documents and enjoy the new purchase. With a house you put up lots of money and then you wait and wait till you finally get the keys and can start to move in.

Selling a home now means spending time and money getting it ready for showing, being realistic about your expectations, being realistic about what you have and what it will get on the market. One pitfall is all the homes that have additions that don't tie in to the original part of the house or were carved out of spaces that don't have full height or enough windows to conform to code. Many have staircases that are just tarted-up utility stairs and actually detract from the additional space.

The market has changed enough so that bad additional space is seen as a detriment and holds no value. It has become imperative that when selling the home it is marketed as it appears on the tax records. The federal secondary mortgage buyers are not recognizing "bonus rooms" or "unwarranted space" as having any value; therefore appraisers can't use it to justify the price of the

We all must recognize that this shift in lending practice will have more of a detrimental effect on homes modified without permit than other economic factors. You might have a four bedroom two bath house but if two of those bedrooms and the second bath were added within a standard two bed one bath you really only have a two bed one bath home as far as the buyers

lender is concerned. Frankly, if the lender will only lend on the value of the property as a two bedroom, one bath home then the buyers are not going to put up the extra cash for the space. A new reality!

What is a seller to do? Well that depends on the equity situation.

Obviously if you've been in the house since it cost \$100,000 you're fine. If on the other hand you bought it and paid for the additional space comparatively then you really should get it inspected and see if you can bring it into conformity with code. It will cost you fees for permits, maybe some work and additional taxes but you can sell the space for more money.

The market statistics for our area show an increase in supply from seventy-three last month to one hundred seven. Sales increased a bit from twenty-five to twentyeight which now gives us a 3.8 month supply of homes to sell at the current rate of sales. Homes in contract went down from forty-three to thirty-five.

The median price for the sales in the past month is \$790,000. The median house for the period was a three bedroom, one and three-quarter bath with 1,516 square feet. The median days-on-market was forty-three.

Citywide the median price is \$700,000 which is down less than 1% from August of 2009. Sales are down 5.6% from the previous year and inventory has risen by 14.2%. Even with sales slowing and inventory rising SF is still holding is the "sellers market" range with a 3.4 month supply for single-family homes and a 4.7 month supply

One last bit of news from California county assessors' offices, San Francisco is the only county that saw a rise in assessed value over the past year. Four percent up while every other California County shrank.

Jed Lane is a Real Estate Broker associated with Coldwell Banker Lakeside, West Side native and current resident of Miraloma Park.

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SF Sales Residential Units Last 12 Months

Westside Real Estate Report

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space" as having any value. . . .

The market has changed enough so that bad



#### Prop L v. Prop M

By Jed Lane

he elected "leaders" of our fair City have placed a choice before us on the November ballot. We are being asked to determine which police process will cut back or better control the deterioration of civility on the public streets and sidewalks, on the surface at least. What we are really being asked is should the will of the community or the will of the Board of Supervisors be primary.

Proposition M was placed on the ballot by Supervisor's Ross Mirkarimi, David Chiu, Chris Daly, Eric Mar, John Avalos and David Campos. The remainder of the eleven opposed the measure. Prop M the "Foot Patrol Ordinance" directs the Police Commission to do some wonderful things that they are already doing, like establish a "Community Policing policy and Foot Beat Patrol program within the Police Department". This has been done starting in October last year when former Chief Fong started the implementation of the recommendations of the Police Executives Research Forum (PERF). Prop M continues to demand that the Police Commission (PC) create a policy document that needs to go before the Board of Supervisors prior to implementation! The new Community Policing policy must include among other things a "description of long-term preventative problem-solving strategies and tools that are available to police officers (2) plans for encouraging full and open communication and collaboration among Police

Plumbing

personnel and community members, including in developing and implementing neighborhood-specific policing priorities and strategies, goals for allocating police resources between the key tasks of call response and engaging in proactive efforts to identify and solve community problems that contribute to crime.

All of this is already going on and has been for almost a year. Ingleside district started it's Community Advisory Board last October and every other district station started theirs right after Chief Gascón was brought on. Most important to this issue is the fact that the community and the police have asked for a long term problemsolving tool to made available and it is shot down by rhetoric in the Supervisors committee. Instead of taking the communities hard work under thoughtful consideration we have a Board of Supervisors placing proposal on the ballot to force the Police Commission to make the department do what is already under way. Not only that but this proposition contains a "poison pill" clause that says if it gets more votes than Proposition L on the same ballot then it wins and Prop L can't be implemented!

Proposition L is the Sit/Lie or Civil Sidewalks Ordinance. This measure was placed on the ballot by the Mayor after it had on hearing in committee at the Board of Supervisors. This ordinance came out of the process that the Supervisors want the PC to create. It was done by the PD and the community in an effort to "solve community problems that contribute to crime". The Haight Ashbury community and the Park district command staff are dealing with a unique set of problematic travelers that have been descending on the Haight area for the past few

years. (see the June 2010 issue). These young adults have anarchistic tendencies for the most part except when it inconveniences them, then they are all about the legal protection they should be accorded.

Most often the question emerges in this "debate" that the PD already has laws that allow action. The difference is that of many traffic infractions. As it is with traffic, if an officer sees you break a traffic law the officer can cite you. The officer doesn't need a civilian or citizen to swear a complaint that you ran the stop sign. All of the laws that can be employed against these gypsies require a third party to swear out a complaint before the officer can take

The community has decided that they want the police to be able to take action if they encounter people sitting on lying on the sidewalks. Whether the office is walking a foot patrol or not the community wants civility restored. This solution is what the people that live, work and shop in the area want to have happen. The community people want the police, who are likely to be on foot patrols to be able to first ask troublesome folks that are blocking the right of way for no legitimate purpose, to get up and not block the sidewalk. Yes, folks that's it - just stand up and don't sit or lie on the sidewalk. If the person or persons refuse then the officer can cite them.

There are really a few layers to this action by the Board of Supervisors. On the face of it is a "feel good" proposal. Everyone loves the idea of foot patrols. Foot patrols are usually the most visible of the proactive elements of a community policing model. The federal Department of

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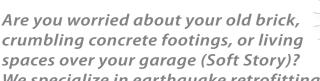




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**Kopp** (Cont. from p. 3)

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two-thirds of each house of the legislature. A true fee requires only a majority approval of each house. Proposition 26 reverses a 1997 California Supreme Court ruling that government may impose regulatory fees on companies which produce contaminating products in order to treat and correct adverse health effects related to those products. Regulatory fees can now be adopted or increased by a majority vote of each house of the legislature on a state basis or a majority vote of a city or county. Proposition 26 classifies that type of fee as a state or local tax requiring supermajority approval. I believe in user fees, charges directly related to the product or service, which underpins the fee amount, which do not result in local or state government "making profit" from the fee payers. Proposition 26 even requires a popular vote to pass local taxes. An inherent Proposition 26 problem arises from deciding whether a particular exaction is subject to Proposition 26. I can predict more business for California courts if Proposition 26 passes. I'll vote against Proposition 26 with trepidation, hoping (perhaps vainly) that future legislators and county supervisors don't abuse regulatory charges to obtain funds to pay the costs, for example, of hazardous waste elimination or oil spill cleansing.

Proposition 27 is easy. Vote "No". It would eliminate the state commission on redistricting, which was just approved by voters in 2008 to stop the "fox in the henhouse" syndrome of legislators' redistricting legislative and Board of Equalization districts every ten years. (Can you imagine that the first chairman of the California Fair Political Practices Commission under then-governor Jerry Brown is one of the proponents? You know damn well the money for qualifying this initiative and campaigning for it emanates from those affected. Need I say more?)

Now, let's dispose of eight local measures. Proposition AA is a sure "No" vote. It imposes an additional vehicle registration fee on San Francisco vehicle owners and seizes the money for special, unrelated spending, manifestly caused by maladministration of gasoline tax and similar proceeds and subventions to City Hall.

Proposition A also merits a "No." It's another example of "cutesy" City Hall manipulation by the Mayor and others. It would authorize a \$46,000,000 plus obligation under the guise of "earthquake retrofit" for San Francisco structures, but the structure isn't your house or even your business building. It's all for taxpayer-subsidized housing.

We'd repay the principal amount of \$46,000,000 plus another 80% or so in interest charges on our property taxes. Isn't that nice?

**Proposition B** constitutes a charter revision in city retirement and health plans, consistent with benefits in private businesses and realities of runaway city government spending which now rests on approximately \$6,800,000,000 per year, an annual budget tantamount to that of Philadelphia, a city of almost five times our population. Vote

Proposition C is a silly proposed charter amendment to compel the mayor to appear on a regular basis at board of supervisors meetings, probably so people like Stupidvisor Daly, its sponsor and Fairfield, California resident can show what big men they are. Vote "NO" on Proposition C, just as you must vote "NO" on Proposition **D**, which, disgracefully, would allow non-citizens to vote in school board elections. (This is the kind of illogical law that affects San Francisco's reputation for probity in public affairs.) I similarly recommend a "NO" vote on Proposition E, which would allow a voter to appear on Election Day and instantly register and vote. Registration procedures in California are generous and "liberal." Having lived through voter fraud scandals in the 1970's (fraudulent registrations were a part of those scandals), I strongly object to Proposition E. Vote against it.

**Proposition F** constitutes a method of slightly reducing the cost of elections for the Health Services Board. Although opposed because of its temporary effect on two long-time members, it does not abolish their membership and simply requires them to run for re-election in a shorter period of time. The world will not end with adoption of Proposition F. The world, at least in San Francisco, will be better by passage of Proposition G, which removes a rigid 1968 Charter amendment spawned by one of San Francisco's historically memorable mayors, who failed to consider adequately its long term effects. Proposition G simply removes the inflexibility of conferring salaries and benefits upon MUNI railway operators that, in practice, amount to the highest in the country! **Vote "YES" on proposition G**.

Finally, I earnestly recommend election of Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley as Attorney General. His experience, unquestioned dedication to enforcing state laws and disinterest in aspiring to any other office but the state's chief law enforcement office render him so much more qualified than his (feeble and feckless) opponent whose only aim is an office higher than Attorney General. Steve Cooley will be the first Attorney General since one time San Francisco District Attorney Tom Lynch in 1965 who performs the duties of office without desire to abandon it for governor, U.S. Senator, Congress, or some other "higher office." Do vote to confirm California Supreme Court Justice Ming Chin, (he is unopposed), and, above all, keep the faith with responsible government for we, the people!

Quentin Kopp is a former Supervisor, State Senator and Judge.

#### *L* &*M* (*Cont. from p. 6*)

Justice recommends that the most effective implementation of community policing is to have most officers "cross-trained" and "generalists". To implement the changes in our police department we don't need the Board of Supervisors injecting itself demanding action that is already underway, structures that will actually hinder the community's efforts and negate the will of the people. This is also a classic power grab by the Board of Supervisors. Writing law that demands that another commission deliver proposals to them for review is nothing less than a power grab. Most important is the effort to confuse the voting public by placing a feel-good band-aid ordinance on the ballot that masks the real effort to defeat the community's will with the poison pill and do a power grab in the process. Don't be fooled - vote to defeat Prop M and support the communities' desire for civility on our sidewalks by voting for Prop L.

In the Ingleside District, where I am an advisor, we have implemented beat officer foot patrols on the streets where it seemed beneficial. We have also taken other actions with the radio cars, MUNI and traffic enforcement. I know that if any member of our community came to us or the Captain and asked for foot patrols and was able to show the merit it would be tried.

If you are interested in working on the implementation of the Community Policing model go to your district police station and ask about the Community Advisory Board meetings or contact SF SAFE at (415) 553-1984 for more information.

The campaign slogan against Prop L is "Sidewalks are for People". Exactly true. They are for people to walk along the side of businesses and homes. Parks and benches are for people too, for people to sit and lie and picnic. Do we need to protect the rights of panhandlers and traveling anarchists? Vote YES on Prop L. Do we want the Board of Supervisors to have review of police manpower allocations? Vote NO on Prop M.

Jed Lane is a Real Estate Broker associated with Coldwell Banker, West Side native and current resident of Miraloma Park. He serves as the President of the Board of SF SAFE and is a member of the Ingleside District Community Advisory Board.

If you have questions contact him at jed@westsideobserver.com

#### **Escalating City Pension And Benefits Costs**



lmost a year ago, I wrote the first in a series of articles about the city's escalating pension and health care costs for the Westside Observer. I didn't know it then, but it started a movement to reform our public benefits system, known now as Prop B, which the voters will decide on November 2.

I had met with several members of the Civil Grand Jury who had authored a report entitled, "Pensions: Beyond Our Ability to Pay," where they detailed how the city's retiree pension liability had nearly tripled in the past five years. Even worse was the City's growing health care liability, which had ballooned to \$4 billion in unfunded health care costs for 26,000

city employees, 28,000 retirees and their 47,000 dependents. And these costs, according to the City Controller, would double in the next five years.

One year later, the pension and benefits tsunami continues to grow. We are spending nearly a billion dollars on pension and health care costs for our city employees. One out of every six dollars available to the city now goes to city employee benefits. By this time next year, it will have grown another \$50-\$70 million.

