

Let's Be Honest - No on Prop A!

By John Farrell

On June 2nd I attended a meeting of the West of Twin Peaks Council. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Chief Ed Reiskin was on hand to speak on the Transportation 2030 Initiative (which subsequently became Prop A on the ballot) and explained that the City has neglected investing in transportation infrastructure for decades.

“...if Prop A doesn’t pass, then the tax rate would drop, reflecting a savings to the taxpayer, an amount Mr. Reiskin had no clue of at the time.”

In short, Muni needs \$10 billion but the City has only committed \$3.5 billion. Per Mr. Reiskin, the initiative asks voters to approve a General Obligation Bond of \$500 million to fund urgent projects and improve the infrastructure without raising the property tax rate. I thought to myself, that’s a deceptive spin by Mr. Reiskin. Right out of the gate and you are already trying to manipulate voters. If you didn’t know anything about the property tax rate and you heard this statement you would think that there would be no costs to a taxpayer. Let’s be honest, it will cost taxpayers. When I asked Mr. Reiskin directly how much this Bond would cost each taxpayer he did not know the answer.

Let’s go back in time. On June 6th 1978, California voters passed Proposition 13, which established a maximum property tax rate of one percent (1%) of the assessable value of a property, but the total tax rate may also include additional tax rates from bond indebtedness approved by two thirds of the voters. For example, the property tax rate for 2013 was 1.188%, which reflects the 1% tax rate, plus .188% bond indebtedness approved by voters for school bonds, infrastructure, and other public projects. As a result, if the voters approve a new General Obligation Bond, the property tax rate goes up; when that bond retires, the property tax rate is reduced.

What Mr. Reiskin implied was that since certain bonds are retiring, they would offset the increase to the taxpayer if Prop A passed. However, Mr. Reiskin avoided the point that if Prop A doesn’t pass, then the tax rate would drop, reflecting a savings to the taxpayer, an amount Mr. Reiskin had no clue of at the time.

The voter pamphlet recently came out with the Controller’s Statement on Prop A, which provides that “the highest estimated annual property tax cost for these bonds for the owner of a home with an assessed value of \$500,000 is \$91.02.” It does cost the taxpayer.

Prop A includes vague language such as “Projects to be funded under the proposed Bond may include

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Parkmerced Opponents Lose Their Legal Appeal

San Francisco’s Development and Planning Process Has Been Effectively Destroyed

By George Wooding and Glenn Rogers

The distinction between two little words — “must” vs. “shall” — is about to allow chaotic and unstoppable growth throughout San Francisco. The lack of these specific wordings has allowed Proposition M, the core of San Francisco’s General Growth Plan, to be controlled by the rich, the powerful, and the influential.

On Thursday, August 14, 2014, the First District Court of Appeals issued its decision in favor of development interests in the case San Francisco Tomorrow et al. vs. the City and County of San Francisco et al.

At issue in the case is the fate of Parkmerced, the serene mid-twentieth-century neighborhood that is a San Francisco landmark. Developers, along with City and County politicians, propose to demolish Parkmerced and replace most of its existing 3,221 residences with 8,900 housing units.

When the project, which currently houses about 8,000 residents, is completed in 2040 an additional 14,000 people will be living in the 152-acre neighborhood. Units that are currently rent-controlled will stay that way, but



new units will be rented or sold at market rate. The rebuilt Parkmerced will have a maximum of 3,200 rent-controlled units, the same number it has today.

Parkmerced residents at the hearing said they have no faith that either the developer or the City have their best interests at heart over the long-term.

The destruction of the current Parkmerced was approved in 2011 by a six-to-five split vote of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. A lawsuit was immediately filed by San Francisco Tomorrow asserting that San

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Sweetheart Deals Revealed in Construction of Laguna Honda Rebuild

BEHIND THE PERP-WALK

The mysterious June 20 expulsion of Laguna Honda Hospital (LHH) Chief Operating Officer (COO) Mike Llewellyn has long roots. According to 780 pages of Llewellyn e-mails, his termination seems connected to DPH painting contractor William Decker Company/RMD Enterprise (Decker). The firm, now owned by the late founder’s daughter, Rachel M. Decker, was being investigated by the Office of Labor Standards Enforcement (OLSE) in 2011 after employees complained that Decker wasn’t paying fair wages.

OLSE enforces prevailing wage requirements in City contracts. Unlike most other City whistleblower programs, the OLSE gets results. It substantiates 65% of complaints and recovers lost wages from 90% of the companies pursued. By combating wage theft, OLSE protects vulnerable workers from exploitation, reduces their reliance on social services, and allows honest employers to compete fairly.

On 4/26/11, the OSLE contacted Llewellyn seeking information about Decker’s work at LHH and he promised to provide the records. Though he knew that OLSE was investigating Decker, Llewellyn blind ccd his response directly to Rachel Decker. Unknown to OLSE, Llewellyn and Decker were buddies. For example, on 5/13/11 Decker sent him a FAX detailing \$2,324 in repairs to her 2004 Silverado. Llewellyn responded “Wow.” On 7/26/11 Llewellyn sent Decker an internal bulletin issued to DPH finance officers. Two months later he sent her an LHH financial report listing fund balances available for 8 vendors, without sending it to the others.

Over the next 8 months, OLSE struggled to round up records of Decker’s work, particularly a \$220,210 restoration job at DPH headquarters that included a \$13,000 renovation of Health Director Barbara Garcia’s Office. A dozen exchanges occurred between OLSE and Llewellyn and his deputies; Diana Kenyon, LHH Facilities Manager, and John Lee, Buildings & Grounds Supervisor. Wherever OLSE probed, Llewellyn was made aware. When OLSE obtained Decker’s employee sign-in sheets, John Lee forwarded them to Llewellyn noting, “thought you want to know.” Lee even blind ccd Llewellyn on his responses to trivial inquiries about Decker.

There were other signs of Llewellyn’s pervasive interest in Decker’s affairs. On 1/12/12, OLSE asked Diana Kenyon about work done by Decker before a contract was



Favoritism in contracts with DPH is revealed in records obtained by the Westside Observer under the Sunshine ordinance

“... the OSLE reached a Settlement Agreement with Decker on 2/21/12. She did not admit to any wrongdoing but agreed to pay \$28,000, including \$19,704 in back wages to 6 employees and \$8,296 in penalties for violating the City’s prevailing wage law.”

signed. Kenyon forwarded the inquiry to Llewellyn. Staying in the background, Llewellyn coached Kenyon, “Here is your reply” and wrote out a generic message, adding, “CC me on the reply.” Kenyon dutifully sent her ghost-written response. But OSLE wanted specific dates, noting a “legal discrepancy” raised by the City Attorney. Frustrated by OSLE’s persistence, Kenyon e-mailed Llewellyn, “I don’t know what tree she is barking up now.” Six minutes

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Market Movers

Sunday Farmer’s Market at Stonestown has been wildly successful at it’s current location behind Macy’s, however, the Holiday season parking demands have made the move across the street a seasonal necessity.

That move will be a permanent one for the popular market starting this month.





Glenn Gullmes, Willie Ratcliff, Earl Adkins and Juan Gonzales take questions from the sold out audience at the Commonwealth Club

Sweetheard Deals (Cont. from p. 1)

later, Llewellyn forwarded the e-mail train to Rachel Decker.

On 2/7/12 Llewellyn sent his deputy John Lee a quote for a window project submitted by the Decker Co. with the message, "Here's your quote, let's get it processed" – and blind cc'd Rachel Decker. One week later, Llewellyn's deputy, Diana Kenyon, notified 3 painting contractors, including the Decker Co., of a bid walk-through. When the walk-through was rescheduled, Kenyon notified the 3 bidders. Llewellyn then forwarded that notice to Rachel Decker to make sure she got it personally. When the walk-through was delayed, Llewellyn instructed Kenyon when to reschedule the due-date for bids, then cc'd Decker – not the others.

After receiving assurances from Llewellyn that Decker's jobs were "won through competitive bidding," the OSLE reached a Settlement Agreement with Decker on 2/21/12. She did not admit to any wrongdoing but agreed to pay \$28,000, including \$19,704 in back wages to 6 employees and \$8,296 in penalties for violating the City's prevailing wage law.

One week after the OLSE Settlement, Decker was awarded a \$44,725 contract to paint DPH Accounting Offices at 101 Grove Street. However, the Accounting Office lacked the funds to cover Decker's bid. So the DPH transferred funds from a Mental Health facilities account to pay for the job. After a lengthy set of maneuvers and approvals, to which Llewellyn was a party, funding was granted on 3/19/12. One minute later, Llewellyn forwarded the trail of Accounting Office e-mails to Rachel Decker with the emoticon, "Funded :)". However, it took another 3 weeks to get Decker's newly-funded

contract released. One minute after getting the OK, Llewellyn forwarded that series of Accounting e-mails to Decker, writing, "Now you can schedule."

On 4/18/12, Llewellyn's Assistant, Jessica Kennedy, was trying to tie a name to a relationship. In an e-mail to Llewellyn's deputy, John Lee, Kennedy copied an invoice with Rachel Decker's name on it and wrote, *Mystery solved. Name on invoice.* Lee rushed Kennedy's discovery to Llewellyn, adding; "OOOOOOOOPPPPS, I told her that she is not the one. I said Rachael is married with kids and that she is a real bitch and that you would not be with her."

Nevertheless, when Llewellyn received a State notice about swine flu on 8/3/12, he sent it to Rachel Decker. She responded; "Thank you for the notification. I'm afraid for my little love." Two minutes later he replied, "I know, I get these alerts, it's personal to me now."

It's intriguing that we found no personal messages in 2013 and 2014. Perhaps Decker was busy, having delivered a baby boy in Walnut Creek on 7/18/13. Perhaps communication was inhibited by the Controller's 2013 investigation of favoritism complaints by DPH painting contractors. Or, the DPH may have withheld some.

Besides Llewellyn's close associates, other LHH staffers knew of the Llewellyn-Decker relationship and the potential for partiality. Given the hospital's repression of dissent, insiders stood mum as Llewellyn painted himself into a corner. Next month, we'll explore why outsiders exposed the rot at the top of Laguna Honda Hospital.

Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr were senior physicians at Laguna Honda Hospital where they repeatedly exposed wrongdoing by the Department of Public Health. Contact: DerekOnVanNess@aol.com

Commonwealth Club Features SF Community Newspapers

By Mitch Bull

The San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association and the impact of community journalism was the featured topic last week at a forum sponsored by San Francisco's prestigious Commonwealth Club. Four local publishers, Earl Adkins (*Marina Times*), Juan Gonzales (*El Tecolote*), Willie Ratcliff (*SF BayView*) and moderator Glenn Gullmes (*West Portal Monthly*) represented the neighborhood news collective in leading a discussion on the state of local journalism and its impact on informing and bringing together citizens for community action.

The problems of the major daily newspapers have been well-documented and reported on nationwide ... the advantage that the neighborhood papers have ... serving the needs of the residents..."

Gonzales, who is also a Professor of Journalism at the City College of San Francisco, described how over 44 years, *El Tecolote* has been a hub in the Mission District and for the Latino community, helping to define and strengthen the "community identity" and serving as a training ground for generations of journalists and community activists looking to be involved in their communities, and to make a difference in the future direction of their neighborhood.

The underlying thread of community involvement and connectedness is a unifying factor for each of the 15 community newspapers, and the main differentiator between the hyper-local news in each community and the difficulties that the major daily newspapers are having. The problems of the major daily newspapers have been well-documented and reported on nationwide, and the Bay Area is not exempt, with downsizing being evident at both the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *The Examiner*. Both Adkins and Gullmes spoke on the advantage that the neighborhood papers have when covering community-focused events and concerns, "We are at the forefront of what is happening in our neighborhoods," said Gullmes. "We have local journalists and citizens that are tuned into the concerns and needs of the communities and they are well-represented to report on meetings at the school districts, neighborhood councils, and police stations, as well as at City Hall and Planning Commission meetings." Adkins used a recent community outreach process concerning the opening of a chain restaurant on the Marina Green as the type of community involvement and coverage that local papers such as the *Marina Times* can cover best. He stressed that his publication is focused on serving the needs of the residents of the Marina primarily as a "lifestyle and local news outlet."

Some of the newspapers tackle a larger scope. Ratcliff, publisher of the Bayview based *SF BayView* tackles both local issues as well as African-American-focused issues from as far away as Haiti and the continent of Africa itself. "It's a labor of love," said Ratcliff, who has owned the paper since 1991. He cited important local issues such as crime, gentrification, education and the redevelopment of the Hunter's Point shipyard as areas where the community looks to his newspaper for detailed information and coverage. When asked about topics that are still relevant for his newspaper, he cited the "inequality within SF, especially for African-Americans, people of color, and women."

Moderator Gullmes, involved with the SFNNA throughout its 25-year history, used numbers to show the impact on the city that the 15 publications have. Together, the neighborhood publications are the largest source of print media distribution in San Francisco, with a reach of over 275,000 households each month, and advertising revenues that have reached their highest in it's history during this period where "print is supposedly dead."

The sell-out crowd was able to ask questions; topics ranged from the future of journalism (there will always be a need for information to be well-researched and distributed, in whatever format it will be in the future), to the differences in what the major papers can do versus the smaller neighborhood-based monthlies.

Following the conclusion of the forum, which was also broadcast via the Commonwealth Club's affiliated radio outlets, the publishers remained to continue the discussion with individual audience members. It was an apt conclusion to the topic which helped to convey that community journalism is alive and well in San Francisco.

Office of the Controller, City Services Auditor Whistleblower Program Annual Report July 1, 2013, Through June 30, 2014		
Complaint Category	Complaint/Allegations	Resolution
Improper Activities by City Employees	An employee did not properly procure the services of the contractor used to perform a project in accordance with the San Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 6. Further, the employee improperly used surplus funds from an unrelated project to fund this work.	The Whistleblower Program's investigation substantiated the allegations. The Whistleblower Program recommended that the department remind the employee of Administrative Code requirements for procuring vendors for construction and maintenance projects and to determine the necessity of personnel action against the employee. The department concurred with the Whistleblower Program's recommendations.
Improper Activities by City Employees	An employee did not disclose a personal relationship with a contractor.	The Whistleblower Program's investigation substantiated that the employee was romantically involved with the owner of a contractor while the employee was in a position of authority over contracted work. The investigation also substantiated that the employee accepted gifts from representatives of contractors. Also, the investigation found that this employee used city resources for personal purposes. The employee was released from the department. Additional corrective and preventive action is pending.

We believe the second complaint is about Llewellyn but the first one on the page may be about Llewellyn as well.

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Ruminations From A Former Supervisor

By Quentin Kopp



Having last month recommended, convincingly or otherwise, positions on the 12 San Francisco ballot measures confronting voting readers on November 4, 2014, I now pronounce judgment on the six California propositions designed to improve life for all citizens, if not elected public officials. Of the six State measures, three constitute voter (or special interest) initiatives, one is a State general obligation bond issue inspired chiefly by the Governor and massaged by industry, environmental, and governmental entities, one constitutes a constitutional amendment proposed by the Legislature, and one is a bona fide referendum from various gambling and other special interests. (Contrary to most media reporters and analysts lacking language integrity, a referendum represents submittal to popular vote of a statute passed by the Legislature, while an initiative represents a procedure enabling a specified number of voters by petition to propose a law for approval by the electorate.)

To reiterate, on San Francisco ballot measures, I recommend as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Proposition A: No | Proposition H: A big "YES" |
| Proposition B: No | Proposition I: An even bigger "NO" to another City Hall trick upon voters |
| Proposition C: No | Proposition J: Yes |
| Proposition D: Yes | Proposition K: No |
| Proposition E: Yes | Proposition L: Yes |
| Proposition F: Yes | |
| Proposition G: No | |

Proposition 1, the State general obligation bond proposal, asks voters to approve \$7,500,000,000 of indebtedness to build structures and facilities improving Californians' access to water, whether for drinking, bathing, growing crops, fishing, boating, drilling, or otherwise. A general obligation bond represents borrowing money and repaying it with interest. Assuming a 30-year loan at about 3.5% interest, Californians will repay the \$7,500,000,000 bond with accumulating interest of at least another \$8,000,000,000. Is it worth it? I think so. Included in purposes for which bond proceeds will be spent are construction of reservoirs, thus holding water otherwise escaping to the sea or elsewhere because of insufficient containment facilities. Proposition 1 arises from a compromise between California interests who need water, including local governments, farmers, and industrial entities. **I'm voting for it without hesitation.**

Proposition 2 is arcane. Don't try to read the text—your eyes and mind will rebel. It requires annual transfer of revenue from California's general fund to a "budget stabilization account." Half the money will be allocated to repay state debt, and the remainder will be spent only on emergencies or prospective budget deficits. It will also cause smaller local reserves for some school districts, but on the whole, it requires expenditure of a minimum amount each year to pay pension and retiree health benefit debts and local government and state debts. A minimum of \$800,000,000 annually must be spent for repayment of existing state debts (the law requires no such payment presently) and if capital gains tax revenues are high, \$2,000,000,000 must be applied to repay state debts annually. Proposition 2 enhances state fiscal responsibility, which is my goal in supporting it. **Vote yes on Proposition 2.**

Proposition 45 constitutes an initiative spawned by a consumer group in Southern California. It grants the California Insurance Commissioner power for the first time to approve (or disapprove) health insurance premiums, just as the Commissioner has done since 1988 with automobile and homeowner premiums. It also prohibits health, automobile, and homeowner insurance companies from setting premiums based on lack of prior coverage or credit history. California's present Insurance Commissioner is extremely partial to the insured (and plaintiffs' tort lawyers). One wants to believe he and successors will administer the Proposition 45 power fairly. I'm willing to do that, having never understood why the sponsors of the 1988

initiative which conferred such power regarding automobile insurance premiums on the Commissioner didn't include health insurance at that time. Proposition 45 is opposed by health insurers, the California Chamber of Commerce, and insurance defense lawyers, because it does bestow much power over health insurance premiums and benefits to an elected Insurance Commissioner. (I tried unsuccessfully as a State Senator to effectuate repeal of the 1988 constitutional initiative clause which made the Insurance Commissioner an elected office, rather than appointed by the Governor.) On balance, **I believe Proposition 45 is justified, despite possible political overlay.**

Proposition 46 should have been a simple initiative to amend the 1975 legislative statute which established a maximum of \$250,000 in a medical malpractice suit for general damages, commonly referred to as "pain and suffering." Proposition 46 should have merely adjusted the \$250,000 for inflation, the cost of living index change since 1975. Proposition 46's sponsors have tried three times to persuade the Legislature to do so, without success, and have unsuccessfully challenged the \$250,000 limitation in the courts, but, for reasons known to Proposition 46's sponsors, the initiative includes a detailed provision about drug and alcohol testing of doctors and requires doctors to report any other doctor suspected of drug or alcohol addiction, claiming that numerous doctors have caused deaths and injuries to patients because of their own drug or alcohol addiction. Sure, pilots, bus drivers, and some other vocations must submit to random drug testing, but that problem, assuming it exists, should have been addressed in a specific proposal to the Legislature, not tied to increasing the \$250,000 limitation on medical malpractice pain and suffering damages. I represented victims of medical negligence as a lawyer, and I sympathize with such lawyers and their clients' frustration with that general damage limitation, but **I must vote against Proposition 46** because it's an unnecessary attack on the integrity of medical doctors, intended as a guise for the unfair damage limit.