The problem with pensions has grown so bad that the public employee union leaders opposing Prop B don't even argue against the Prop B's common-sense pension reforms. After all, an employee who pays 9%-10% into their pension for a guaranteed, life-time pension upon retirement which equals 75%-90% of their last year's income has a deal that no one in the private sector would even dream of. In order to receive the pension that a public sector employee receives, a private sector employee would have to save 65% of their paycheck.

Instead, opponents have focused on the health care component of Prop B, arguing that Prop B is "bad medicine" because it requires city employees to pay more for their

But a close review of the facts shows that under Prop B, city employees will still receive health care premiums at rates unparalleled in the private sector.

 $\ldots$  most city employees do not contribute anything for their own healthcare. Taxpayers subsidize the entire cost, between \$2,890 to \$5,560 per year for each employee.

Prop B would change this by requiring that an employee insured under the basic health plan pay just \$96/year (\$8/month) for their healthcare. Under Proposition B, city employees would still pay more than 22 times less than private sector employee, who, on average, pays \$2,185 per year for their health insurance.

City employees with dependents currently pay \$8 a month. Under Prop B, they would pay \$2988 per year. Private sector employees with dependents pay an average of \$7,026 a year. And this does not include the 31% of San Franciscans who do not receive employer-paid health care costs and pay the entire cost themselves.

Opponents of Prop B claim that city workers cannot afford to pay the health benefits if Prop B passes. Their argument ignores the fact that the average San Francisco city employee earns \$93,000 a year in salary alone, not including benefits, while the average private sector salary is \$46,000.

They also argue that "a single mother will be forced to pay up to \$5,600 per year for her child's health care — in addition to the \$8,154 she already pays."

First, this is not true. A city employee with two dependents only pays a total of \$448 a month for full health coverage. Only if the city employee chose the most expensive health plan, which costs \$31,645, would the employee have to pay \$19,561 a year under Prop B instead of the \$16,922, which he or she now pays.

What the opponents conveniently fail to point out is that out of 26,000 city employees, there are only 91 employees who are enrolled in this "Rolls Royce" rate plan.

Even with contributions required by Prop B, City employees will receive a benefit package that is unparalleled in the private sector. More importantly, however, the City's healthcare fund will be made more sustainable by ensuring that the funding for the city's healthcare program doesn't run dry when the city can no longer afford to pay

According to the Controller's ballot statement, Proposition B would save the City \$121 million annually. Some of these funds could be used to prevent the devastating cuts to the City's mental health, substance abuse, and other community health programs for poverty-stricken adults and children who do not have healthcare coverage. Next year's deficit looks worse, and we won't be able to count on federal stimulus funding to save us.

Voting yes on Prop B is an antidote to continuing cuts to healthcare for the poorest

*Jeff Adachi is the proponent of Proposition B and the city's Public Defender.* 

#### Water Treatment Factory (Cont. from p. 1)

adding open space. Has anyone asked San Franciscans what other uses they might like to see for this precious open space? This land could, and should be, used for park and recreational uses. Golden Gate Park can always use more recreation areas and meadows – try to find a picnic table on a busy weekend!

The need to come up with ways to address San Francisco's drinking water supply for the future cannot be denied. But it is important that all concerns about our parkland are addressed before this factory is constructed. Public input at the early stages of this EIR process is very important in order to protect and preserve open space in Golden

Feedback: miller@westsideobserver.com

The public may submit its questions and concerns about any issues it would like to have covered in the EIR to the SFPUC. Written comments should be mailed to the San Francisco Planning Department, Attn: Bill Wycko, Environmental Review Officer, SF Westside Recycled Water Project, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103 2479 or submitted by email to Carrie Dovzak, the CEQA coordinator for this project, at carrie.dovzak@

Please also forward copies of your letters to: Golden Gate Park Preservation Alliance, ggppa@earthlink.net or 1243 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, SF, CA 94122.

•

Information will be posted on the GGPPA website during this process.www. goldengateparkpreservation.org.

EDUCATION October 2010

hat's a pretty easy question. My guess is that almost everyone will answer, "Yes".

The next question is a little bit harder. "What can I do in my community to help?"

As someone once said, "Let me count the ways."

And let me count the ways that parents in our community are helping children by

Last week, I was at Lowell High School and a PTSA father was volunteering in the bookstore helping to sell school materials. Find out more: http://www.lowellptsa.org/vol-

The PTA at Herbert Hoover Middle School keeps parents well informed through email news about up coming events—from a beach clean up to planning parent programs at the school. Find out more: http://sfpta.org/Hoover/HHMS2005/html/hoover%20 happenings/Happenings\_Current.htm

Just up the hill at the Ruth Asawa School of the Arts PTSA, parents have put together a web site listing all kinds of activities that support the students-including a school beautification day! Find out more: http://www.sfsota-ptsa.org/ You can even sign up for email alerts notifying you about up coming student performances!

The number-one reason to join the Parent Teacher Association is to benefit your

But there are many more advantages. Here are just a few:

- **Get Connected**. There's no better way to know what's happening in your school.
- Discover Great Resources. The PTA offers a variety of programs designed for par
- Tap into a Network. PTA functions provide opportunities to meet other parents and teachers, build rapport and discuss parenting issues that are on your mind.
- Watch yourself Grow. By volunteering with your PTA, you gain valuable experiences and personal confidence. It's an opportunity to put your skills and hobbies to good use for a good cause.
- Speak Up. Because PTA is a forum for exchanging ideas, you are encouraged to make suggestions and more effectively suggest change at your child's school.
- Help Your Child Succeed. PTA fosters parent involvement. Parent involvement has been proven by three decades of research to be the greatest predictor of student
- Witness Improvement. By getting involved at your child's school you'll be part of the solution, helping to make positive changes. Local PTAs play an important role in fundraising to provide building improvements, curriculum-based programs, social events – all vital to a school's success.
- Be a Role Model. By becoming a PTA member, you'll be demonstrating to your child the importance you place on education.

Anyone who chooses to support PTA can become a member. PTA is the nation's oldest, largest and highest profile volunteer organization working on behalf of public schools, children and families.

You can join the PTA at your school or –if by chance you don't have children at a PTA school or your kids have graduated—you can still join!

Golden State PTA is a statewide organization allowing individuals and businesses without a local school affiliation to join PTA and maintain contact with California State PTA. When you become a member of Golden State PTA, you join with California's statewide membership in support of the education, health, and well-being of children and

Want to help children? Join PTA: www.capta.org

Feedback: kocivar@westsideobserver.com

#### **Ballot Politics** (Cont. from p. 8)

Not to mention the fear and anger caused to neighborhood residents and businesses by being continually threatened by the people they must walk by. This is a neighborhood character and quality-of-life issue. The police are doing their jobs, but the justice system is ineffectual and almost everyone cited is back on the streets within a day. Vote yes on Proposition L, as it has the potential to stop the bullying and intimidation of innocent pedestrians and local merchants.

Not to be outdone, Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi introduced Proposition M, the Community Policing and Foot Beat Patrols ordinance, and gave Mayor Newsom a strong dose of his own dirty-politics. Proposition M would establish "a comprehensive foot beat patrol in all police stations." Foot Patrols have proven to be crime deterrents and helped to create good relationships between the police and the community.

The SFPD is already using foot patrols when they can. San Francisco Chief of Police, George Gascon, stated, "Unfortunately, the Board of Supervisors placed a counter measure on the ballot, Proposition M, which calls for more foot patrols. It sounds harmless but you need to read the fine print. Embedded inside Prop. M is a 'poison pill' to override our vote on Proposition L/Civil Sidewalks, and frankly we can reduce crime without dictating police deployment through the ballot box. This is not the hallmark of a worldclass police department."

This is the "poison pill" language that Supervisor Mirkarimi used in Proposition M: "If section 2 of this ordinance is unenforceable because the voters approve, with more votes than this ordinance, a City ordinance (Proposition L) at the November 2, 2010 election that bans lying or sitting on public sidewalks, then it is the voter's intent that the balance of this ordinance shall be enforceable." This language means that if Mirkarimi's Proposition M wins, Newsom's Sit/Lie, Proposition L will be erased.

Another black-eye for City politics. Vote yes on Proposition L and No on Proposi-

Finally, the worst example of bad governance on this year's ballot came from what wasn't placed on the ballot. The mayor's office strong-armed the David Chiu-led BOS to negotiate away non-budgetary ballot measures without even a vote so that the BOS would receive a guarantee of \$44 million in budgetary add-backs from the Mayor. Heretofore, San Francisco had a time-honored history of keeping the negotiation of budgetary items separate from non-budgetary items. Newsom wins this battle, but plenty of embarrassment and shame to be shared by all who were involved.

No wonder fewer and fewer people vote in San Francisco. "Yes" means "No," and up means down. Heated political battles, personal feuds, and vendettas are casually thrown to the voters. Propositions are complex and contain hidden agendas, while intimidation keeps worthy propositions off of the ballot.

The Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's office need to work together and do a better job of legislating San Francisco's issues, and representing their constituencies. It should not be voters' responsibility to both legislate and keep City politics out of the

Please remember to vote on November 2.

**ON THE PLUS SIDE** By Hank Basayne **Have You Joined Yet?** 

Westside Observer

LARS DIDN'T DO IT s I continue getting somewhat long in the tooth—a few of you may be like me in that regard—I can

remember way back to my early school days when I was required to memorize some lengthy classic poems. It amazes me how exercise implants that poetry into the marrow. I can't tell you for sure what I had for dinner last Thursday, but I could put you to sleep reciting some Walter de la Mare—and don't get me started on Shelley's "My Name is Ozymandias, King of Kings."

Along with The Three Rs, it was a given that by the time you clambered into high school you could identify and accurately recite at least some of the gems of English literature. And, because the mind of a kid is a sponge, the words that

I soaked up then—if I didn't yet get their full import—remain with me almost threequarters of a century later.

I can still tell you what Abu Ben Adam saw within the moonlight in his room, what it is like to wander lonely as a cloud and find a host of golden daffodils, why the "luv" of Robert Burns was like a red, red rose, and why Tennyson wanted no moaning at the bar when he put out to sea. I can get all the way to why April is the cruelest month, and repeat what the raven quoth.

I don't take any particular pride in or credit for this—my memory is about the usual, although the short-term memory is spotty—but the panic that ensued when I thought the teacher might call on me to recite focuses the mind wonderfully. Powerful

I understand now why reading and memorizing poetry is as important as knowing what happened in 1789, in 1848, in 1933, in 1945 and in 2001. For me, the continuing study of history is like eating celery: I'd never order it, but if it's there, I'll chomp on -and even derive some satisfaction from the cool crunch. As I continue to age—the alternative is unattractive—I am more and more inclined to look back, way back, to try to understand the absurd and preposterous twists and turns of the human journey.

We can draw a line from Pilate through Ptolemy, the Caesars, Louis the XIV, Rasputin and Himmler, all the way to certain current politicians and legislators and be overwhelmed with the prevalence of dishonesty, bribery, immorality and impurity. But history as she is writ is not history as she is made. History is told by the winners and whatever goodness was inherent in the losers is blown in the wind and covered by the sands of time.

Mostly, but not always.

Like you, I watch my pennies carefully, but acting on an impulse I don't fully understand, I recently purchased some very ancient history. As I began to browse through a tome titled The Etruscans (isn't that where you'd start?) the tiny bit I thought I knew about these early Italians was shown to be dead wrong.

What I thought I knew I had learned from memorizing a poem in high school by Thomas Macauley. It began "Lars Porsena of Clusium, by the Nine Gods he swore, that the great house of Tarquin would suffer wrong no more..." Or something like that.

Lars was king of Etruria, if you'll cast your mind back to the 6th Century B.C., and reportedly was prevented from leading his expedition against Rome, turned back by he bravery of Horatius. Remember Horatio at the bridge? Not! It didn't happen that way at all. Macauley had swallowed the Roman version, written much later by Tacitus, a classic case of cover up.

Actually, Porsena did not flee, but entered, conquered and occupied Rome and became its ruler. The later Roman historians found it unflattering that the upstart Etruscans had made hash of them. So they re-wrote the story and reversed the out-

Isn't history fun? Next time I'll give you the real skinny on Marie Antoinette.

Hank Basayne is a San Franciscan who wonders what future historians will say about us Feedback: basayne@westsideobserver.com

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#### October 2010 Westside Observer Page 9

#### Laguna Honda Hospital's Red Flags

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

Page 8

t is thought all City employees are bound to comply with San Francisco's Administrative Code, since none of them are thought to be above the law or hold authority to amend the Code, unilaterally.

When last month's issue went to press, I reported Deputy City Controller Monique Zmuda was scheduled to return to LHH to conduct a review of LHH's gift fund accounting practices. On

August 25, Zmuda indicated her "audits group" would conduct a "review" of LHH's patient gift fund to determine whether LHH had administered the fund in accordance with the municipal code. She indicated re-allocation of \$100,000 in "interest earned" might be re-performed based on the "reasonableness" of the initial interest allocation to staff education accounts (as reported recently on Ch. 7) rather than to patients. She also indicated if there was a departure from the Administrative Code, her group would determine under what authority practices had been amended.

Whistleblower doctors Derek Kerr and Maria Rivero are former LHH physicians who have been investigating disbursements from LHH's patient gift fund for nearly a year. It appears from their research that there were few accounting controls in place and that the patient gift fund may have been used like a petty-cash drawer, since many of the checks and balances to prevent abuse of the funds had been eliminated.