Proposition 47 is anything but "The Safe Neighborhood and Schools Tax." As the California District Attorneys Association points out, it "unfairly misleads the public into believing that the Act will strengthen criminal laws to protect neighborhoods and schools." It does the opposite. It reduces a plethora of crimes from felonies to misdemeanors. It allows release of imprisoned felons with serious or violent criminal records. It ignores the

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West Portal parent jumps into School Board Race

By Mitch Bull

Lee Hsu, a well known West Portal community leader and resident, has entered the race for the San Francisco School Board. The current President of the Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association, and parliamentarian for the West Of Twin Peaks Central Council, he believes in public education and that he can make a difference. "My parents emigrated to the United States in search of a better life and I am a product of public education. The schools in San Francisco do a good job, but I think we can make improvements to bring more effective, quality education to all communities in the city," said Hsu.



Imagine what the city will look like when every neighborhood has a quality school that children can walk to. It's better for the environment and for each of our communities. I hope to have the chance to make it happen."

"One of the biggest problems that we have in San Francisco is the overly complex and problematic assignment of children into the school system. Our system has become a "commuter school system" as the concept of children attending their neighborhood schools has all but disappeared. The key isn't to send high learning students across town to good performing schools, it is to bring quality education and programs to all schools within San Francisco," he explained, citing as an example that the schools in the Southeastern part of the city have not seen the type of investment that is needed to bring quality programs into those classrooms.

His goal, if elected, is to have as many students attend schools in their own community, as neighborhood schools should be an anchor within the community, and the candidate feels that San Francisco has lost some of that over the years. By having students in school close to their homes, it would also take thousands of cars off of the roads each school day, but can only be successful if quality programming and facilities are brought to all neighborhood schools.

Hsu says he is results driven, and thinks that underperforming schools can be turned around. As an example, Hsu described an after school enrichment program that he started and managed at one of the city's elementary schools. Starting with two subjects an after school enrichment program with two subjects, chess and language immersion, and it grew to include soccer, art math, theatre and other

classes. As the involvement of the students and parents grew, the school also performed better as a whole.

With a background in finance, technology and the law, Hsu feels he is well prepared to help the district work with companies to integrate technology into school sites and the curriculum across the entire city.

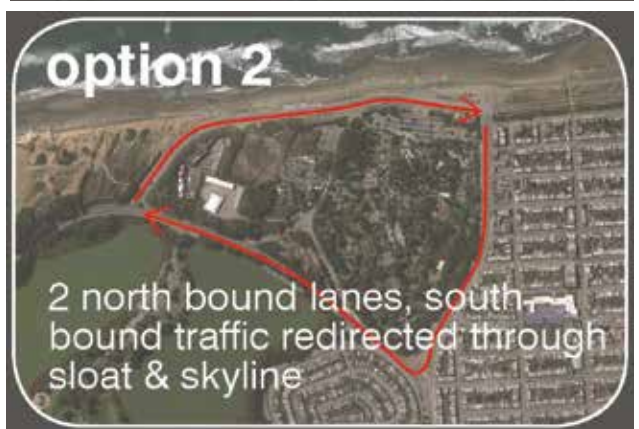
Married, with two children in the SF public school system, Hsu would, if elected, be the only school board member with children currently in the public elementary school system. When I asked what has motivated him to run he replied, "I have volunteered and worked at a single school site and have seen what can be done. There is no reason we cannot improve the schools in every neighborhood. It is important that we maintain our diversity and help both our high achieving and high needs students. Instead of telling a child in a lower-income neighborhood that she has to leave her community to get a quality education, let's bring the quality education to her. Let's place high demand language, arts and technology programs into schools that need the most help. That attracts families and brings resources into underserved communities instead of encouraging families to leave the city or send their children to private schools. Imagine what the city will look like when every neighborhood has a quality school that children can walk to. It's better for the environment and for each of our communities. I hope to have the chance to make it happen."

Great Highway: Addressing Sea Level Rise

Ocean Beach, one of the gems of the San Francisco landscape, faces significant challenges. For the past two years, SPUR has led an extensive interagency and public process to develop the Ocean Beach Master Plan, a comprehensive vision to address sea level rise, protect infrastructure, restore coastal ecosystems and improve public access. There is still time to submit feedback.

Department of Public Works' project to abandon the two northbound Great Highway lanes in the near future (3-10 years) provides the opportunity to provide a multi-use coastal trail, bluff restoration and parking reconfiguration. This plan recommends the two lane reduction continue until the Skyline and Great Highway intersection. DPW is still studying whether the Great Highway returns to four lanes as it nears the intersection.

What are the opportunities and constraints of using the two abandoned lanes of the Great Highway south of Sloat? Providing more access to the coastal areas, improve aesthetics and habitat



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Why We Are Fighting To Keep Control Over Our Parks - And Why You Should Fight, Too!

By Greg Miller

Over the next few weeks you are likely to encounter neighbors who will ask you to vote YES on Proposition H — this measure will protect the western end of Golden Gate Park by preventing the use of artificial turf and night stadium lighting at the Beach Chalet Soccer Fields. They will also ask you to vote NO on Proposition I, which is a “poison pill” that would automatically negate a Prop H victory. But Prop I has more serious consequences. Prop I is also an attempt by the current City power structure to remove the few checks and balances left to manage all of San Francisco’s parks.

“...when it comes to managing our parks, the City “process” is broken.”

Why are these few remaining checks and balances so important? It is because, when it comes to managing our parks, the City “process” is broken.

San Francisco has what is called a “Strong Mayor” system. The City Charter confers tremendous power on the office of the Mayor, especially as regards our parks. The Recreation and Park (Rec and Park) Commission is appointed 100% by the Mayor, and the General Manager of the Rec and Park Department is chosen by and can be fired by the Mayor. Therefore, this unilateral power over decisions that affect your parks — whether it is the lack of maintenance or the closing of a clubhouse — can be traced back to the Office of the Mayor and his/her cadre of supporters.

You might ask - what about the Board of Supervisors? The Supervisors’ main role in park management is limited to an up or down vote at budget time. But at any time of the year, the Mayor can use park issues to manage the Board through Rec and Park. The Rec and Park Department and Commission decide where new parks will be located and how well they will be maintained. If a Supervisor wants a park project in their district and if they want their district parks to be maintained, then they had better toe the line.

The Mayor can also use the budget process to control your parks. A few years back, Supervisors tried to put a Charter Amendment on the ballot to split the appointment of Rec and Park Commissioners between the Mayor and the BOS. That proposal was held hostage by the budget process and eventually defeated by financial pressure brought by the Office of the Mayor.

There is little accountability to the voters in this system. When was the last time you voted for a Mayor or a Supervisor based solely on their performance managing the parks? Elections are determined by issues such as public safety and economic needs. This leaves our park system open to use as a lever of power by the Mayor’s office.

In the case of the Beach Chalet, the City power structure has chosen to listen

solely to one group of sports enthusiasts, and they are supported by an extremely wealthy family that has spared no expense to go forward with its project. Because of this, despite years of protests from major environmental groups, as well as community groups and individuals from all over San Francisco, our City government has been utterly unresponsive to a large segment of the public.

To add injury to insult, the City power structure has introduced Proposition I, which would not only negate Proposition H but also compel the City to allow park renovations if the Rec and Park Department forecasts a doubling of usage and if that forecast is included in a certified EIR. (Note - The Rec and Park Commission is not even mentioned!)

Senator Quentin Kopp had this to say about Prop I: “Proposition I arguably denies the Recreation and Park Commission discretion to consider other city policies before approving a project, clearly limits the powers of citizens and their Board of Supervisors and perhaps prohibits future voter initiatives on the subject matter. . . It’s a trick. I don’t like politicians’ tricks.” (*Westside Observer*, Sept 2014).

Will Prop I pass? As of this writing, that same wealthy family has donated over \$500,000 to the Proposition I campaign. Funding that could be used to fix up our parks is instead going towards attorneys, pollsters, and consultants making six-figure salaries. Needless to say, a massive PR campaign is to be expected.

If Proposition I passes and Senator Kopp’s prediction comes true, then there would be no checks and balances to the Mayor’s power over our parks. Regardless of your position on the Beach Chalet Project and Proposition H, you should view Proposition I with alarm! The political wheel will continue to turn. Surrendering all voice over our parks to whomever is currently in power is a poor choice for all voters.

Vote No on I to preserve your rights for a say over what happens to your park, and to keep citizen control over what happens to all of our parks.

City College—What’s all the Fighting About?

San Francisco is in danger of losing an irreplaceable asset, our 80 year-old college. Yet the problem is not the quality of its education; educational standards exceed the Accrediting Commission’s (ACCJC) requirements. Nor is the College in financial trouble, the duly elected Trustees—prior to their undemocratic replacement with a “Special Trustee”—left the college in the green, with a balanced budget.

So if it’s not the education or the finances, what is the problem?

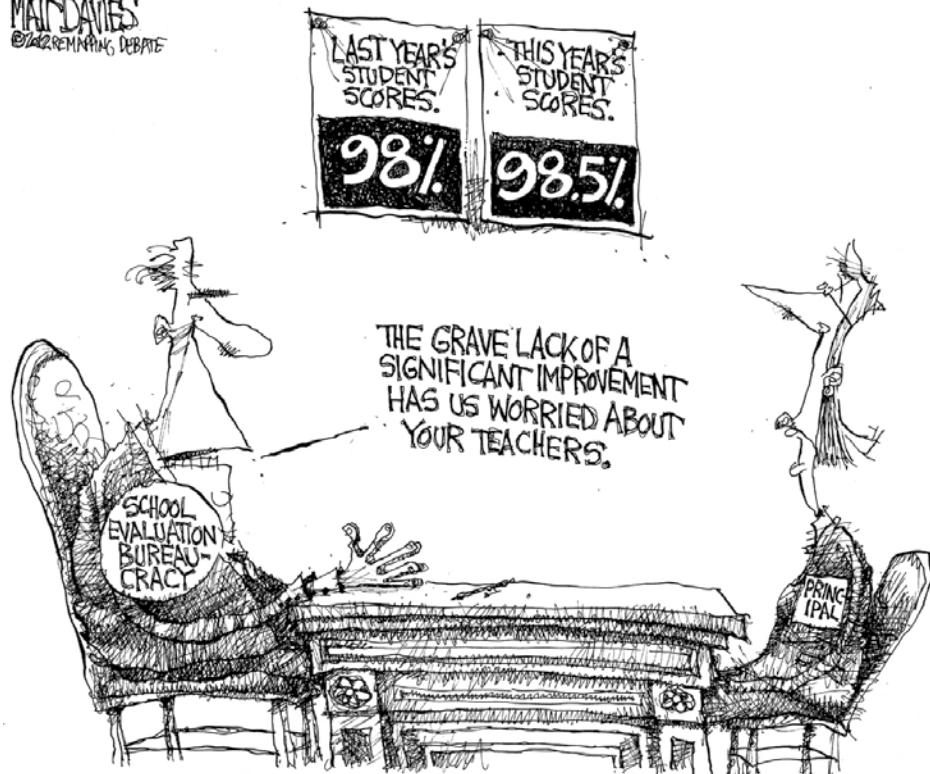
The ACCJC’s beef with our community college is about data—they want a top-down administration that concentrates on graduation numbers. This is needed, they contend, to deal with fiscal problems generated by students who do not graduate or transfer. They contend the state can no longer subsidize students who want or need to repeat a class. But their solution, “no repeatability,” is causing irreparable fiscal harm.

Since California community colleges began enforcing the “repeatability” regulations last fall, enrollment has fallen 17% at SF City College. While much of it is caused by the ACCJC, much can be ascribed to the rule. Teachers are scrambling to keep enough students to qualify classes, and many classes have closed, excellent teachers have given up, moving on to other colleges or professions. Especially hurt by this rule are seniors who enjoy taking an exercise class or any of the wonderful art classes, or immigrants who need to repeat basic skills or master English as second language (ESL). Where else can newcomers become acculturated? It is not easy for everyone.

Our formerly balanced budget cannot survive this newly imposed agenda.

Last month we asked our readers (Don’t Kick Grandma Out of Pottery Class) to sign the petition to *reverse* the repeatability rule and we appreciate the response. If you haven’t signed the petition, please do it now: petitions.moveon.org/sign/dont-kick-grandma-out

MAT DAVIES
ON REMAINING DEBATE



My 2¢ • Will Durst

WHERE'S MY IPONY?

Shake off the blues, put on your shoes, and tell grandma the news: the next generation iPhones are here. Cue the “woo-hoos.” And guess what: they’re huge. Or not. You choose. It’s like iGoldilocks. There’s a small, a medium and a large. And the best part—no bears.

The iPhone 6 is a little bigger than the previous models but the iPhone 6 Plus looks like they shrunk the Minipad. Or tiny iPad. Or whatever they call it. “Is that an iPhone 6 Plus in your pocket or are you just really, really happy to see me?” All across America, Baby Boomers are raising 8 ounce glasses of prune juice in grateful toasts. They can finally see their buttons. These phablets are fabulous.

In other fruit computer news, the iWatch did not turn out to be the iWatch: it’s the Apple Watch. Even though the company filed for trademark protection in about 100 markets for the right to call it the iWatch. Of course, the wrist- bound marvel doesn’t become iAvailable until 2015. Or when iSwatch freezes over.

“Can’t figure out what it is about these modern communication devices that makes people so crazy. You never hear Lexus owners bashing Acura drivers for finally acquiring contrasting leather stitching on their reclining heated leather seats.”

In response to the new releases, the Galaxy Android Samsung contingent (GAS) has ramped up their troll-like flame campaign to shame and defame Apple for belatedly matching the lame technology of their sacred superior smart phones. But in such a piercing stridency, one thinks — perhaps they doth protest too much. If whining were beer, these guys would be a frat party during Oktoberfest. In Bavaria.

Can’t figure out what it is about these modern communication devices that makes people so crazy. You never hear Lexus owners bashing Acura drivers for finally acquiring contrasting leather stitching on their reclining heated leather seats. Brioni doesn’t claim that Kiton suits are seasons-old knock-offs with materials drawn from substandard sheep. Wustof wouldn’t dream of accusing Henckels of stealing their edge design. They might think it.

People, settle down. For crum’s sake. Who cares? They’re phones. A few cosmetic differences but 99% exactly the same. Anyone depending that much on an accessory for their identity doesn’t need a new phone, they need a new life. Smart phones wielded by dumb users.

And next time, pick a feud that’s two- sided: Appleheads couldn’t care less about you Androidites, which probably heightens the frustration. Of course the Apple community is so myopically loyal they would line up to buy the next iteration of Jobsian progeny even if the only new feature was a rotary dial. “No battery? You got to plug it into an outlet? Will it still have the cute little Apple logo and be almost completely useless as a phone? Okay. Whatever.”

Used to be the hippest of phones kept getting smaller until it seemed you would need tweezers to make a call. But with streaming video such a big part of our lives, we’re headed towards a 19 inch model that requires iSaddlebags on an iPony to shepherd it across town. All optional, of course.

Then again, a few of us are still waiting for the phone that will dry the dishes and do the laundry. “Siri? Are you down there? Don’t forget to separate the colors. I swear. That girl would lose her head if it weren’t preinstalled.”

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PO Box 27176, SF 94127 • 415 517-6331

www.westsideobserver.com

Publisher: Mitch Bull

mitch@westsideobserver.com

Editor: Doug Comstock

editor@westsideobserver.com

Ad Sales • Mitch Bull

Contributors:

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

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The November 4 MUNICIPAL Ballot

Prop “A” and David Chiu: Just Say No

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

If the idea of sending Supervisor David Chiu off to represent you in the California Assembly in Sacramento doesn't scare you enough, get ready for being bilked, San Franciscans.

According to a December 3, 2013 article on StreetBlogSF, you're being asked to approve half-a-billion dollars for MUNI in 2014 and 10 years from now, the City plans to come back in November 2024 to ask you to approve a second half-a-billion dollars for MUNI, 20 years before the 30-year interest on the first bond will be paid down.

Between the two bonds, taxpayers may have to pay down nearly one billion in interest on the one billion in bonds. Add to that the Mayor's Task Force recommendation to place a ballot measure before voters in November 2016 to increase San Francisco's sales tax by a half percent, from 8.75% to 9.25%, designed to help raise another billion dollars for MUNI.

Add onto the mix a ballot measure to raise the vehicle license fee (VLF) from 0.65% to 2% that was planned for the November 2014 election, but which the Mayor pulled off the ballot to make the first \$500 million bond for MUNI more palatable to voters hoping for passage of the 2014 bond. Since state law allows San Francisco voters to restore the VLF cut by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, do not doubt that the VLF measure recommended by the Mayor's Transportation Task Force to raise another cool one billion dollars for MUNI will eventually make it onto a future ballot, perhaps in 2016.

Say No to Prop “A”
If voters approve it, the 2014 Proposition A, the Transportation and Road Improvement Bond, will authorize The City to borrow \$500 million by issuing general obligation bonds in order to meet some of the transportation infrastructure needs of the City. The key word is “some,”



which is not clearly described.

The Mayor's Transportation Task Force identified \$10 billion in spending on “crucial infrastructure projects” for MUNI earlier in 2014. Proposition “A” funds would be used to address “some” of the needs identified by the task force.

Some observers report the \$500 million in General Obligation Bonds will be accompanied by \$350 million in interest, for a total debt load of \$850 million. Other observers assert that the interest will actually be \$500 million.

In both the enabling legislation and the Ballot Simplification Digest in the voter guide, specific projects to be funded are not clearly described. Instead the operative words being put before voters indicate that funds “could be allocated” for transit and roads, or alternatively described as “a portion of the Bond may be allocated to.” Voters beware: The use of the vague words “could be” and “may be” are no substitute for more precise language that uses “shall be.” The choice of words is obviously no mere accident.

There is no mention in either the Board of Supervisors ordinance or in the Ballot Simplification Digest itemizing either estimated dollar amounts, or percentages, of how the funds will actually be allocated across project categories or to specifically-named projects. The City is clearly seeking carte blanche authority for unspecified projects. It wants voters to authorize a half-billion dollar check having a blank memo line so The City can spend the funds anyway it pleases.

MUNI's Five-Year Budget
Given the five-year history of MUNI's budgets, voters should be skeptical of

handing MUNI any more money using vaguely-worded ballot measures.

Data available on The City's SFOpen-Book web site shows that across the past five years, MUNI's budget has soared by \$172.9 million, up from \$775 million in FY 10-11 to \$947.9 million for the current FY 14-15 — a whopping 22.2% increase. Of the \$172.9 million increase, \$93.9 million occurred between FY 13-14 and FY 14-15.

Across the four-year period from calendar year 2010 to calendar year 2013, MUNI added 221 employees pushing its total payroll (excluding fringe benefits) up just \$30.1 million, from \$375.4 million in CY 2010 to \$405.5 million in CY 2013, leading observers to wonder why MUNI's budget increased \$172.9 million between FY 10-11 and FY 14-15 and what the \$173 million was spent on, if not on salaries.