#### Without an independent audit, the accounting red flags will likely increase.

San Francisco's Director of Public Health, Mitch Katz, MD, issued a press release on September 2, claiming DPH had requested the Controller's Office conduct a "detailed audit" of LHH's patient gift fund. Even before the audit was underway, he prematurely concluded that "there has not been a single instance in which funds designated for patients were used for any other purpose." Katz is wrong. There appear to be multiple instances in which patient funds were used for other purposes.

On September 1, 2010, doctors Rivero and Kerr submitted a second report to the Health Commission, Civil Grand Jury, and the Whistleblower Program administered by the City Controller's Office, regarding potential cost-shifting of previous hospital operating expenses onto LHH's patient gift fund account, suggesting \$745,000 may have gone missing from LHH's patient gift fund between 2004 and 2005.

The next day, Dr. Katz issued a press release, claiming a minor error in deposits of funds intended for patients, "had no impact on expenditures for patients," and "in no way influenced the amount of money available for patient activities.'

The following day, September 3, the City Controller's Office released for the first time news that an "Investment Balance" sub-account may exist within the patient gift fund. It was news to everybody who has been following this scandal.

Could it be that the various detailed analyses by Drs. Kerr and Rivero gave the City no choice but to finally conduct a deeper audit?

Among other red flags Kerr and Rivero uncovered, they report depletion of major bequests and trusts left to the patient gift fund. In the six years between 2004 and 2010, almost \$2 million vanished from the bequests and trusts donated for LHH patients exclusively, depleting these sub-accounts. Some \$1,581,882 was pulled out of the three big bequests (the Martin Heller, William Lenahan, and Marie Lewis bequests) in 2005

A second red flag the two doctors uncovered involves re-shuffling of gift fund subaccounts in 2005. Within six months after John Kanaley became LHH's Executive Director in 2004, most gift fund "index" codes were changed. For example the "Miscellaneous" sub-account was switched from HLMGFT to HLMISC. The Martin Heller bequest was changed from HLMHEL to HLMBQ, etc. When asked why these changes were made, LHH's Chief Financial Officer, replied "I don't know."

Once the account codes changed, money appears to have been transferred from old to new accounts, and elsewhere. Following what money went where became difficult to track, and "restricted" patient bequests appear to have been poured into new unre-

The re-shuffling of codes obscures transformation of a patient "trust fund" into a

A third red flag involves the misallocation of interest earnings

Interest and dividends generated from bequests to the patient gift fund should belong to LHH patients. But on February 18, 2010, \$100,485 was taken from the gift fund interest account (Index Code: COUNGR) and deposited into four staff sub-accounts. This enormous allocation — which Zmuda indicated she would investigate — was based on existing balances in these staff accounts, most of which came from dubious deposits. The "interest earned" allocation to staff accounts appears to be a violation of the City Charter and should be restituted to patients.

A fourth accounting red flag involves a disbursement from the gift fund in fiscal year 2006-2007 of \$176,481, during a year in which total disbursements totaled a whopping \$456,545, 50% higher than the preceding or any following year, much higher than any other year. The \$176,481 expenditure came directly from the gift fund's interest account, but there's no explanation of what was purchased with the funds.

Katz's sudden new claim the patient gift fund balance has reached \$1.9 million through the present rests on the September 3 release of information that the gift fund had up to \$835,000 in an investment account not revealed during the past four months. Katz appears to be claiming that combining the "cash balance" with an "investment balance" solves the problem

If there has been no adverse impact on patients as Katz claims, why was LHH staff told that the patient gift fund is bankrupted, and patient bus outings sharply curtailed by 65%, resulting in a State citation?

Lingering questions remain about how \$649,685 may have gone missing in the gift fund's "cash balance" between 2004 and 2010, and how the "total balance" may have decreased by \$585,688 across this time period.

It's unclear whether Zmuda's new investigation will distinguish between "trust"

Peg Stevenson, the City Services Auditor who works closely with Zmuda, has indicated some \$400,000 in "Proposition C" City Services Audit funds are designated for LHH. A small part of the \$400,000 could be used for an independent, CPA-directed audit of the LHH patient gift fund, to prevent Zmuda's potential conflict of interest from tainting the results of a full, impartial audit.

Zmuda admitted on August 25 that the gift fund's cash balance stood at only

Only an independent audit — conducted by an external agency — will keep Katz and the City honest about LHH's patient gift fund.

Without an independent audit, the accounting red flags will likely increase. Monette-Shaw is an accountability advocate, and the San Francisco Hospital Examiner at Examiner.com. Feedback: monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.

## B2B - BART to the Beach: Let's Begin the Dialogue

By James Fang, President, BART Board of Directors

Imagine a time in the future when BART trains whisk commuters underground to stations in San Francisco's Western Addition and the Richmond districts. BART passengers could enter stations along Geary Boulevard all the way to Ocean Beach. Sound difficult? Maybe not.

The time is now right to begin the dialogue with residents and stakeholders of San Francisco - particularly the Westside of San Francisco - to see if it is feasible to bring BART to the Beach.

For years regional rail planners and BART have looked at the idea of extending the system west toward the ocean. There is good reason. The Geary Boulevard corridor is one of the most heavily used transit routes in America, carrying over 100,000 transit trips per day on buses. Yet it can be a long, slow ride. It's been suggested that it takes longer to get downtown on transit from "The

#### Richmond" than it does from (the City of) Richmond. Jobs and On-Time, Green Transit

Think of how seamless and convenient the commute would be, not to mention the jobs created for San Franciscans if BART to the Beach became a reality. Construction, operations and indirect jobs would be created by the nation's greenest transit agency expansion to the Beach, and would contribute to the economic revitalization of San Francisco and the Westside - neighborhoods where many of us, like my wife and I, live, shop, dine and look forward to raising a family.

Our friends at MUNI have done a yeomen's effort in transporting riders from San Francisco's western neighborhoods. BART has complemented MUNI by delivering 96 percent on-time service and taking 330,000 daily riders out of cars – meaning less pollution and congestion. BART's reliability is reflected in surveys where nearly nine of ten riders

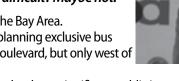


#### would recommend the system. Go West, San Francisco

The Sunset, Richmond and Western Addition represent the largest population base in the city and largest geographic areas as well.

These neighborhood businesses and residents would be well served by

rapid transit service to all parts of the Bay Area. MUNI has taken the leadership in planning exclusive bus lanes in the median along Geary Boulevard, but only west of Fillmore Street.



Over the years there has been significant public interest in having BART extend westward instead of buses. On one hand, MUNI service is favored because it appears more feasible in the short term. That may be true, but in the longer term there is merit in considering a BART alternative.

> Clearly, BART over the years has shown its ability to design and operate such an extension.

BART planners expect that by the year 2050, 800,000 riders will use rapid transit rails daily – a nearly half million increase over the 330,000 daily riders using

#### BART Bears Funding Burden

To accommodate those passenger loads, the system needs significant upgrades. BART would bear the financial responsibility of the BART to the Beach extension so the burden would not fall exclusively on San Franciscans to construct a second "transbay tube." This, in effect, would create a second BART line to San Francisco with additional stations, easing the burden on already congested facilities in the city and enhancing regional sustainability.

A recent regional rail planning study recommended a BART transbay tunnel with a new San Francisco line possibly linking Alameda with the south of Market area by the year 2050. That study also took a preliminary look at a Geary Boulevard extension.

I believe a "BART to the Beach," as some have coined it, is worth further study. Sure, it's probably a future dream. But so was BART itself. Consider this: planning for the Bay Area Rapid Transit system began in the mid 1950's. The first trains didn't start operating until nearly twenty years later.

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#### **Endorsements** (Partial List)

The Democratic Party

Supervisor David Chiu\* Supervisor David Campos\* Supervisor John Avalos\* Supervisor Eric Mar\* Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi\*

#### Democratic Clubs

Richmond District Democratic Club Irish-American Democratic Club Mexican-American Democratic Club Democratic Women's Forum of SF Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club

#### Other Organizations (in random order)

San Francisco Tomorrow "Bert Hill gets it and he SF League of Conservation Voters San Francisco Bicycle Coalition has truly visionary Rescue Muni SF Green Party ideas about making SF Women's Political Committee **BART** work better for San Francisco for Democracy

San Francisco."

Get to know Bert Hill:

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555 AFSCME Local 3993

SEIU 1021

\*Titles for identification purposes only, not intended as agency endorsement

"SF deserves a better BART!" www.Bert4BART.org



#### Vote for a Better **Economic Future** on November 2!

The November General Election Ballot contains critical initiatives that will impact San Francisco residents and businesses for years to come. Join your neighbors, local merchants and SF Forward in voting for jobs and a better economic future on November 2, 2010!

#### **VOTE YES**



Earthquake Retrofit Bond

Prop G Fix Muni Now

Prop H Prohibit Dual Office Holding

Hotel Tax Clarification Prop K

Civil Sidewalks Prop L

#### VOTE NO

Prop C Force Mayor to Appear at Board Hearings

Prop J Job Killing Hotel Tax Increase

Prop M Board of Supervisors Managing Police Department

Prop N Job Killing Property Transfer Tax

Prop 23 Protect Landmark Clean Energy Law (AB 32)

Prop 24 Jobs Tax

Learn more at: www.sfchamber.com/votingguide



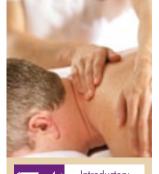
SF Forward - the Political Action Committee (PAC) of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce - is the political voice for businesses and residents who support sound economic policy and an exceptional quality of life for all San Franciscans.



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#### Life on the Line

A Muni driver talks about driving and politics

By Doug Comstock

uni bus driver Howard Nelson has hazy memories of the drivers' strike in 1976. He remembers riding his bike past crowds of people walking to their jobs, desperately trying to hail already-packed cabs, and venerable little-old-ladies discreetly holding a thumb up to catch a ride. "We may see that again," he said.

It's hard to talk to Nelson as he drives his bus. There is not a lot of conversation between the bus driver, and the 350-500 people he transports through treacherous traffic each day. At most, riders get a nod as they present their various passes, transfers or occasionally pay in cash.

At "40 plus," Nelson handles the 14 Mission Express, with a calm certainty. He keeps one eye on the traffic behind him as he stares straight

ahead and hands a transfer to one passenger, assuring another, an anxious lady who speaks little English, that he will make sure she knows when the bus gets to Cortland. He jabs himself then points to his mouth as he says "Cortland" loudly. She smiles confidently and takes a seat behind him. Mostly, he keeps both hands on the steering wheel. Signs directing passengers to "avoid unnecessary conversation with the driver" are prominently displayed and discourage friendly chatter.

He sat for a chat at an outdoor table of a coffeeshop near the Bus terminal at 15th and Harrison, a rare industrial patch that has escaped gentrification. Ignoring the September chill, he warmed both hands on his paper cup. He was happy to talk about his job.

"I've been driving a bus now for over 11 years, not counting the part-time driving," he said with a proud smile. He has a perfect driving record. It's one of the reasons he chose to become a driver when his previous full-time job at Schlage Lock moved to Denver. "If they were still here, I'd still be there," he said. "San Francisco is where my roots are, but that old job had better wages and benefits than I get from the City."

...reneging on that piece of the charter—the part that promises drivers the second-highest wage of any transit workers in the country in exchange for promising not to strike—that sounds like a deal-breaker.

He first stepped foot in San Francisco when he was 4 years old, moving here with his mother, his sole provider. She found work more plentiful than it had been in New Orleans. Driving a bus provides for his wife and two children. Mentioning his "kids," a broad smile brightens his face, revealing a father's pride and a beautiful set of white teeth below a wispy moustache with more than a few gray hairs.

"It is a long, hard day for Muni drivers," he said, the smile disappearing. The typical day starts before most people are awake. His bus must be at the first stop at 6:25 AM for the beginning of the commute. "Sometimes, between runs, we get 10 or 15 minutes for coffee," but drivers have to be cautious about liquids, as rest stops are not allowed. "You can't just park the bus and walk away. Sometimes there are facilities at the end of a trip, sometimes there are none," he said, turning both hands up. Then there's the down time from 11:17 to 1:27, unpaid 'dead time.' It takes 12 hours to work the commute but you only get paid for 10." By the end of Nelson's commute, it's 6:30.

The danger worries him too. "There were 2,500 incidents reported on coaches last year," he said. "We're vulnerable—we have to do cops work, social work, hospital work with no weapons and no authority. All we can do is ask people to behave and threaten to call the police, but by the time they get there it's usually too late. Most incidents don't get reported, because of the downtime and paperwork. Night shift is even tougher."

Tonight the union meeting is on Nelson's mind. "All the drivers are worried about Proposition G," he said, frowning impatiently as the discussion turned to Supervisor Sean Elsbernd's November ballot proposition. "Drivers are feeling scapegoated. There will be a lot of unhappy folks tonight." Union meetings are members only, and a strike is likely to be discussed even though it is forbidden by Sec. A8.346 of the City's charter. It requires that drivers be terminated and lose their seniority—they would be hired back as rookies—if they resort to a strike. However, the City's Municipal Code also forbids hiring strikebreakers, which paints the City into a lose-lose corner.