There are few signs that increasing MUNI's budget has improved the system overall, or improved on-time performance.

Looking closer at MUNI's budget, the category for “Administration” increased by 44.4% across the five-year period — from \$55.6 million in FY 10-11 to \$80.2 million for FY 14-15. Why did Administration need a \$24.6 million increase?

Before voters hand MUNI \$500 million in new bond funding via Prop “A,” reasonable questions include whether the agency has too much bloat in its budget; whether it needs a department-wide comprehensive, and independent, audit; and whether the agency has been a good steward of public funds.

Say “No” to David Chiu
Leading up to the June 2014 primary election, readers may recall in-depth reporting about the race between Supervisors David Campos and David Chiu to replace termed-out Assemblyman Tom Ammiano in this reporter's article “The Three-David Race for Assemblyperson” on the Fog City Journal web site last May. Since then, the race between the two Davids has become neck-and-neck, and additional information has surfaced about why you won't want to send Mr. Chiu to Sacramento.

Airbnb and the “Sharing Economy”
Although New York City, Berlin, Germany; and other cities are taking steps to ban short-term rentals altogether, Supervisor Chiu continues his attempts to write legislation to “regulate” — rather than ban — short-term rentals in San Francisco. Problems with Airbnb have surfaced in many neighborhoods throughout San Francisco, from West Portal to single-room-occupancy (SRO) hotels in the Tenderloin.

As I reported last May on FogCityJournal.com, Supervisor David Chiu has taken over two years to develop legislation regulating “sharing economy” short-term rentals in San Francisco. Chiu's two-year delay may have benefited Airbnb and its prime investor, billionaire Ron Conway, who holds considerable sway over Mayor Ed Lee after Conway formed an independent expenditure committee that spent \$600,000 towards electing Lee as Mayor in 2011.

Chiu's delayed legislation has allowed Airbnb to continue refusing to pay the 14% hotel tax, which it has failed to do during the six years since the company was founded. Current estimates project that the City would receive \$11 million annually if Airbnb would begin paying the hotel tax; over the six-year period it has refused to pay the tax, San Francisco has lost somewhere between \$66 million and \$100 million in revenue, a fact that cannot have escaped investor Conway's notice.

On April 3, 2012, San Francisco Treasurer and Tax Collector Jose Cisneros published an opinion that short-term rental companies and their hosts are required to collect and pay the city's Transient Occupancy Tax (the hotel tax). On the day Cisneros published his opinion, the SF Bay Citizen reported that Mayor Lee's office “had urged Cisneros ... to postpone applying the rule to give a ‘collaborative

consumption task force’ time to consider possible legislation that would apply a lower tax rate” on brokers of short-term rentals. The term “collaborative consumption” is used to describe the so-called “sharing economy” ... although “sharing economy” companies such as Airbnb don't actually pay their fare share of taxes.

Mayor Lee, for his part, has offered no explanation as to why a lower tax rate should be granted to Airbnb and its prime investor, Ron Conway. Perhaps Lee is counting on Conway spending more independent expenditure committee funds to re-elect him to a second term as mayor and doesn't want to annoy his “angel” investor.

On August 14, 2014, the San Francisco Examiner reported that the Department of Building Inspection's (DBI) Code Advisory Committee believes that Chiu's legislation to regulate short-term rentals “still fails to address fire-safety, life-safety, accessibility and occupancy issues,” and argued that DBI should not be an administrative record-keeping agency monitoring short-term rentals by being required to operate a registry of hosts using short-term rental platforms like Airbnb.

The Code Advisory Committee noted Chiu's legislation doesn't add safety codes to the short-term rentals beyond what currently exist for residential units, and doesn't provide for code-compliance checks for issues such as smoke detectors.

Between August 14 when the Code Advisory Committee expressed its concerns and September 15 when the legislation was last heard by the Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee, Chiu had taken no action to include the Code Committee's concerns.

During the September 15 Land Use Committee hearing, Supervisors pushed David Owen, Airbnb's director of public policy, for information on liability insurance and the number of nights hosts can rent out their units. Owen, who served as a legislative assistant to former Supervisor Aaron Peskin, creatively claimed that reporting to The City the number of nights each unit is used would violate Airbnb's “innovations” and violate the privacy of hosts renting out their units. Owen has refused to comment on whether Airbnb will pay its back taxes, despite Cisneros' 2012 ruling and Aaron Peskin's belief the back taxes should be paid.

Chiu's legislation appears to be restricted to a 90-day limit when a host is not present, but the Land Use Committee debated, but has not yet required, that a similar limit should be applied when hosts are present, since without an explicit restriction there's a clear loophole allowing hosts to be able to rent out portions of their units all year long provided they are present.

Supervisor Jane Kim is concerned that if Chiu's legislation does not include regulating co-hosted days, and if Airbnb continues to refuse disclosing room rental data, the City will have no way enforce Chiu's legislation as written.

The Land Use Committee reportedly added a requirement to Chiu's legislation that tenants must notify their landlord if they register as a “host” on a hosting platform such as Airbnb, a key provision that Chiu failed to include all along, as if landlords have no say in whatever happens in their rental units. Still unresolved is the amount of liability insurance Airbnb and hosts will be required to carry on short-term rental units.

Airbnb's “sharing economy” business model appears to be based on flouting laws on the books regulating various public accommodations. Take for instance an August 20 article in San Francisco Weekly reporting that Airbnb had launched a pilot program to allow city residents to register for its “dinner party program” in which “hosts” will be able to throw paid dinner parties for total strangers while violating all sorts of regulations that apply to brick-and-mortar restaurants. SF Weekly

Letters to the Editor

Lake Merced Boathouse

As a long-suffering volunteer trying to make Lake Merced less of an embarrassment to San Francisco, I have a couple of discouraging comments on recent developments. First, Rec & Park recently announced that it is starting a program of fishing lessons. The only catch is that for about 3 hours of lessons you have to pay \$25. Yet, Rec & Park has admitted that they can't find a fishing concessionaire to replace the excellent concessionaire who left in disgust back in 1999. Apparently the fishing lessons will be given by Rec & Park personnel. For the most part people don't need or want fishing lessons given by amateurs; they want to be able to rent a boat, buy some tackle and bait, and maybe buy themselves a snack or soft drink. You can't do any of those, but you can pay Rec & Park \$25 for 3 hours of “lessons.”

The recent Boathouse renovation came in at \$3.2 million despite an original estimate of \$2 million. We can't get an explanation of the outrageous overrun. Maybe the Observer can get an answer from Rec & Park or SFPUC, or whoever is really in charge.

You can't get food service at renovated Boathouse; if you want to rent the community room you have to bring your own tables and chairs. Just what did the public get for \$3.2 million? Meanwhile in Marin County a local non-profit group has built a state of the art boathouse for its rowers and has just installed a solar system for its energy. The boathouse for rowers in SF is the dark and dank basement of the recently refurbished boathouse building. It is inadequate in size for the needs of the high school and adult rowers who row at Lake Merced. Having spent over \$3 million of someone's money on the Boathouse, there is not an additional square inch for badly needed boat storage.

Some things never change and it is very sad.
Jerry Cadagan, Committee to Save Lake Merced

Assessor

John Farrell's column regarding the inefficiencies of the Assessors Office was well taken, but the upshot appeared to be a sniveling hit piece on Assessor Chu. Whether she finds the Assessors office a bureaucratic sham, as did her predecessors, does not appear to me as an indictment against her as a clueless “politician” - which there are many. I voted for her because she does have a fiscal background and has demonstrated that skill as a Supervisor. Mr. Farrell's arguments are valid, but painting Assessor Chu as just another politician warming the Assessors chair is a bit disingenous.

Matt Mitgaurd

John Farrell responds:

Thank you for your comments. It is a fact that all the prior four Assessor's since the two term limit passed in 1990 were just politicians warming the chair, three of which were former Supervisors. I hope for the City's sake that it isn't the case this time since hundreds of millions in property tax revenue are being lost annually. The current one Carmen Chu was being termed out as Supervisor and needed a place to go and was appointed by Mayor Lee. The past three Assessors, including Assessor Chu, have directly or indirectly blamed their predecessors for the dysfunctional office, excessive backlogs and antiquated systems resulting in hundreds of millions lost per year. Just like a broken record. I noted that Assessor Chu now has the opportunity to rectify the situation which Ting and Teng failed to do. Only time will tell.

costs of its provisions and costs of recidivism to our cities and counties. It changes the burden of proof on resentencing convicted criminals; it requires a judge to resentence an imprisoned convict unless the convict is found to pose “an unreasonable risk of danger to public safety.” Currently, under the 2012 revision of the so-called “three strikes” law, a convict can be resentedenced as a “second strike” offender if the convict’s “third strike” was nonviolent and non-serious, and the convict, through his lawyer, must bear the burden of so proving. Proposition 47 switches the burden from the convict to the prosecution and lessens judges’ exercise of discretion. It also allows a convict who has completed a felony sentence that would be a misdemeanor under Proposition 47 to file a written application to have the felony designated as a misdemeanor without a court hearing, which violates the victim’s constitutional right to be present in court and be heard by a judge. Theft of most handguns will become a misdemeanor under Proposition 47. It’s no wonder district attorneys and police chiefs oppose Proposition 47. I’m voting “no.”

Proposition 48 would override a bill passed by the Legislature in June 2013 allowing gambling for the North Fork Rancheria (Mono Indians) and the Wiyot tribe and exempted certain gambling projects from the California Environmental Quality Act. I have always opposed gambling legalization in California, beginning with the state lottery in 1985. California voters in 2000, however, amended the California Constitution to allow Indian tribes to operate slot machines, card games, and lottery games. Proposition 48 entitles the North Fork tribe to build a casino in Madera County

and introduce gambling, not on tribal lands, but also off of reservations. I say a “pox on all their houses.” It’s a fiction that gambling improves the lives of California’s American Indians. It doesn’t. It’s a sham for the benefit of casino professionals. (There are presently more than 60 casinos in California.) I’m voting “no” on Proposition 48; I hope you’ll do so, too.

I’m only genuinely interested in a couple of statewide candidates because most of the races are one-sided. I don’t know him, but I think Pete Peterson would be a responsible Secretary of State. He will not use the office as a stepping stone for some other office. I also believe strongly that Marshall Tuck should be elected Superintendent of Public Instruction, a non-partisan office. He’s not a captive of the California Teachers Association and he’s a leader in establishing nine successful public charter schools in Los Angeles’ most difficult neighborhoods, increasing graduation rates by 60%.

If you’re in that Assembly district, please vote for David Campos for the Assembly. Be sure to vote for Nick Josefowitz for the BART Board of Directors, so we can benefit from a vibrant, conscientious, honest businessman instead of a 24-year incumbent who leaves the meeting room to avoid controversial votes after participating in the unions’ picket line during last year’s strike against BART, which left tens of thousands of San Franciscans high and dry. Finally, I recommend Daniel Flores, Esquire unreservedly for San Francisco Superior Court. He is an experienced trial lawyer; his opponent is not, as noted by the Bar Association of San Francisco.

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

but are not limited to...” and “A portion of the bond may be allocated to...” Taxpayers should be concerned that Prop A is not specific on how the bond monies are to be spent. In other words, if Prop A is passed, the SFMTA has the authority to spend \$500 million any which way it pleases. This is bad government.

It is all good that our City officials want to improve services and maintain our infrastructure, but before you start inundating the voters with initiatives, I would highly recommend you look into your own backyard. Because if you did then you would not be putting measures like Prop A to the voters.

Over the past year I have written articles identifying close to \$200 million in tax revenue that is not currently being appraised by the Assessor’s Office, such as the unconstitutional loophole in the Presidio Trust that tax exempts tenants, the non-assessment of naming rights at AT&T Ballpark, the PG&E franchise fee by the SBE, and the appalling appeal by the Giants to reduce its Ballpark value to \$140 million after they built it 2000 for over \$350 million, to name a few. If these high profile properties are not being assessed appropriately, then what about other properties in the city. Just think, this \$200 million in

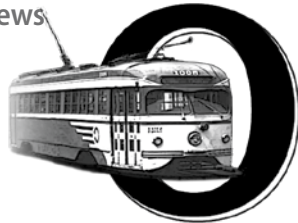
tax revenue not being addressed appropriately is just from a handful of properties and represents 10% of the City’s total annual property tax revenue. This \$200 million would go along way for our Muni infrastructure without asking taxpayers to pay the bill, and save hundreds of millions in interest payments.

Mayor Lee, before any monies are requested from taxpayers in the future, “Audit the revenue practices of our revenue generating City Departments.” Have Grand Jury and Harvey Rose audit recommendations been implemented? Are all City department lands that are rentable leased out and if not, why not? Have all backlogs, such as building permits, been addressed? Have all studies been done to insure rental rates, permits, licenses, boat berths, etc...are at fair market and taxed accordingly? I can tell you as a fact they are not.

These are the facts. Not the Spin.
Let’s be Honest - No on Prop A.

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

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Don't Shred City College

By Dr. Anita Grier, City College Board of Trustees

Saving City College is our number 1 priority. ACCJC, the Accrediting Commission that's supposed to “ensure the quality of education” at City College has recklessly and seriously endangered the hard-earned reputation of our 79 year-old college. We have nothing to apologize for. City College offers an excellent education.

Finances are not the problem. CCSF is in strong financial shape, the Board left it with a balanced budget. And with Prop 30 and Prop A and new facilities to attract new students, plus the improving economy, City College has a bright financial future.

The quality of City College's education is not in question. City College is renowned for its teachers, staff and educational excellence. Hundreds of thousands of successful students have gone on to rewarding careers, contributing to our community. What annoys the ACCJC is the bureaucracy — not because it's unresponsive to the will of the voters — just the opposite. The ACCJC's has imposed its will through “Extraordinary Powers” behind closed doors, without hearings or input from the public—that's antithetical to San Franciscans' sense of fair play and due process.

Destruction of records. Now that ACCJC has been forced to defend its actions in court, it's reportedly shredding documents. It's no wonder U.S. Congress Member Jackie Speier calls it “an agency run amok.”

Policy pushback. The ACCJC wants to impose policies that read straight out of the right-wing playbook: remove faculty from the decision process, hire part-time, temporary, low-wage “adjunct” professors, slash job security for teachers, increase wages for administrators, trim “unnecessary classes,” nullify child care agreements, rewrite the Mission Statement to exclude thousands of students, close neighborhood serving facilities, cancel expansion plans. All these “fiscal austerity” mandates are demanded despite the fact they will further cut enrollment, aggravating the fiscal health of CCSF.

Lifelong learning is not lifelong failure. We disagree with the ACCJC and the non-repeatability ruling. We favor repeating classes when repetition ensures success — hundreds of classes: learning English (ESL), basic skills, art, theater, music, tai chi, yoga, aerobics are being closed because students can't re-enroll. This especially hurts our seniors for whom a class makes a big difference. Grandma's pottery class does not threaten the community college system!

Education for All. It's why City College began. I take pride in the students who do not have the option of 4 year and elite universities, whose successful careers started at City College. They are the very people who need it the most, I'll always advocate for them.

No Apologies. I am confident that we will prevail if we stay true to what we believe. I do not apologize for standing up for the values San Franciscans cherish — living wages, a seat for everyone at the table and education for all — our San Francisco values.

A great career begins at City College!

Please sign my petition on repeating classes: petitions.moveon.org/sign/dont-kick-grandma-out


INFO: anitagrier.org

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- PRODUCT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS** An immigrant to the U.S., Lee credits American public education with giving him a chance to graduate from Yale Law School and Stanford University.
- COMMUNITY LEADER** Lee is president of the Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association and an engaged school volunteer. He has built and led an after-school enrichment program, coached youth sports and tutored underserved students. He has experience in law, finance and technology. He will work hard for all of San Francisco.



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SF Zoo is "tickled pink" with 4 flamingo chicks. After four years, the Zoo's Chilean flamingos expand their flock. Photo May Woon

Money Matters By Brandon Miller & Joanne Jordan

Spend or invest? New thoughts on an age-old dilemma

A familiar experience for many Americans is that as fast as money comes in, it goes out the door again in pursuit of the next "must have" purchase. Such spending habits can take a toll on plans to build up savings for the future. The key is finding a balance between immediate gratification and long-term financial security.



Major expenditures aren't just about the immediate benefit. You should consider whether the current cost would become more significant over time because the money was not invested for your future.

In many instances, we can all find ways save on daily purchases to set more money aside to help meet goals like saving for retirement or a child's education. The bigger challenge comes when it is time to make a major purchase – a home, a car, appliances or home improvements. These expenditures can require the immediate outlay of thousands of dollars. You may have to drain money from savings or at the very least reduce available funds to invest for your future. When is the expenditure worth it, and when is the cost too prohibitive relative to your financial future?

Judging the "real" cost

There are a variety of ways to assess the financial value of a major purchase. The approach you choose can vary depending on the type of expenditure you make. Here are three ways to think about it:

1. Opportunity cost

Whenever you're making a significant purchase on a product or service, you need to look at how it will impact your financial future. It is important to assess the opportunity cost of making a cash purchase today. For example, consider what could happen if instead of spending \$5,000 on a home entertainment center, that money was invested for 20 years earning 7% per year. Over time, that \$5,000 could grow to more than \$19,000 (not accounting for taxes or investment fees). Assessing potential opportunity cost is one way to better evaluate the real cost of making a significant purchase.

2. A "return on investment"

Another consideration is whether there is a payback on the purchase. For

example, paying for a class or a college degree may provide a future return in the form of the potential for increased income. Anybody who has spent (or taken loans for) \$100,000 or more for a medical or law degree likely does so with a reasonable expectation that future income will more than make up the difference. A home improvement may be looked at in the same way – an investment that may be recouped in the future.

3. Borrowing the money to cover purchase costs

While it may be tempting to pay for purchases with credit cards, home equity loans or other types of financing, you have to think about how much borrowing the money will cost in the long run. The key here is to limit interest charges as much as possible. It's not that you necessarily need to avoid all debt. In some instances you can incur "good debt," which is used to purchase an asset that has a long lifespan, increasing value and other potential benefits such as tax deductibility of interest. Mortgages and student loans are typically considered good debt.

Major expenditures aren't just about the immediate benefit. You should consider whether the current cost would become more significant over time because the money was not invested for your future.

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

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Senior Smarts

Stroke Survival: Assistive Technology Products

By Anise J. Matteson

I heard about assistive technology products [Proloquo] from a listener who called in to a radio talk show in August 2011 during the segment on Apple Products. Therefore, I included information on computer access and speech software for Windows and Mac OS X in the October 2011 issue of my Caring Boomers Newsletter. New products have been added since then.



Mac OS X SOFTWARE

Proloquo: a multilingual speech and communication solution, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), for Mac OS X for people who have difficulty speaking or cannot speak. The software offers features for users with limited vision or learning difficulties.

Other Communication Products

Proloquo2Go: an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) application for iPad, iPod touch and iPhone.

Proloquo4Text: a text-based communication app for people who cannot speak.