Nelson points to the Prop G literature he brought with him; "Elsbernd says he wants to change the charter to 'let Muni operators be treated like every other city worker,' but he doesn't mention his own salary," he said. It's a similar charter stipulated mechanism; Elsbernd's salary is based on salaries in other cities as well, but he makes twice as much as drivers. At \$29.16 an hour, drivers are not among the highest-paid City workers.

"I don't know why the voters are picking on us," he said "reneging on that piece of the charter—the part that promises drivers the second-highest wage of any transit workers in the country in exchange for promising not to strike—that sounds like deal-breaker. Contra Costa's SamTrans drivers are the third highest paid drivers in the country," he adds.

"The last bus strike lasted 37 days," Nelson said. According to an *SF Chronicle* editorial written May 7, the day after the strike ended, it was "one of the longest strikes of public employees in United States history." It cited the costs to the economy, to business and the City as well as to people "who are being inconvenienced by the shutdown of buses and cable cars, by littered streets, by a deteriorating Golden Gate Park, by cascading waters from broken water mains, by unusable toilets...

Bus drivers joined that strike in sympathy for City crafts workers. If the drivers strike now, other unions would likely follow suit. But the word "strike" is curiously absent from discourse as voters proceed to a ballot that may just trigger another one.

"If the voters defeat Prop B, we won't have to worry about whether drivers will still honor the 'no strike' clause," Nelson said, "being illegal didn't prevent a strike before," referring to the strike of '76 that ignored Judge Clayton Horn's Injunction. "It's up to the voters, if they choose to break the contract we'll find out."

Coincidentally, the '76 strike revolved around two anti-union measures that were on the ballot: Prop E, which would fire City workers who strike and Prop K, a two year pay freeze. Both were put on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors, but were withdrawn in

the settlement brokered by Mayor Moscone.

Bus driver Stanford Johns, driving a packed 5 McAllister, agrees with Nelson, "drivers are not the problem. The public is mad about the scheduling, so are we. It's not the drivers who control the scheduling," he said, wincing as he passed a stop without picking up waiting passengers. "We can't make a bus suddenly appear. We can only work with what they give us," he said to the passengers crammed into the isle and in the well of his bus. "I might need to start looking for that old bike again," Nelson said.



John Kirkpatrick 415.412.0559 john@johnkirkpatrick.com www.johnkirkpatrick.com

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26 Greenview Ct	3	2	2	N/A	05/03/10	750,000	771,000
481 Dellbrook Ave	3	2	1	N/A	04/16/10	729,000	772,000
156 Midcrest Way	3	2	1	1,490	04/29/10	799,000	785,000
254 Dellbrook Ave	4	2	2	1,548	06/17/10	799,000	805,000
123 Dellbrook Ave.	3	2	2 Tandem	1576	10/30/09	750,000	805,000
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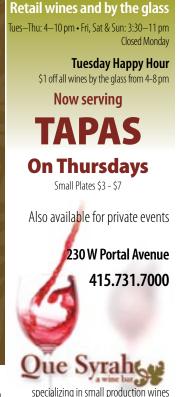
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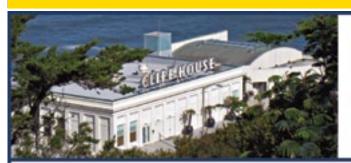
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#### **Cliff House Newsletter**

The Cliff House is pleased to announce the recent launch of our e-newsletter, On the Edge. Stay informed about specially priced dining promotions and historical tidbits that we'll have some fun with. To sign up for the Cliff House newsletter please visit: www.cliffhouse.com/guest\_book/newsletter.html

#### Cliff House and Beyond!

Guided walks exploring San Francisco's historic Land's End are offered every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month and begin with a continental breakfast at the Cliff House. For more information or to make a reservation call the Gift Shop at 415-666-4006 or visit www.cliffhouse.com/history/Johns\_Walk.html.



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October 2010 Westside Observer Page 14

#### **Constant Support in a Constantly Changing World**

Court Appointed Special Advocates a Mainstay in the Lives of SF Foster Children

By Molly Oleson

n the day he was born Anthony Pico entered the San Francisco foster care system. His drug-addicted mother disappeared from the hospital, leaving him with poison running through his system, no home and no one to fight for him.

By 14, he had lived in three separate placements, and by 18, he had attended six different high schools. Shuffled between social workers, thera-A CASA spending time with her foster child

pists, lawyers and group homes, he was starved for stability

own in Sacramento. He's a legislative aide and a third-year student at Sacramento City

saved him from slipping through the cracks of an over-burdened social welfare system: hearings. "[We] are another group of people keeping the San Francisco Court Appointed Special Advocate program.

"I don't think I'd be where I am today, had it not been for my CASA," Pico says outside the Sunset's Java Beach Café, the late afternoon sun glazing his round face a golden that the city's most vulnerable youth have been repeatorange before slipping below the Pacific.

SFCASA, a non-profit agency that trains community volunteers to serve as advocates for abused and neglected children in the San Francisco Juvenile Dependency Court System, assigned a teenage Pico a mentor, or CASA, who became his guiding light

city's approximately 1,300 foster kids is placed in a safe, permanent home.

The organization, supported by grants and corporate and individual donations, was established in 1991 and is one of more than 900 affiliate programs across the country. believe their CASAs are not paid to be there. It's profound for them." Volunteers are rigorously screened and complete 40 hours of professional training in areas such as child development, mandated reporting and dependency law.

For more information about becoming an SFCASA volunteer, please visit www.sfcasa. org, or contact Leah Cerri, Training and Recruitment Manager, at 415-399-6132.

On Thursday, October 14, 2010, from 7-11 p.m. at San Francisco's Club Mighty, SFCASA will host "Hot October Nights: HAVAVA," a fundraiser in support of the city's youth in foster care. For event details or to purchase tickets, please visit www.sfcasa.org

Knowing what's best comes from spending one-on-one time with them, reviewing records, researching information and talking to everyone involved in the child's life —

"We make a point of seeing them in all of their environments, so we can have a full view of where they are as humans, and what their needs may be," says Maya Durrett,

neglect and abandonment. They spend a large chunk of childhood on the move, averaging five different homes and nine different schools over an average of five years in the

our eyes on kids in fragile situations.'

Sally Coates, Executive Director of SFCASA, says

DONNA HITCHENS edly let down by adults promising to do good things and then disappearing.

"These children are not necessarily waiting on the doorstep for someone to come and love them," Coates says.

But in a world of impermanence, CASAs provide the constant presence that is usu-Pico exemplifies the ultimate goal of SFCASA: to help ensure that every one of the ally missing but desperately needed. Weekly visits build a trusting bond that may be one of the few positive relationships the child has.

"When one person keeps returning, it speaks volumes," Durrett says. "They can't

Gail Nebenzahl, 72, a CASA who has volunteered hundreds of hours to mentoring foster youth over the past eight years, knows the importance of "being there." On top Upon making an 18-month commitment to advocate for a child, CASAs are sworn of making sure their needs were met, she gave her foster kids caring companionship, in as officers of the court. Reporting to a judge every six months, they submit a case report addressing the child's needs and recommending the best possible outcome for his Surprising one of the young girls with singing lessons remains one of her most vibrant

> "It was something she always wanted to do," Nebenzahl says, her smile growing bigger with pride. And then she turns serious.

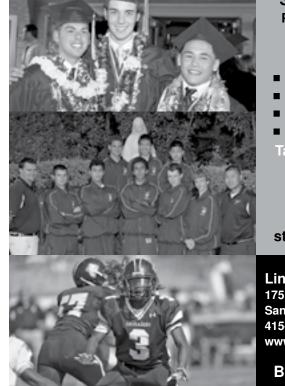
> "With these children, there's a very dark side," she says, cupping a cobalt blue mug of tea in her sunny kitchen. "They've experienced what you and I cannot imagine."

Three of the children Nebenzahl advocated for were removed from their families of origin after being subjected to violence, drugs and alcohol. On one occasion she found herself walking through an abandoned squat house with the five-year-old. A place with





Come get in tune with us!



Sunday, October 31, 2010 Program Begins at 10:00 a.m.

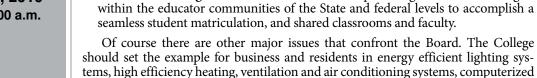
#### **Learn About:**

- Extra-Curricular Activities

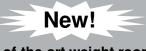
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they leave their parents and how they will live in a world that has so little to offer in terms of a security. As San Franciscans, these problems continually face us.

Advertisement paid for by Re-Elect Dr. Anita Grier to Community College Board 2010 FPPC #123852

**City College Update** 

to go to the voters for another Bond, I'm concerned that the general public has lost

faith in the leadership of the Administration and the Board of Trustees. We need

to demonstrate that we are willing to change the way we do business, and the best

way to do that is by adopting the voter initiated Sunshine laws that drive the City's

• Better program integration with high schools to prepare students for college. I'll continue to focus on keeping higher education affordable and available to

everyone. I have always worked to increase funding and lower tuition. I support

remedial programs, but believe students spend more time in those courses than is

necessary. We need to do a better job of raising their basic academic skills before

• Tuition Free College Classes. I'll continue the cooperative groundwork I've begun

energy management control systems, boiler efficiency improvements, energy recov-

ery systems and building shell improvements. CCSF Planning must put Green Build-

ing at the top of the list for developments it proposes for both housing and business.

We also have a role in neighborhood planning around our campuses. The most common input from neighbors involves "troubled youth" and that is unfortunate. As

a 30-year veteran of some of the toughest high schools in the City, I have dealt with

the bad apples and I know when a little tough love is effective and when more drastic

measures are needed to turn around young lives. I have served as Program Admin-

istrator of "Special Education" at several of our problem sites. The newly dedicated

Multi-Use Building on the main campus is a LEEDS silver green building and was

equal opportunity, diversity, ADA compliance and special education for learning dis-

abled students, beyond my concerns as a professional, I care about the future. I think

about my high school and college students and I wonder where they will live once

Though my focus has been academic and much of my life has been devoted to

developed through community cooperation that is a model for future endeavors.

Our transportation improvements must be driven by the same principles.

ince my election to Community College, I have focused on keeping higher education affordable and

available to everyone. I have been an educator and

administrator all of my life. I taught Special Education for

twelve years, most currently at Denman Middle School. I'm

• Implementing the San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance,

specifically the documents element. As the college lays plans

keeping my focus on these major issues that face CCSF:

By Dr. Anita Grier

meeting and records procedures.

they come to college level classes.

# According to the Controller's Office Proposition N & J will cost jobs and hurt our economy.



#### PROPOSITION J - HOTEL TAX INCREASE

The City Controller writes that the tax will be responsible for "lowering occupancy, tourism spending, and tourism industry employment." This significantly higher tax will:

- ► Make San Francisco's Hotel Tax the highest highest in the nation
- > Put us at a disadvantage when competing with other cities for conventions and events

#### PROPOSITION N - REAL ESTATE SALES TAX HIKE

The City Controller writes that Proposition N will make San Francisco "less competitive and reduce job growth." The higher tax will:

- ➤ Raise commercial and housing rents ➤ Depress property tax values > Threaten jobs and livelihood



You'll pay for these taxes with less economic growth and fewer jobs.

# Vote No on Propositions N & J

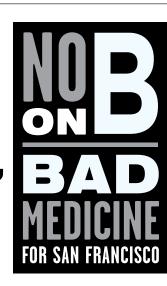
To join our coalition or for more information, visit www.economicrecoverysf.com

Paid by Economic Recovery San Francisco, No on J & N, sponsored by business associations, with major funding by Building Owners and Managers Association of San Francisco political action committee -independent expenditures and San Francisco Hotel Council

### **State Senator Leland Yee says:**



# "Proposition B is the wrong answer for San Francisco."



#### PROP B WILL DOUBLE CHILDREN'S **HEALTH CARE COSTS**

Prop B will double health care costs for thousands of children, spouses and domestic partners of San Francisco School, Community College, Superior Court and City workers—regardless of their ability to pay.

#### A SINGLE PARENT WILL PAY UP TO \$5.600 MORE PER YEAR

The real impact of Prop B on working families is staggering Under Prop B, a single mother with one dependent could be forced to pay up to \$5,600 more per year for health care in addition to the \$8,154 she already pays. Many other employees will see their costs more than double.

#### A CUSTODIAN WILL PAY AS MUCH **AS THE TOP BRASS**

Prop B forces the custodian making only \$40,000 per year to pay the same hike in health insurance premiums as the top brass, who could be making three times as much. Many of these workers are already struggling to afford health care, and this literally takes food off their table.

#### **COULD COST SAN FRANCISCO \$100 MILLION** IN FEDERAL HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Prop B was so poorly written, the Director of the San Francisco Health Care Service System has written it could make the City ineligible for more than \$23 million in federal funding for health care next year and up to \$100 million over the next four years.

#### **United Against Prop B**

California Nurses Association

United Educators of San Francisco San Francisco Democratic Party

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi

Mayor Gavin Newsom

State Senator Mark Leno

State Senator Leland Yee

Assemblyman Tom Ammiano

**Sheriff Michael Hennessey** 

**Board President David Chiu** 

STANDING UP FOR WORKING FAMILIES, NO ON B. A COALITION OF TEACHERS. NURSES, FIREFIGHTERS, PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, AND HEALTH CARE ADVOCATES, MAJOR FUNDING BY SAN FRANCISCO FIRE FIGHTERS LOCAL 798 AND SEIU LOCAL 1021, 150 POST STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94108, FPPC# 1329001

Canine Massage in San Francisco nimals are important to mankind as they aid in the balance in nature known as "the web of life". On a more per-

sonal note, these wonderful furry friends bring so much joy and unconditional love into our lives. It's truly a wonderful life changing experience to have a pet when you are ready for it. In taking responsibility as a pet owner, there's a lot to learn about

the care of our dog or cat. In the beginning, we research the best type

of pet and breed for our life style and family dynamic as each breed has its own distinct characteristics. Once we find the right pet, we then must figure out a healthy diet for the pet and find a local Veterinarian.

There are many choices today in choosing a Vet. I just recently found a holistic office in Pacifica for dogs and cats and was so pleased with the unique care given. Our little five pound Chihuahua, Charlie, received Chiropractic adjustments in his jaw, spine and hips that changed the funny little gait he had that seemed to originate from his left hind leg. It was amazing to watch the difference in him. The doctor also recommended we cook for him, as little dogs sometimes have dietary issues. Boy, does he love that! Now, the "Pack" sits down to a home-cooked meal.

Because humans are part of the animal family, it's no wonder what is good for us is also very important in the health and vitality of our pet. I'd like to introduce you to Michelle Geisler, a Certified Canine Massage Therapist.

Michelle has been in practice for over a year here in San Francisco. She was trained '90 at the Rocky Mountain School of Animal Acupressure and Massage in Colorado. She specializes in Therapeutic and Sports Massage for Canines. She's also a Healing Touch for Animals Practitioner (HTA) and, recently, added pet sitting to her repertoire.

It all began after she rescued 2 German Shepherd brothers from the pound when they were 6 months old. Ozzy had hip dysplasia and Randy had Lupus on his nose. Both dogs had several surgeries over the years. As they aged, arthritis set in. The doctor wanted Randy to have an MRI for his neck and she couldn't afford it. She figured humans go to Chiropractors for neck issues so why not try it for Randy. The adjustments worked for him immediately and the Chiropractor suggested massage would help both dogs. This was Michelle's calling!

Therapeutic Massage: a non-invasive therapy incorporated into a total health care regimen of the dog. It's used to promote general well-being, boost circulatory and immune systems by encouraging circulation, muscle tone, digestion and skin tone. It greatly contributes to relaxing the nervous system.

For Convalescing Dogs: circulation is stimulated, toxins are removed from the tissues and nutrients are supplied, atrophy of muscle tissue is decreased, helps in pain relief, keeps joints lubricated and flexible, aids range of motion and enhances respira-

For Puppies: blood circulation is increased so growing bones receive nutrients, and calms to bring the puppy's awareness inward.

Sports Massage: a therapy used before an event to increase blood flow to the muscles, promote flexibility, energizes, and prepares the dog for the event or exercise to help prevent injury

Healing Touch for Animals® (HTA): a holistic approach influencing the health and well-being of animals through energy medicine and intention. HTA Techniques restore harmony and balance to the animal's energy system while providing physical,

emotional, mental and instinctual stability.

Helps animals understand their purpose and what is **appropriate behavior** 

Aids in building the animal-human bond Supports animals through injuries, physical or emotional trauma and abuse

Supports animals during the **end of life transition** Michelle loves working with dogs and has a very special connection with them. She makes house calls, as it's important that your dog is in his/her comfort space. She provides soft music and a loving touch. Call 415-699-5832 or email her at michel-

legeisler1@gmail.com On the web at http://www.michellegeisler.iwant-



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# CONSOLIDATED **GENERAL ELECTION**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2010

### **REGISTER AND VOTE!**

- Polling places are open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.
- Early voting at City Hall begins October 4
- Last day to register to vote is October 18 You must re-register if you have moved, changed your name or want to change your party affiliation
- Last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot is October 26

#### Be a Pollworker on Election Day! The Department is looking for pollworkers to help on Election Day. Pollworkers can earn up to \$170!

To sign up, visit www.sfelections.org/pw or call (415) 554-4395.

# "San Francisco, your VOTE is your VOICE!"

#### RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

For the upcoming election, San Francisco voters who live in Supervisorial Districts 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 will use ranked-choice voting to elect their Member of the **Board of Supervisors.** 

Citywide, voters will use ranked-choice voting to elect the Assessor-Recorder and Public Defender.

With ranked-choice voting, the names of all the candidates are listed in three repeating columns on the ballot. This allows voters to rank up to three different candidates for the same office.

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#### Learn More!

View an interactive demonstration of how rankedchoice voting works at www.sfelections.org/demo



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#### October 2010 Westside Observer

## Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi **Shakespeare in Love: Ashland**

he old Chinese proverb says that the longest trip starts with a single step. What they didn't say is that you shouldn't try to go across the Bay Bridge on the day that the tolls go up an additional dollar. Fortunately, it wasn't all that bad considering that we had our chops set for one of those salami and cheese sandwiches on a crunchy French roll at Granzela's Delicatessen in Williams-my favorite, head

cheese and cheese, light on the Mayo. We've been there before and it didn't take us long to place the order and start munching. So maybe it was only 11:15 in the morning but it sure tasted great, and the Dryer's ice-cream that followed should have made us feel guilty but nobody we know saw us so that made it OK to our retired minds.

We were headed for Ashland, Oregon for a few days of theater and a little cel-

ebrating of July 4th. The ride up was easy enough, the scenery spectacular. The truckers may own Highway 5 but they still left a lot for us to enjoy. The Pines and Firs are a glorious green, Mount Shasta's still draped with snow that sparkles in the afternoon sun while boaters are waterskiing on the crystal clear water of Shasta Lake. Overhead, a hundred contrails melt through the billowy clouds hiding the full moon that would

Driving all day and heading for a play that evening is a formula for disaster but we did stay awake and survived "The Royal Family" without so much as a yawn. Our dinner at Omar's before the show was a real treat and for fifty bucks per couple including cocktails and wine it was not only good but cheap! And we're going back.

Ashland has grown up and learned to smile since our last visit almost 10 years ago. The old stores are still good and the new ones are a paradise for the ladies. A friend took us to a wine store that has a treasure of Italian wines sprinkled with some delicious local labels making our selection a very difficult process; fortunately for us Lorenzo was quite adept at suggesting and recommending.

An early lunch at Lela's Bakery and Café primed us for an early dinner at The Peerless Restaurant where we ate "al fresco," a perfect prelude for the Elizabethan Stage at the Allen Pavilion Theater. "Much Ado About Nothing" was produced in modern garb but unfortunately for me the prose was all Shakespeare. That Prosciutto Wrapped Saddle of Oregon Rabbit that I so enjoyed at dinner kept asking me if I understood any of what was being said. Sadly, my honest answer had to be "Not Much!"

The Allen Pavilion alone is worth the trip to Ashland. Open to the sky, it wraps around a beautiful stage that changes appearance as the evening grows darker. The fireflies compete with the stars that compete with the actors. For good behavior, sitting through the production I was treated to an ice cream cone from BJ's that made it all

The following day we attended the matinee at the Angus Bowmer Theater and "The Visit" managed to keep us wide awake even after a very pleasant lunch, a nice Pinot Gris and a three hour production. Great story about revenge, greed and money. Fortunately for me, I did the three plays and now we can go back to dinner at eight, an extra glass of wine and no fear of being cracked in the ribs because I'm dozing off

Sunday was the Fourth, the parade route was lined with chairs and blankets for the spectators and it was Red, White and Blue all the way. A true American Fourth of July celebration. As I've said so many times before "Good Bless America."

"All's Well" is the perfect name for the guest house where we stayed for four days and to round it off "As You Like It" sits right next door. So very Shakespeare! The sevenroom Inn is a block off Main Street and a comfortable walk to the center of town, no

The best part was that it was just a block away from the parade route and what a parade Ashland put on! I can't remember the last parade I watched first hand and this

The parade was rural America at its best, the Fire Department with sirens blaring, the Forest Service with shinny yellow trucks, the Police Department on motorcycles proudly following the Bag Pipers, Miss Ashland waving to the hundreds lining the streets. We didn't get any of the candy and beads that were being tossed out to the crowd but we did get a bunch of great video. The entire town was buzzing and the city park was jammed with young and old alike. Stands lined the park paths with all sorts of food, drinks and crafts from every trade. We got so tired from watching that it took a couple of beers and a hefty lunch to keep us going. Sunday night the fireworks went off all night long and I imagine it must have been quite interesting watching "Henry the VI" in the outdoor theater with the fireworks going off during the battle scenes on stage.

Don't know if we'll be ready to do the 8 hour drive again anytime soon but as far as the shear pleasure of the trip, we'd leave tomorrow. So much to see in this beautiful country of ours, so many nice people, so nice to be home. So until we meet again, as Shakespeare would have said, "Parting Is Such Sweet Sorrow."

Feedback: sergio@westsideobserver.com

Letters (Cont. from p. 4)

there is any intrenched special interest is that of Business. They always win, doesn't he know that? In fine, I would say that we have to tax the citizens to have a great country. Nafiss Griffis, Outer Sunset

Mr. Adachi's suspiciously funded Prop. B deserves a NO vote because it is a mean spirited attack on San Francisco City workers as if they were the cause of the City's fiscal problems. In his "Prop. B Deserves Support" he never mentions the causal effects of the greedy and dishonest big operators from here to Wall Street.

How unfortunate that he compares the City's employee medical insurance benefits to the "only 60% of SF businesses that offer health care benefits for employees" (or the 40% that don't). San Francisco seeks a higher standard in many areas including medical coverage for its employees and their dependents. Why compare her to employers that don't?

Adachi argues that SF is extravagant in her coverage of her worker's dependents. According to the Kaiser Foundation the average employer covers 73% of family health premium costs; SF covers 74%. San Franciscans are proud that their city is above average in many ways. We should not regress! Vote NO on B.

Anthony C. Bazan, City Worker, 94131

Editors Note: We received more letters than we can print this time. Thank you for your letters! The remaining letters are accessible at www.westsideobserver.com

#### **GENEROSITY OF NATURE**

by Hilary Gordon

alpine meadows. Once again I rested my spirit

From the Border

y annual backpacking trip to the Eastern Sierra revealed the cus-■tomary beauties and rigors. We endured a violent hailstorm at 11,000 feet (later we found it had caused a mudslide that closed Hwy 395) and admired the last wildflowers in

in the flagrant generosity of scale when Mother Nature makes the garden. Turning the corner we saw not one shooting-star on a creek side, but 50, not one sagebrush on a hillside but 500, not one ancient wind-scarred pine by a high pass, but 5000.

Mother Nature's garden has very strict rules as well as generosity. A meadow or hillside may feature many individual plants, but only a handful of species. The fierce competition in the wild eliminates all but the best-suited plants for the specific exposures of the site. The repetition of a few elements results in the beautiful chaos and rhythm of

Every year I bring the inspiration from this trip back to my own gardens, and try to create on a small scale a reminder of this generosity and strictness. To create a natural feeling in the garden, it's important to resist the temptation to plant one specimen of each of your favorite plants. Instead, repeat the most successful and best suited plants. This way you can create the same feeling of ordered wildness we loved in the mountains.

Now is the best possible time to begin the process of refining next year's garden

First, be like Mother Nature and remove plants that have struggled in their location or that had stubborn pest or disease problems. Even failure to thrive is a good reason to remove a plant; in our small urban spaces we just don't have room for plants that aren't

Now you have created some new open spaces in the garden, and open spaces cry out for some new plants. The best time for planting in our summer-dry climate is at the very start of the rainy season. The first rains usually arrive by early November, but the soil is still warm from September and October when we get our sunniest days. By clearing space in the garden and preparing the soil now, you can be ready to plant just before the

Next, develop your plant list. Again following Mother Nature's lead, choose plants that did fabulous jobs this year and gave you tremendous pleasure. Think about adding more of these, doubling the number, or tripling it. Create natural looking groupings of two or three or five and scatterthese groups throughout the garden. Odd numbers usu-

Also, think about the succession of bloom in your garden. Was there a time this year when the garden let down? A little research will help you choose a new plant for your garden that will peak its bloom or beauty at that time. You can add one this year and see how it does, and buy multiples next year, or just go for broke and plant lots of your new

Either way, a little planning and preparation now will lead to a successful planting season next month, and an even more beautiful garden next year. Happy gardening!

#### SF Botanical Garden: Growing Urban Edibles workshop — Master Gardeners will Demonstrate

Saturday, October 16, 9am-1pm

In a continuation of the popular classes in growing edibles, the UC Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of San Mateo and San Francisco Counties will teach another hands-on Saturday morning workshop at the San Francisco Botanical Garden (SFBG), aimed at beginning and intermediate gardeners.

This final workshop covers growing winter vegetables, renewing the soil, choosing fruit trees and berries, pruning and tool care.

The workshop will be held at the San Francisco Botanical Garden Hall of Flowers in

Registration is \$35, or \$30 for members of the SF Botanical Garden. For more information or to register, visit groups.ucanr.org/sanmateo.