Infovox iVox: natural sounding voices and a choice of language.

Layout Kitchen®: functions as an editor for *SwitchXS*, *Proloquo* and *KeyStrokes®* panels and keyboards. Users can design their own switch panels with colorable and resizable buttons containing texts or images.

AssistiveWare describes itself as "a leading innovator of assistive technology software for iOS and Mac OS X and is committed to collaborating with the global community to make a difference in peoples' lives; offers several assistive technology software products for Apple's Mac OS X and iPhone, iPad and iPod touch." For more products/information, visit www.assistiveware.com.

Head-Controlled Computer Access

Headmouse®Extreme: provides head-controlled access to computers and augmentative communication devices for people who have limited or no use of their hands.

WINDOWS SOFTWARE

SoftType: an on-screen keyboard with a built-in mouse button utility—*Dragger*—and can be accessed using a mouse emulator (i.e., *HeadMouse®Extreme*).

Dragger: a software utility for manipulating the mouse buttons of a standard mouse or mouse emulator [by people who have physical motor challenges].

Origin Instruments Corporation describes itself as "the North American distributor for AssistiveWare, the leading supplier of assistive software for the Apple Macintosh. These products provide solutions for physical access, communications, speech synthesis, and low vision. Develops and delivers access software for Microsoft Windows including *SoftType* and *Dragger*. Develops and delivers access solutions for people who do not have the ability to control a computer or iOS Device (iPads, iPhone or iPod touch) with their hands."

You can download free, time-limited, full-function versions of their software for review and email them to request information on their free loan program for assessments, evaluations and demonstrations. For more products/information, visit www.orin.com.

When care planning, contact your health care specialist for specific questions and advice.

Anise Matteson is an elder care consultant, retired Registered Health Information Technician, writer of reference books for seniors and *Caring Boomers Newsletter* ©2011. Part IV in a four-part series focusing on stroke was revised August 2014 from the Newsletter for this article. Photo: enablemart.com file. Email: cfaalo@yahoo.com.

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Where Friends Meet

West of Twin Peaks Central Council By Mitch Bull



Jay Chang argues the case against the anti-speculation tax, Prop G at the WOTP Central Council

Housing and neighborhood issues were the dominant theme as the new group of officers opened the 2014-15 session of the West of Twin Peaks Central Council. Incoming **President Roger Ritter** welcomed the attendees at 7:30 and opened the meeting in front of a crowd of 30 or so delegates and guests. Joining Ritter as the officers for 2014-15 are: **Vice President – Sally Stephens**, **Secretary –David Golden**, **Treasurer –Carolyn Squeri**, and **Parliamentarian – Lee Hsu**.

Following the officer reports and committee reports, a spirited discussion on the Pros and Cons of the ballot initiative, **Proposition G, the Real Estate Transfer Tax**, was held with presentations by **Peter Cohen** on the Pro side, citing the need to continue to protect the housing stock and stop the real estate speculation that has caused many properties to be sold or converted from apartments to condominiums, thus affecting the apartment housing stock in both availability and affordability for tenants. On the Con side, **Jay Chang** cited the need to not penalize investors and families that have properly invested in San Francisco apartment buildings and have been good landlords, but may wish to sell for other reasons and should not be subjected to a tax, not just on the profits from the sale, but on the entire sale price. In many cases a single-family ownership group that is forced to sell due to changes in finances, health condition, etc. could be unable to because of the very large tax liability due to the run up of the market values for properties. A question also focused on those properties with certified (or non-certified) in-law units and how the tax formula would affect them (if Prop G is enacted).

Discussion followed on another homeowner concern, the proposed legislation by **Supervisor David Chiu** that would “legalize” **short-term rentals** (through services such as VRBO and especially AirBnB), and impact neighborhoods by undermining the established CCRs of community associations.

Ritter reported that at the public input session at the **Planning Commission**, the homeowners who lobbied against the legislation were outnumbered by the pro-rental lobby by a ratio of about 9 to 1. The full **Board of Supervisors** is expected to vote on

the legislation by the end of September. Much discussion has centered on the fact that the opening up of temporary rentals would in effect create an environment where every homeowner (or renter) could become a “B&B” proprietor in any neighborhood, creating issues with parking, noise and possibly security. The proposed legislation would also weaken provisions of homeowner association CC and R’s that have been in effect for decades.



The meeting ended with a Presentation to **Walt Farrell** for a lifetime of service and commitment to the neighborhood organizations, the Hibernians, Forest Hill and to everyone he has touched by District 2 **Supervisor Mark Farrell** (no relation). Walt’s family was on hand to witness the reading and presentation of the proclamation (Where as, Where as...) well deserved Walt!

The next meeting of the WOTPCC will be on Monday, October 27th at 7:30 PM at the historic Forest Hills Clubhouse. For more information see the WOTPCC website (www.westoftwinpeaks.org).


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West Portal Resident Gail Nebenzahl named Volunteer of the Year...often times all of us in the news business are left to write about what is wrong in the neighborhood, or what is not working, etc. I am pleased to write about Gail Nebenzahl, who was recently awarded the Governor’s California Volunteer of the Year Award. Nebenzahl recently completed her service as a board member of SFCASA (San Francisco Court Appointed Special Advocates), after serving as a volunteer advocate. Since 2000, when Gail completed her 40 hours of training and was sworn in as a CASA, she has worked tirelessly for the healthy development of children in foster care in San Francisco.

“Gail is the perfect role model of a committed California volunteer. She is not only deeply passionate about foster youth, she also wants to get more people involved in the issue she cares so much about. And she does all this with her trademark humility.” – Karen Baker, Chief Service Officer – California Volunteers.

SFCASA’s executive director Renee Espinoza also shared “Every youth needs a consistent, supportive adult and Gail not only provided that role for her own family, and for three youth in the foster care system, she also recruited countless volunteers and raised funds to ensure that SFCASA could provide that advocacy and mentoring for hundreds of foster youth each year.”

When told of the Award, Gail said, “I’m always hesitant to share the story of the work I’ve done, not just because it needs to be kept confidential but because I’m dealing with real people that I care about. I believe everyone in the family I’ve worked with deserves respect and I’d never want them to think that I do this for accolades. At the same time I believe every child in foster care should have a CASA and for that to happen, I know we need to spread the word widely. Being a CASA is a wonderful, rich experience for the volunteer advocate, as well!”

A fourth generation San Franciscan, Gail holds a BS from the UCSF and earned her MA in Anthropology from SF State at age 60. While raising three children with her husband Bernard, Gail worked as a dental hygienist for twenty-nine years, was active in the integration of public schools, and marched in Civil Rights rallies. She has served on the Board of Cross Cultural Family Center, Jewish Family and Children’s Services, and Women’s Interfaith Dialogue on the Mideast.

San Francisco CASA is currently recruiting for new advocates. See www.sfcasa.org/volunteering for more information.



Mayor Lee – He knows about JACK and wants you to vote for them!

Earlier this month Mayor Lee conducted a newspaper roundtable with local media members and several SFNNA publishers were there to hear what the Mayor had to say and to throw a few questions his way. In his discussion, Mayor Lee wanted us to focus on “JACK”, that is, Propositions J, A, C and K and why he thinks they are key to improving city services, infrastructure, housing, helping local families and children and raising the minimum wage.

The Mayor believes that the biggest problems facing the city lie with the affordability of housing,

the need for an increase in the minimum wage, and improving the educational structure in the SF Public Schools to give families that are thinking about fleeing SF a reason to stay in SF and raise their families. Prop J would raise the minimum wage in several steps; Prop A will help to fund transportation infrastructure projects; Prop C is the Children’s Initiative for better educational resources in SF, and Prop K is the housing initiative that aims to bring over 30,000 housing units on line in an effort to stabilize neighborhoods and keep families in the City.

During the press briefing, the Mayor also spoke on the vibrant economy in the city, projects such as the mid-Market renovation of the Strand Theatre by A.C.T. along with other arts initiatives, the increase of businesses moving into the city, and the fact that the unemployment rate has dropped to 4.6%. By all accounts, the economy has rebounded strongly in SF, but with the success other issues have been highlighted such as the rapidly escalating prices in both owned properties and apartments, as well as increased traffic in the city. He underscored the influx of businesses that are taking an interest in partnering with the SF Unified School District to create partnerships with neighborhood schools.

SFNNA at the Commonwealth Club... the SFNNA (San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association) was featured last week at the San Francisco’s prestigious Commonwealth Club. Four of our local publishers, Earl Adkins (Marina Times), Juan Gonzales (El Tecolote), Willie Ratcliff (SF BayView) and moderator Glenn Gullmes (West Portal Monthly) represented our neighborhood news collective in leading a discussion on the state of local journalism and its impact on informing and bringing together citizens for community action.

Here in the Westside we are fortunate to have diverse and informative publications such as the *Ingleside Light*, *West Portal Monthly*, the *Sunset Beacon*, the *Richmond ReView* and of course, the *Observer*. San Francisco can proudly point to the impact that the 15 neighborhood newspapers bring to over 300,000 households every month.

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



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www.csfjn.net • 415.262.0440 • Est 1972 • 48 neighborhood organizations

CSFN Official Endorsements November 4, 2014

Prop A NO

This bond has no oversight, makes no commitment as to how funds will be allocated, doles out funds to special interests, will not restore service cuts, cannot be used to buy busses. And with interest it'll be \$1Billion!

Prop B NO

Muni Charter Amendment (set-aside).
More set-asides means less money for basic services.

Prop H YES

Save Golden Gate Park!
Protect it for kids today and for future generations.

Prop I NO

Poison Pill Alert!
This is a very mean-spirited measure... and possibly illegal.
It removes your citizens' right of appeal!