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*Hall* (Cont. from p. 5)

In July of 2003, I knew that "Care not Cash" would pass at the ballot box because the truth about the full effect of the measure and the hidden costs were not disclosed. I and a number of the other Supervisors who had the advantage of studying the details of the measure were not in a position to raise millions of dollars to fight the proposition and inform the public. As a last ditch effort to improve care not cash and fill the holes that Budget Analyst Harvey Rose so ably exposed during the hearings, I offered a legislative package at the Board of Supervisors to amend the Administrative Code called the "Homeless Accountability Act." Instead of simply criticizing poor legislation, I set out to improve it and correct the shortcomings of "Care not Cash". The Act had many parts, but in essence, it called for a Human Services Care Fund to be set up and monitored by the Controller to ensure that the "cash" was available before the "care" would be provided, and that any care provided would be dependent upon the cash being available. At that time the fund was to be seeded with \$13.9 million dollars diverted from current services. The amendment also insured that any additional monies expended on welfare services be identified and verified, and approved by the Mayor, the majority of the Board of Supervisors, and eventually the public. Oddly enough, I was able to get the Act passed at the Board, but like so many other ordinances, mandates, and codes, it has just been totally ignored by this administration and the incumbent Controller.

In my December 2002 column in the West of Twin Peaks Observer, I wrote that PROP N would add untold millions of dollars to an already failed homeless industry. In 2002, San Francisco was spending approximately \$200 million dollars per year for homeless services that were inefficient, ineffective, and unaccountable. This was more per capita than any other city in the country was spending on homelessness. Today, we are spending up to 2 billion dollars per year from our general fund on social services programs, with most of those monies going to homeless services.

As part of my opposing argument against "Care not Cash" that was so widely publicized in 2003 and 2004, I opined that it was precisely the "industry" providing services to the homeless that would flourish, consume undisclosed millions of dollars, and make San Francisco the magnet for homeless visitors. I argued that by cutting \$8 to \$10 million dollars in General Assistance funds from the 2700 recipients who were then required to work 32 hours a month for \$320, we could not then even possibly begin to cover the costs of "care" that Prop N was proposing in the form of housing, food and medical services for the 13,000 homeless people in our City at that time.. In addition, leaving these poor people with only \$20 cash per month for personal expenses was criminal, and would be enslaving many of them who are not substance abusers to the homeless industry, forcing them into panhandling just to meet daily necessities. I wasn't against reducing general assistance for the abusers, or providing "care" for those who need it, but as an elected representative who took his fiduciary responsibility of public monies seriously, I wanted to know exactly where the money would come from in future years to pay for what PROP N was really going to cost the City. I felt that you, the public had the right to know where we, your Supervisors, were committing your hard earned

The entire Prop N campaign was spun to the public as a cure all for homelessness at no additional costs. What a deception, what a lie! Think of it this way, PROP N called for "cash" being replaced by "care." The "care" that was to be provided to a homeless individual was to be in the form of housing, food, and medical services. That "care" would cost many, many, times the amount of \$320 that we were required to take away in general assistance from 2700 individuals. Nowhere did the proposition address where the money would come from to pay for all of the so called "care."

Back in 2004, the Budget Analyst for the Board of Supervisors estimated that it would cost at least 40 to 50 million dollars more per year to implement the "care" that PROP N was mandating for the 2700 individuals on general assistance. Today's census figures place the number of homeless individuals in San Francisco at between 9000 and 13,000 individuals, the same as it was back in 2004, only now we are spending ten times as much on the issue. Is it any wonder that today the City is spending over 1 billion dollars in social services to treat the same number of homeless individuals that were here in 2004 at a cost then of 200 million? Is it any wonder that the same number of transient individuals, who came to San Francisco to avail themselves of the "care," is still here today, still panhandling on our streets in order to acquire cash in addition to the care that we're already providing? Is it any wonder that our total City budget is now 3 times what it was when Frank Jordan was Mayor, and with no change in the population? Is it any wonder that our budget is projected to be at least 600 million dollars in the red for

What have we done outside of institutionalize and enslave homeless individuals in the ever growing world of services that the homeless industry provides as mandated under Prop N?

Why is this happening, you might ask? PROP N locked the City into baseline spending on direct homeless services in all future years after 2004, regardless of whether or not we implement more cost effective delivery of services, or if we receive state or federal funds, or if we even improve the homeless situation.. Multi-millions of your tax dollars have been squandered on this futile and deceptive approach to treating the homeless community. You, the taxpayer, and those truly in need of our help are the victims. My heart goes out to those poor unfortunates who, have fallen on hard times for whatever reason, and also to you for repeatedly being asked to pay for such political foolishness.

We must institute a System that identifies those with particular and specific needs, who truly want our help, and directs them to effective and appropriate assistance.

The System should incorporate residency and means testing, in order to give priority to our city's less fortunate, and not be an open door policy for people from all over the

We should not tolerate those individuals who abuse the System, or those politicians who use the System for political gain.

The amount of money spent on the System should be "pegged" to a percentage of the city's budget, and any change to that amount should be subject to public approval.

If we are to continue with such irresponsible social programs as "Care not Cash," then the State and Federal government must also weigh in, as we are servicing an inordinate amount of homeless individuals from all over the country.

There should be a litmus test for non-profit service providers based upon a proven track record.

We should incorporate in the System the many wonderful programs already in existence by many of the faith- based organizations, as their outreach is based on the concepts of charity and motivation for those treated. In addition, we should streamline and expedite the real estate permitting process that these private non-profit organizations must undergo in order to provide services.

You have heard me say many times, "not one penny more for failed homeless programs." That is my belief today as it was in 2004. With the money we are spending on the homeless situation in San Francisco today, we could easily afford to give each bona fide homeless person registered in the City at least \$40,000 to \$60,000 a year, and he or she would be better off than they are now standing in line to beg for services.

Feedback: hall@westsideobserver.com

**SECOND THOUGHTS / By Jack Kaye** 

#### **ANALYZINGTHETEAPARTY**

he New York Times recently released the results of their survey of 881 tea party members. The survey found that 89% of the members are white, 76% are over 45, 70% had some college, 66% usually vote Republican, 61 % are Protestant, 61% attend church at least a few times a month, 59% are male, and 59% have incomes of more than \$50,000 a year.



So tea party supporters earn more than the average American, are older, more religious, much more Republican, much more conservative and much more likely to be non-Hispanic and white. And they are more educated. It makes me wonder what colleges these people attended and whether the education they received was really worth

These are the same educated, well-paid people who believe that our President was not born in America, is not a Christian but really a secret Muslim, as well as a socialist, communist and/or Nazi fascist. They want the government out of their Medicare, a federal health insurance program and their Social Security, also a large federal program. They don't want the Post Office to reduce deliveries to five days a week even though it too is a government program. Nor do they want NASA spending cut back not realizing, perhaps, its connection with the federal government or taxpayer money.

These allegedly more educated and better reimbursed Americans fear that our President is going to use taxes to redistribute the wealth without realizing that everything the government does it does by redistributing wealth. They believe that Reagan was their hero forgetting that he raised taxes five times after reducing them for the rich, and that he gave amnesty to illegal immigrants causing another 12-20 million to sneak into our land with the hope that they too will get amnesty for their illegal entry.

These same people blame our current President for the deficit caused in total by Republicans like Reagan and Bush. It was they who lowered taxes on the rich, reduced regulation of our banking sector, refused to fight oil companies that were stealing from the people, and got us into two unnecessary wars that are costing the taxpayer trillions

These tea party supporters attend rallies to hear the likes of Sarah Palin to inspire them. She who wants less government accepted federal government money to build a bridge to nowhere, charged her own state rent for her time spent at her own home, spent more than \$150,000 on clothing for her failed campaign and currently asks for as much as she can get from institutions willing to listen to her speak.

These loyalists who make up a small percentage of our total adult population while onsidering themselves to be proud Americans are actually people about whom most Americans cannot be proud.

If these people are better educated, they are surely not as intelligent as the average American. If they are wealthier, it is not a wealth that make people's lives better. It is

These same people want the government to stop interfering with their personal relationship with their medical insurance plans. They do not mind having these friendly companies raise their rates periodically by as much as 40%, deny coverage for drugs they do not recognize or procedures that they feel are unnecessary. They want government to stop protecting them from banks and other financial institutions that give their preferred customers the inside sure bets while giving these people, these intelligent, well-off tea party members, the stocks and securities that their insiders are

These same "good" people are mad because the current administration bailed out the big banks and two of the country's largest car companies. They say that this President wants to take over the banks, car companies, and mortgage lenders Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. What they are not intelligent enough to grasp is that the bank bailouts were initiated by the former President, a Republican, after the Republican policies relaxed supervision over these large financial corporations. Had the banks not been helped by the government, there would have been a financial meltdown that would have negatively affected the whole world. If the car companies had not been bailed out, hundreds of thousands more jobs would have been lost. This President has no intention of running either the banking or the auto business.

The tea party people should note that most of the banks have repaid their bailouts paying an additional 12% in interest. General Motors, a car company that was almost run into the ground by the poor management of a free enterprise corporation, has paid back it's loan and is now producing family cars that Americans actually want to buy.

But most ironic is the stated goal of one of this strange movement's leaders, Rush

He has said what all of them want to. This patriotic American who proclaims his undying love for America and its people, has admitted that he would rather have all of President Obama's efforts to help the country fail, causing the country and its citizens tremendous suffering, than have him succeed and save our country. In other words with all his patriotism, he loves his wretched minority party more than he does his

This creature, who also promised to move to Costa Rica if the healthcare legislation became law, is still here. If he moves there, he can use their universal healthcare coverage until 2014 when it kicks in here.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com



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"We think (Prop B) proposes reasonable and modest changes that are necessary for the taxpayers of San Francisco to continue to be able to afford a high level of public SPUR services ... SPUR recommends a YES Vote." — San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association

# DON'T LET THE CITY'S \$829 MILLION PENSION & BENEFITS DEBT **BANKRUPT OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE!**

- For the first time in San Francisco's history –

**Summer School was Cancelled for 10,000 kids** 

because the district didn't have \$4 million to pay for it. Yet the City spent nearly 100 times this amount to pay retiree pensions.



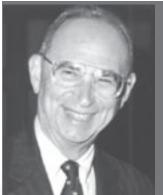
**Proposition B** helps rescue San Franciscans from the unfair, unsustainable and unfunded burden of subsidizing nearly a billion dollars just this year in public employee healthcare and pension benefits. Over 49,000 San Fran**ciscans** – more than 1 in 10 city voters – signed their names to help place Prop B on our November ballot.

Nearly half of all city employees don't pay anything towards their own healthcare or pension benefits. Consequently, San Franciscans who work for private

employers or for themselves pay not only for their own healthcare and pensions - but also finance the generous healthcare and pension benefits for city workers.

**Proposition B** will save over \$121 million dollars a year, money that can be redirected to our schools, fire protection, health, senior and children's programs.

**Please VOTE YES on Proposition B on November 2!** For more information, or to read the measure, please visit: www.voteforpropb.com



"Every generation must demonstrate fiscal justice and discipline, which Prop B finally does."

— Hon. Judge Quentin L. Kopp (Retired)



"A yes vote on Prop B will help ensure that we don't pass on our city's escalating pension and benefits debt to our children." —Jeff Adachi, Public Defender



ES ON PROPOSITION B, supported by Public Defender Jeff Adachi, Harriet Heyman, Michael Moritz and Warren Hellmar

Farmers Market | Every Sun | 9 am-**1pm** | Stonestown: at Stonestown Gal-

leria (19th Avenue @ Winston)

#### **EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT**

Every Tues | 4–8 pm | Que Syrah. Take \$1 off each glass, 10% off of each bottle of wine consumed at the store. 230 West Portal Avenue 731.7000

#### **EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT**

Friday Night Jazz Fri | 7–11 pm | Cliff House, Balcony Lounge – 1 Seal Rock .

Jennifer Arnold | Oct 5 | 7 pm | Discussing Through A Dog's Eyes. After 20 years of dog training, Arnold shares her training method, which is based on teaching dogs to make choices through kindness and encouragement rather than fear and submission Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave., Info: 564-8080

#### WED • COMMUNITY POLICE ADV. BOARD

CPAB | Oct 6 | 6-7 pm | Community Police Advisory Board. The purpose of the CPAB is to provide advice to the Area Commanding Officerto decrease the incidents and fear of crime. Taraval Police Station Community Room 2345 24th TUE-COMMUNITY MEETING

#### SUN • VIOLINIST AXEL STRAUSS

SF Academy Orchestra Season Opener Oct 10 | 5 pm | Andrei Gorbatenko, Conductor Mozart Adagio and Fugue in C minor, Sir Edward Elgar Introduction & Allegro Astor Piazzolla, Four Seasons in Buenos Aires. Calvary Presbyterian Church, 2515 Fillmore. Tickets at door or: www. sfacademyorchestra.org

#### SUN • CZECH NONET

Czech Nonet Chamber Ensemble | Oct 10 3 pm | First California performance in 35 years. Martinů: Nonetto; Asia: Nonet; Krejci: Divertimento; Wagner: Siegfried Idyll McKenna Theatre, Creative Arts Building, SF State University, 1600 Holloway at 19th

#### TUE • POETS NEWMAN AND BELZ

Denise Newman and Aaron Belz | Oct 12 | 7 pm | Reading from *The New Make*  Goods and Human Forest. Offbeat poet and humorist Belz reads from Lovely, Raspberry. He is also author of The Bird Hoverer. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave., Info: 564-8080

#### THU • HAVAVA -SFCASA FUNDRAISER

**Oct 14 | 7–11 pm | Club Mighty, SFCASA** will host "Hot October Nights: HAVAVA," a fundraiser in support of the city's youth sfcasa.org 415-399-6132

#### GROWING EDIBLE PLANTS

SF Botanical Gardens | Oct 16 | 9 am-1 pm | UC Ext. Master Gardeners will teach hands-on workshop at the Hall of Flowers, aimed at beginning and intermediate gardeners. Covers winter vegetables, renewing soil, choosing fruit trees and berries, pruning and tool care. Registration is \$35, or \$30 for members of the SF **Botanical Garden.** 

#### TUE • AUTHOR JUDITH ROCK

Judith Rock | Oct 19 | 7 pm | will read from, Rhetoric of Death, a superb historical whodunit set in 1686 Paris. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave., Info: 564-8080

**Taraval Police District Community Mtg** | Oct 19 | 6 pm | US Postal Inspector will be on hand to discuss mail theft at the monthly Taraval Community meeting at Taraval Police Station, 2345 24th Ave. (3rd Tues of each month).

#### • ECOLOGIES AND OCEANS

**Author Doug Abrams and Dennis Kelso** Oct 19 | 6 pm | Best-selling Author Doug **Abrams and Environmental Hero Dennis** Kelso "Ecologies and Oceans: Whales, **Humans and Earth Lessons Learned from** the Gulf Spill" Commonwealth Club, 595 Market Street, 2nd Fl. Info 597-6705 or commonwealthclub.org \$8 members, \$20 non-members, \$7 students (with valid ID)

#### AUTHOR ANTONYA NELSON

Oct 21 | 7 pm | Nelson will read from, Bound. Author of Nothing Right and Talking in Bed delivers her first novel in a decade.

#### Believe Newman an SF poet penned Wild TWO NEW BABY FACES AT THE SAN FRANCISCO ZOO

One Surprise Birth and One Planned Brings New François' Langurs to Zoo Family

On September 7, 2010, animal keepers at the San Francisco Zoo were greeted by a wonderful and unexpected new addition—the birth of an infant François' langur. Then, on Thursday, September 23, 2010 another infant was born, this one was planned through the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Species Survival Plan. The two vibrant orange-headed infants were welcomed with open in foster care. Details, tickets, www. arms by the rest of the langur group and both mothers and newborns are doing incredibly well.

The Zoo's Francois' langur group consists of two males (Chuy and son Han) and four females (Conkhi, My Linh, Jingjing and Kim). My Linh is the mother of Kim and also birthed the recent surprise infant. She originally had a birth control implant, but keepers suspect that the family of langurs may have somehow removed the implant during regular grooming. The second infant was birthed by Conkhi, who is the mother of Han and Jingjing. Chuy is the sire for all the offspring

amongst this group of François' langurs. All the females in the group will take turns car-

This medium-sized black primate has unique facial characteristics and long, distinctive white sideburns. Infant langurs are known for their stark color contrast and have a vivid orange coat at birth, especially on their heads. As they get older their coloring will change to the adult black and white.

The François' langur is a rare species found in Southwestern China and Vietnam. The population of the species has declined dramatically in the wild and potentially faces extinction. Recent estimations are that there may be as few as 1,000 left in the wild.

Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave., Info: 564-8080

#### RI • BERLIN & BEYOND FILM FESTIVAL

Oct 22-28 | The 15th annual Berlin & Beyond film festival at the historic Castro Theater Opening: Vincent Wants to Sea a comedy, Pope Joan, Animals United in 3-D, When We Leave, Rock Hudson: Dark and Handsome Stranger, and Autumn Gold. Info and tickets, berlinbeyond.com or Goethe-Institut 530 Bush St.

#### N • ORCHESTRA AND ENSEMBLE

SF State Orchestra conducted by Cyrus Ginwala/SF State Wind Ensemble conducted by Tristan Arnold | Oct 23 | 7:30 pm | Benjamin Britten's Variation's and Fugue on a theme of Purcell Op. 34 and Charles Gounod's Petite Symphonie for winds Knuth Hall, Creative Arts Building, SF State University, 1600 Holloway at 19th

Ave., Admission: Advance: \$8 students, faculty, staff and seniors/\$12 general; Door: \$10 students, faculty, staff and seniors/\$15 general.

#### ALEXANDER MCCALL SMITH

Author McCall Smith | Oct 23 | 7 pm | will read from, The Charming Quirks of Others. A discreet investigation reveals suprising issues in the most hidden precincts of the heart. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal Ave., Info: 564-8080

#### N • CENTRAL COUNCIL

West of Twin Peaks Central Council Oct 25 | 7:30 pm | A resource for neighborhood organizations. Learn and comment on issues. Fourth Mon each month Forest Hill Clubhouse at 381 Magellan

Got an event? The Westside Observer's priority is neighborhood, local events: editor@westsideobserver.com

**Now At the Movies •** By Don Lee Miller

#### THE AMERICAN

As soon as the bodies start stacking up in snowy Sweden, hit man Jack: George Clooney hides out from his pursuers in Italy. He designs a special lightweight rifle for a female client, Ingrid: Irina Bjorklund. Parts are specially ordered. Meticulously, Jack files the metal to perfection while listening to Madame Butterfly, then assembles the weapon. A loner, Jack has an attraction to young, nubile women who are paid for their services. His Italian companion is the sympathetic Clara: Violante Placido. Father Benedetto: Paolo Bonacelli harbors secrets of his own while befriending Jack. Anton Corbjin directs the screenplay by Rowan Joffe, based on the original novel by Martin Booth. Female nudity, Violence, Scenes of intercourse, Profanity.

#### EASY A

High school senior Olive: Emma Stone spreads a lie about having lost her virginity, using it to her advantage, both socially and financially. Her mother, Rosemary: Patricia Clarkson and Dad, Dill: Stanley Tucci don't realize how resourceful Olive can be. Making noises inside a locked bedroom at a high school party, Olive pretends to have sex with Brandon: Dan Byrd. Her science teacher, Mr. Griffith: Thomas Haden Church is more understanding than Principal Gibbons: Malcolm McDowell or her counselor, Mrs. Griffith: Lisa Kudrow. The high school religious fanatic, Marianne: Amanda Bynes wants to get Olive expelled. Olive's real interest is handsome Woodchuck Todd: Penn Badgley. Bert V. Royal's script is directed by Will Gluck with humor and inclusion of Olive's cell phone and computer screens. Profanity, Sexual situations.

#### **SCOTT PILGRIM VS. THE WORLD**

Set in Toronto, nerdy teen Scott: Michael

Cera has the hots for Kim: Allison Pill. When her seven ex's whom Scott must defeat in battle include hunks, Todd: Brandon Routh (Superman) and Lucas: Chris Evans (Johnny Storm in Fantastic Four), one realizes it's all a joke. Had Kim been played by Megan Fox with a Ten-Plus bod, rather than the conventional Pill with hair changing color every ten days, one could better understand what the fuss was about. Gay Wallace: Kiernan Culkin shares his floor mattress with Scott and two others. Knives: Ellen Wong is excellent as the groupie who hangs around Scott. Director/co-writer Edgar Wright and co-Lee O'Malley's graphic novels. Profanity, Tasteless situations. LEGEND OF THE GUARDIANS: THE OWLS

#### OF GA'HOOLE

This animated feature for kids, containing beautiful sunsets with life forces only owls and their predators, is based on the books of Kathryn Lasky. The good owls, the Guardians, dwell in Ga'Hoole, while the bad owls, the Pure Ones, live in a barren wasteland. The story centers around two brothers, Soren, voiced by Jim Sturgess, and Kludd, v.o. Ryan Kwanten, who is lured to evil ways. Soren escapes his kidnappers and alerts his friends to unite to protect their flock. Sharp metal claws and leather helmets are donned so they can attack. Australian and British actors supply the vocal talent: Ezylryb: Geoffrey Rush, Allomere: Sam Neill, Otulissa: Abbie Cornish, Barran: Deborra Lee Furness (Mrs. Hugh Jackman), Twilight: Anthony La Paglia, Noctus/Grimble: Hugo Weaving; Nyra: Helen Mirren, and Gylfie: Emily Barclay. 3D and IMAX

#### THE TOWN

Within one square mile of Boston, named Charlestown, live and hide most of

Boston's criminal element, including the bank-robbing quartet of this story. The brains, Doug: Ben Affleck; the loose finger, Jim: Jeremy Renner; and two other hoods do the jobs. Then, there's the bank manager, Claire: Rebecca Hall and Jon Hamm, the FBI investigator. Jim, his parents and sister, Krista: Blake Lively, have raised Doug since he was five when his father, Stephen: Chris Cooper was sent to prison. Fergie: Pete Postlethwaite, runs a flower shop as a cover. This crime thriller, one of the year's best written dramas, is well worth seeing. The acting is also top-notch with the script writer Michael Bacall adapted from Bryan co-written and directed by Affleck in great form. Violence, Sexy situations, Profanity.

beautiful Peruvian coastline, a married fisherman struggles to reconcile his devotion to his male lover within his town's rigid traditions. Miguel: Cristian Mercado, a handsome, young and beloved fisherman, and his youthful wife, Mariela: Tatiana Astengo, are about to welcome their first born. But Miguel harbors his secret love for Santiago: Manolo Cardona, an American painter who is ostracized by the townspeople both because he denies God and is openly gay. When Santiago accidentally drowns in the Pacific Ocean's strong undertow, he cannot pass over peacefully to the other side. He returns after death to ask Miguel to find his body and bury it according to the town rituals. Miguel must choose between condemning Santiago to eternal torment or doing right by him and, in so doing, revealing their relationship to his wife—and the entire village. When Santiago's mother and sister come to take his body back home for burial, his nude paintings of Miguel are seen by all and there are no more secrets. Well written and directed by Javier Fuentes-León. Male laughs. Profanity.

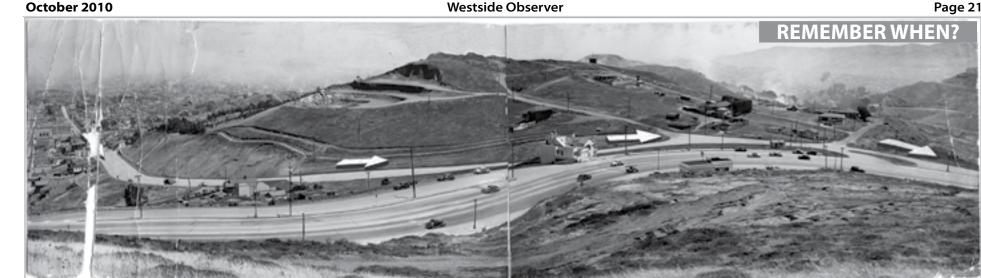
and female nudity, situations, Profanity. <u>Festival</u> Awards: 2010 Sundance Film Festival: Winner of the World Cinema Audience Award

(Drama); 2010 Frameline Festival: Outstanding First Feature Award; Peru's Official Selection for the 2010 Oscars.

#### **YOU AGAIN**

Marni Olsen: Kristen Bell was the girl in her high school class who had braces on her teeth, glasses, bad hair and skin, and was bullied by the in-crowd led by cheerleader, Joanna: Odette Yustman. Now it's eight In this unusual ghost story set on the years later and Marni's a PR VP. In 48 hours, Joanna is marrying Marni's older brother, a lawyer, Will: Jimmy Wolk, unless Joanna is exposed for the bitch that she really is. Marni's parents, Gail: Jamie Lee Curtis and Mark: Victor Garber are hosting the event in Northern California. Joanna's Aunt Mona: Sigourney Weaver, now on the Forbes 100 Most Powerful Women with a chain of hotels, was Gail's best friend in high school, but secretly envied Gail, who won all the titles, even was Sandy in Grease. Pretentious Mona tosses around French phrases incessantly. Weaver's performance reminds one of her comedic Oscar-nominated work in 1988's Working Girl. Grandma Bunny: Betty White adds humor to dire situations. Kristen Chenoweth, the perky wedding planner with pizzazz, livens up the proceedings. When the fangs come out, beware! Cameos by Duane Johnson, Patrick Duffy, Cloris Leachman, Reginald VelJohnson, Hall & Oates, and Catherine Bach. The direction by Andy Fickman and writing by Moe Jelline could have had less clichés and more belly

October 2010 Westside Observer



Clipper Street freeway extension Date 1947 June 20. S.F. Districts-Diamond Heights-1940's, Newscopy: "DEBUT FOR FREEWAY DUE—Pictured above is another link in San Francisco's program of freeway traffic arteries, the Clipper-St extension scheduled for completion by July 15. Its course traced by arrows, it will be the main east-west arterial to the contemplated second Bay crossing and connect with all north-south arterials between Twin Peaks and the Bay. Meantime, it will provide motorists easier access from Portola-Dr, at point shown in right foreground, to the industrial areas. The new \$182,000 road joins Clipper-St near Douglass Playground and is part of the so-called Army-Guerrero-San Jose-Clipper-Sts Project:

At the Theater • By Dr Annette Lust and Flora Lynn Isaacson

#### **WORD FOR WORD'S WIZARDRY**



Dr. Annette Lust



panies take on the challenge to successfully instill dramatic life into novels and short stories. If any theatre company can bring prose to life it is Word for Word that has a unique talent for spotting novels and stories that can be dramatized. And if the prose has little dialogue they have an acting technique that effectively dramatizes and physicalizes narration. A recent example is their production of Elizabeth Strout's novel Olive Kitteridge, presently being staged in their inaugural season of Z Space at Theater

t is hard enough for good

companies to stage quality

plays with a readymade

dialogue. And still fewer com-

Word for Word's world premiere of Strout's Olive Kitteridge,

consisting of two stories entitled "Tulips" and "River," is based on the life of small town characters in Maine. The dramatic conflict revolves mainly around forthright retired math teacher Olive Kitteridge, magnificently interpreted by Patricia Silver along with excellent performances by Paul Finocchiaro as her husband Henry, and Patrick Alparone as son Chris. The main thrust of "Tulips" (performed with a detailed staging that could gain in being trimmed down) focuses on the relationship of Olive to her devoted Henry to whom she shows dutiful affection and son Chris whose marriage to a flighty Suzanne separates them. When Henry's stroke occurs, Olive, estranged from her husband, faces loneliness accentuated by Chris' departure to California. Her life now consists of watching her tulips blowing in the wind, visiting an immobile Henry in a rest home, and taking six mile walks along the river.

Actress Patricia Silver and stage director Joel Mullennix's power to move spectators lies in the realistic and masterful portrayal of Olive's heartbreaking loss of her lifelong partner and her carefree son that drive her to depressed suicidal feelings. Olive's psychological state, sensitively and profoundly depicted without sentimentality or melodrama, incites spectators to empathize with the protagonist's hollow retired life and reflect on their

one is not aware that their lines are directly repeated from Arley Levine Wright who the printed word until they say at the end of a line "he said or she said." Among other cast members who enliven the text are Jeri Lynn Cohen as nurse Mary Blackwell, Michelle Bellaver as Suzanne Kitteridge, Nancy Shelby as dying father. the affected eccentric neighbor Louise Larkin, and Warren David Keith as Jack Kennison, Olive's gentle male widower companion. Director Joel Mullennix and scene designer David

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Szlasa create an intimate and less hollowed stage space than the preexisting one by seating audience members on both sides of the stage and playing parts of the action among these spectators. Costumes (especially that of Olive in the same old coat sweater) by Laura Hazlett, lights by Jim Cave and sound by Tucki Bailey all are well suited to the characters and action.

This unique company, now with a permanent address at Z Space and that has staged classic and contemporary fiction since 1993, has once again weathered the challenge to animate the written word and continue its wizardry in admirably bringing literature to the stage.

Olive Kitteridge extended to Oct. 10th. Info: 800-838-3006 or visit www.Zspace.org. Dr. Annette Lust

#### **ZERO TO 90 IN 90 MINUTES**

Zero to 90 in 90 Minutes is a smorgasbord of Short Plays and Monologues written by four smart Bay Area women—Linda Ayres-Frederick, Joya Cory, Ruth Kirschner and Naomi Newman. These plays most of which won awards at the 2009 Fringe of Marin just won the Best of Fringe Best Plays Award at the 2010 SF Fringe Festival.

My particular favorites were the three plays which were previously performed last fall at the 2009 Fringe of Marin Festival. First Place would to go Gussie and Sam, written and directed by Naomi Newman. This prize-winning play is a serio-comic look at two senior citizens facing the challenge of living in a nursing home. Performed expertly by Linda Ayres-Frederick and Paul Gerrior, the audience was roaring with laughter with tears. This play really has depth. Wabi Sabi by Ruth Kirschner and beautifully directed by Linda Ayres-Frederick is a hilarious comedy about four neurotic strangers whose lives unwillingly intersect at a bus stop. Delightful performances are given by the entire cast—Juliet Tanner, Heidi Wolff, Linda Ayres-Frederick and Bruno Kanter. This play was the winner of the Marin Fringe Festival Best Play Award in 2009 (directed by Penny Wallace). Linda Ayres-Frederick is amazing! She also wrote and performed Googling for Gerson, a poignant, award-winning monologue about a Hispanic grandmother who helps purchase a prosthesis for her grandson who has just returned from the war.

Other plays on the program include another play written and directed by Linda Ayres-Frederick called Waiting in the Victory Garden. In a time of war, a young bride wonders if her new husband will survive his deployment. Featured players include Juliet Tanner, Heidi Wolff and Paul Gerrior. This play was previously performed at the 2007 Bay Area One Act Festival at the Eureka Theatre. Ruth Kirschner wrote a wonderful monologue called 15 Notes directed by Linda Ayres-Frederick and featured All the actors animate the narrated prose so well that Heidi Wolff who gave a sadly hilarious performance as

> is trying to write a simple thank you note to the doctor who has been caring for her Last but not least was

The Most Beautiful Showgirl in the World by Janet Johnston and Joya Cory,



Finding

directed by Maureen Studer. Joya gives a stunning performance as Elavne, an aging showgirl. Then immediately before our eyes, Joya transforms herself into Irma in Irma at the Movies, which she also wrote, in which Irma fights a panic attack at the movies. I would also like to give credit to Jan Carty Marsh for

her outstanding work in lighting and sound effects. Zero to 90 in 90 Minutes will be performed at the "Best of Fringe" on Oct. 1 and 2 at the Exit Theatre on 156 Eddy Street, on Oct. 1 and 2. For info call 415-931-1094 or visit www. sffringe.org. Flora Lynn Isaacson

#### MAMET'S POLITICAL PARODY

Just in time for the mid-term elections, comes "November." This 2008 farce by David Mamet concerns a U.S. President facing a bleak re-election campaign who must look to the turkey lobby to boost his sagging polls. Meanwhile, his speech writer has demands of her own to legalize gay marriage.

Ross Valley Players' production stars Buzz Halsing as President Charles Smith who is staring at extremely low poll ratings. In order to fund his presidential campaign, he seizes an opportunity to extort \$200,000,000 from the Turkey Producers of America by threatening to give a speech making a case for eating pork or fish on Thanksgiving instead. The play begins with Stephen Dietz as the President's Chief of Staff, Archer Brown, trying to knock some political sense into his head. The President's best hope for money rests with a turkey lobbying group, which is willing to pay substantial sums for the traditional presidential pardon of a Thanksgiving turkey. But they have unacceptable conditions which also cause problems for his lesbian speech writer Clarice Bernstein (LeAnne Rumbel), who wants the President to marry her and her partner before he leaves the Oval Office to make it legal.

The play then wraps up with a quick farcical moment including a Native-American lobbyist (Romulo Torres) who tries unusual methods to win some land for a casino, and gay marriage advocates score a win at the expense of several dead turkeys.

James Dunn, who directed the superb production of Glengarry Glenn Ross last year, also by Mamet, directs November with an ear for the musicality of the language. His smart staging elicits crisp performances from his

November continues at Ross Valley Players through October 17. For tickets, call 415-456-9555 or go online at www.rossvalleyplayers.com.

Coming up next at Ross Valley Players will be Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice directed by Phoebe Moyer from Nov. 12-Dec.12, 2010.Flora Lynn Isaacson



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Constant Support CASA (Cont. from p. 22)

broken windows, dirty mattresses and drug addicts coming and going was where the

Being a CASA empowered Nebenzahl in the courtroom to be the voice of a child who couldn't negotiate the legal system on her own.

"I said, 'Your Honor, these are the kinds of things that have happened to this child. We need to make sure this child can survive and thrive."

Nebenzahl's testimony was evidence of a deep-seeded relationship between CASA and foster child — a relationship that judges highly value.

"CASAs provide the eyes and ears for the court in looking at each child as an individual," says Judge Donna Hitchens, who has presided over dependency cases in San Francisco's Unified Family Court for over 19 years.

Judge Hitchens says that judges rely heavily on the CASA report because it contains crucial information that fills in gaps in cases. "It goes right to the heart of what's going on with the child," she says, which, in turn, "always leads to better decision-making."

Approximately 2,000 foster kids have come through Judge Hitchens' courtroom, but of those, only 15% had the benefit of having a CASA. In her experience, 80% of court-dependent children not served by SFCASA enter the juvenile justice system, but of those served by SFCASA, less than 2% do so. "We could always use more CASAs," she says. "If I had my way, every foster child would have one."

During 2009-2010, SFCASA provided over 13,224 hours of advocacy and mentoring to San Francisco's children in foster care. Today, there are more than 300 volunteers, but more than 130 court-referred children on a waiting list for a CASA.

"It's an amazing role for someone in the community to have," says Durrett of being a special advocate. "A volunteer can make a change for a child on a small scale that means

Despite living in a different city, Anthony Pico still keeps in touch with his CASA. He's grateful for the consistent support he had while trapped in the foster care system's "perfect storm" - a scary, lonely, swirling mess of court proceedings and emotional issues.

"Having a CASA helped navigate away from the storm's eye," he says. "Just knowing that someone was there....that someone actually cared enough to spend time with me." Feedback: oleson@westsideobserver.com

			9	5	3			
	8				2			
3	5					2	9	
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7	9					5		6
	6	2					5	7
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Each puzzle is a 9 by 9 grid of squares divided into nine 3 by 3 square blocks, with some of the numbers filled in for you.

The Object: Fill in the blank squares in such a way that each of the numbers 1 to 9 appears exactly once in each row, column and block.

The answer appears aside.

#### BRAIN FUD

When you curtail a word, you remove the last letter and still have a valid word. You will be given clues for the two words, longer word first.

Example: Begin -> Heavenly body Answer: The words are Start and Star.

- 1. Endures -> At the end
- 2. At the beginning -> Evergreens
- 3. Long in duration -> Longest dimension
- 4. Boxers -> Brief in duration
- 5. Fully developed -> Become larger
- 6. Count -> High in stature
- 7. Long for; desire -> Small inlet
- 8. Despise -> Head covering

Answers: on the right

#### OPEN LATE









By Julie Behn



#### **Early Detection Saves Lives Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)**

PAD is a serious disease affecting 8 million Americans and nearly 1 in 3 people age 70 and over. When fatty deposits build up in the arteries it can lead to stroke, heart attack, amputations, and even death. The UCSF Heart and Vascular Center is home to some of the world's top vascular specialists who provide the most advanced diagnosis and treatment available for PAD.

If you are over age 50 and have any of the following, you may be at risk:

- Diabetes
- ► Smoke or previously smoked
- ▶ Leg pain when walking or foot pain at night
- ▶ Poor healing of minor wounds
- ► High blood pressure or abnormal cholesterol
- ► Heart disease, prior heart attack or stroke

#### Talk to your doctor to see a UCSF vascular specialist.

#### Three convenient locations:

- ▶ UCSF Medical Center at Parnassus
- ► Greenbrae (Marin County) ► Mission Bay (Opening in November)

Visit www.vascular.surgery.ucsf.edu or call (415) 353-2357

**UCSF** Medical Center

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8. Hate -> Hat 7. Covet -> Cove 6. Tally -> Tall 5. Grown -> Grow 4. Shorts -> Short 3. Lengthy -> Length 2. First -> Firs 1. Lasts -> Last Answer



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#### **Scott Wiener Deserves Your Vote for District 8 Supervisor**

# **Building a Better Quality of Life for** San Franciscans...

#### Scott's vision for San Francisco, and what he would foster as District 8's Supervisor, is a city where:

- There is recognition that neighborhoods that are safe, vibrant, and clean are the building blocks of a great city;
- The public health delivery system is strengthened with a sharper focus on specific needs, such as HIV, children's health, mental health, and substance abuse treatment;
- The budget process is reformed and city leaders focus on long-term structural solutions;
- The city's infrastructure receives the attention it deserves, with innovative solutions being found to reduce the fiscal impact of addressing decades of neglect;
- The public education system is strengthened by reforming the school assignment system so that diversity is maintained while not forcing parents to transport their kids across town;
- Quality-of-life misdemeanors are diverted from the criminal justice system into alternative settings that hold people accountable for their behavior while requiring them to receive services to address underlying problems; and
- More housing opportunities in all forms, including market-rate housing, affordable housing, and rental housing are made available to city residents.



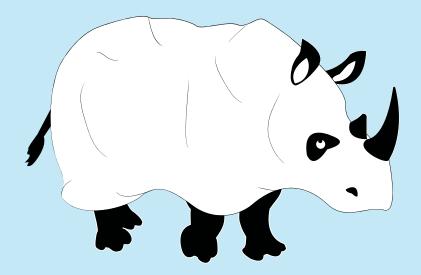
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# **VOTE NO ON G**It's not real Muni reform



Prop G says it's about fixing Muni. But the only thing it does is unfairly go after drivers - while doing nothing about bad management and real problems of Muni.

- **X** Management is the problem with Muni. The top manager at Muni made \$354,000 last year - the highest paid official in San Francisco – yet Muni management gets worse each year.
- **X Prop G doesn't improve Muni management.** Prop G does nothing to increase management accountability or efficiency. It gives the bureaucrats a free ride, while going after the drivers as if they are the problem.
- **X** Muni drivers are part of the solution. Muni drivers are on the front lines, keeping passengers safe, driving our transit routes, helping disabled passengers. They work hard under tough, sometimes unsafe conditions. They're part of the solution, not the problem.
- **X** Demand comprehensive, fair reform. Prop G singles out Muni drivers with the most unfair collective bargaining standards of any city union. That's not fair - and it won't fix Muni.

Get the facts. Vote NO on G.

Transit Workers Union, Local 250-A, AFL-CIO Special Fund FPPC#744486