Prop L YES

Send City Hall a message with your vote for Prop L:
Stop foisting parking meters on residential neighborhoods!
Stop removing street parking without neighbors' and merchants' consent!

Coalition for SF Neighborhoods (CSFN) is an all-volunteer "umbrella" organization for neighborhood groups. Since 1972 CSFN has worked to strengthen the voice of our neighborhoods in all aspects of governance and planning; stable, healthy neighborhoods are the key to healthy cities. We carefully review ballot measures and bonds and consider those matters that will have impact on our neighborhoods.

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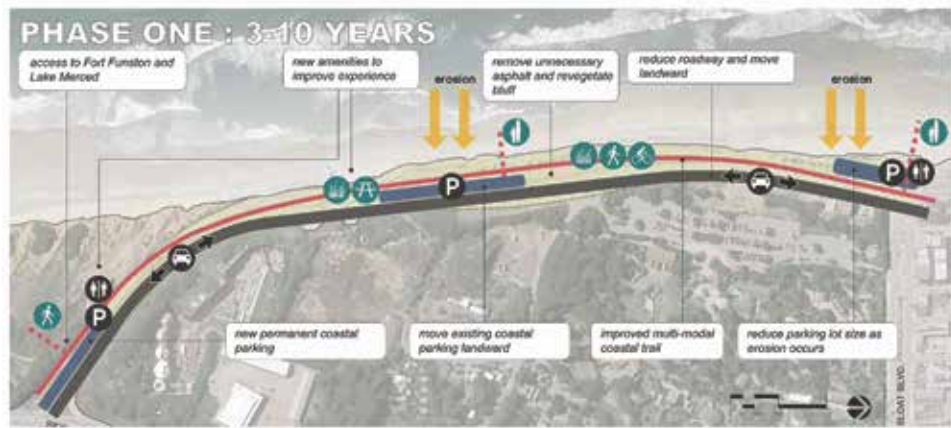
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Ocean Beach Master Plan (Cont. from p. 3)

Critical erosion along the Great Highway is expected to continue and DPW has plans to change the width South of Sloat from four lanes to two lanes. The two north-bound lanes, those most affected by ongoing erosion, would be removed to allow for coastal retreat. The remaining southbound lanes would be reconfigured to accommodate the remaining traffic. DPW is studying three options of the new road configuration. Option 1 envisions 2 lanes, 1 lane each way. Option 2 envisions 2 northbound lanes, with southbound traffic redirected through Sloat and Skyline. Option 3 envisions 2 southbound lanes, northbound traffic redirected through Skyline and Sloat.

The long term vision as erosion intensifies includes plans to remove asphalt and replace Great Highway lanes with a Coastal trail.

SPUR's open space design workshop at the United Irish Cultural Center on September 24th For more information on proposed open space designs at both the North Reach, across from Golden Gate Park between Lincoln Way and Balboa Street, and the South Reach, along the Great Highway from Sloat to Skyline Blvd.

Residents may submit your comments to SPUR by **October 15, 2014:**

Open Space Design at Ocean Beach • 6 pm | Monday, October 27

In the third program in this three-part series, learn how a decommissioning of two lanes of the Great Highway will provide opportunities to improve public access with a coastal trail and other amenities designed to adapt to an eroding coastline.

Admission: Free to SPUR members, \$10 for non-members.

SPUR Urban Center, 654 Mission Street INFO: info@spur.org / 415.781.8726



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- ✓ Doubled BART ridership while improving on-time performance from 87% to 96%
- ✓ Helped bring BART to SFO

- ✓ Brought solar panels to BART stations
- ✓ Most bike-friendly policy in the country
- ✓ Strengthened seismic and public safety
- ✓ Leading efforts to prevent future BART strikes



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"James Fang knows our city and he's proven he knows how to improve transit. I strongly support his re-election to the BART Board."

— Ed Lee, Mayor of San Francisco



Lt. Governor
Gavin Newsom



Attorney General
Kamala Harris



California Democratic
Party Chair John Burton



Former Assemblymember
Fiona Ma

Cloud Forests Bloom at San Francisco Botanical Garden

Hundreds of rare and endangered plants native to the cloud forests of Mesoamerica

For hundreds of rare and endangered plants native to the world's misty cloud forests, foggy San Francisco feels like home. San Francisco Botanical Garden (SFBG) is one of the only botanical gardens in the world where the alluring beauties of these high elevation forests thrive outdoors, and fall is the best time to see the Garden's enchanting cloud forest in bloom October 1 – December 31 from 9 am to 5 pm.

In the Mesoamerican Cloud Forest collection, visitors can stroll through a lush jungle of typical cloud forest plant communities found from southern Mexico to Panama and throughout Central America. Amidst the deep green canopy, delicate and unusual fuchsias dangle gracefully overhead, towering tree daisies hum with the buzzing of bees, vibrant salvias add bursts of color to the forest floor and much more.

At the San Francisco Botanical Garden, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, all San Francisco residents: are free with proof of residency.

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

The Garden is free daily 7:30-9am and all day on second Tuesdays of the month

INFORMATION:
www.SFBotanicalGarden.org / 661-1316



(Above) Fuchsia paniculata (left) Montanoa Photos: James-Gaither

October

CALENDAR

EVERY SUNDAY • FARMERS MARKET

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

EVERY TUE & THU • JOB SEEKERS LAB

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

EVERY TUE • COMPUTER SKILLS

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

EVERY TUES • QUE SYRAH HAPPY HOUR

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

EVERY THURS – NIGHTLIFE

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

JAZZ FRIDAYS @ THE CLIFF HOUSE

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

FRIDAY NIGHTS @ THE DEYOUNG

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

FRIDAYS @ OFF THE GRID/FT. MASON

Every Fri | DJs 5-7:30 - Live Bands 7:30-10:30 pm | Off the Grid/Over 32 food trucks and street food carts in a huge circle with a full bar and bands in the

middle? . Ft. Mason Ctr. Marina Blvd.

EVERY WED • FREE E-BOOKS

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

SUN • ASIAN ART MUSEUM FREE DAY

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

EVERY DAY • CLOUD FOREST

Daily | 9 am-5 pm | Fall is the best time for one of the only botanical gardens in the world where the alluring plants of the cloud forest thrive outdoors. SF Botanical Garden, 9th Ave at GGPark. 661-1316

WED • GEORGIA O'KEEFE

Wed Oct 8 | 7 pm | A Life in Art -SF artist Marlene Aron discusses O'Keefe's celebrated art and life, from her large, sensuous flowers and her expansive, beautiful landscapes, to her soaring skyscrapers and starry nights. Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Drive.

WED • POET PIANE DI PRIMA

Wed Oct 8 | 6:30 pm | The former SF Poet Laureate and Beat Legend, reads from her newest collection *The Poetry Deal* the first full-length collection of individual poems in decades from legendary feminist Beat poet, at the Koret Aud. Mail Library, 200 Larkin St.

TUE • GERMAN CONTRIBUTION TO SF

Tue Oct 14 | 7 pm | Much has been written about the many ethnic groups that flocked to San Francisco at the time of the Gold Rush: Irish, English, Chinese, French, Italians. What about the Germans? The Old Mint, 88 Fifth St. \$10 - enter on the side at Mint Plaza.

TUE • AUTHOR MICHAEL LEWIS

Tue Oct 14 | 6 pm | John Lanchester Author, *How to Speak Money: What the Money People Say – And What It Really Means* In Conversation with Michael Lewis, Contributing Editor, Vanity Fair; Author, *Moneyball*,

Liar's Poker and Flash Boys. Commonwealth Club, 595 Market St., 2nd Fl. \$12/20 Non-member. Tickets: 597-6705. commonwealthclub.org

FRI • HEALTHIER LIVING WORKSHOP

Fri Oct 17–Nov 21 | 9-11:30 am | Free, 6-week Chronic Disease Self-Management Program developed by Stanford School of Medicine focused on participant empowerment, support and skill development for chronic health conditions. Taraval Station 2345 – 24th Ave. 550-2257/ carmenlee@onlok.org

SUN • VICTORIAN ALLIANCE TOUR

Sun Oct 19 | 1–5 pm | SF Victorian Alliance's 42nd House Tour this year's tour focuses on the Haight-Ashbury. Some of the City's most colorful "painted ladies," restored to their original Victorian elegance showcase the interiors of eight homes, one with an intact carriage house. victorianalliance.org \$45 (by Oct 10)

TUE • COMMUNITY SAFETY MEETING

Tue Oct 21 | 7 pm | Meet with Captain Curtis Lum. 3rd Tue of the month. Minnie & Lovie Community Room, located at 650 Capital Ave. 759-3100.

WED • QUAKE READINESS TRAINING

Wed Oct 23 | 7 pm-9 pm | Learn the basics to take care of yourself and others. SFFD NERT want you to have skills to be prepared for emergencies and get to know your neighbors on your block to maximize resiliency after a disaster. St Philip Church, 725 Diamond. Info/RSVP: sf-fire.org/index.aspx?page=879

WED • AUTHOR JANE SMILEY

Thu Oct 23 | 7 pm | Jane Smiley, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for *A Thousand Acres* (1991), will read from her powerful new novel. *Some Luck* is an engrossing story about the life and times on their Iowa farm, Rosanna and Walter Langdon abide by time-honored values that they pass on to their five wildly different children. Bookshop West Portal, 80 West Portal 564-8080 for more information.

SUN • ANNUAL LUPUS WALK

Sun Oct 26 | 10 am | Walk to End Lupus Now event - part of America's largest lupus walk program, Golden Gate Park- Music Concourse Bandshell Info: 916-218-9991. Register: WalkToEndLupus.org

MON • OCEAN BEACH PLAN

Mon Oct 27 | 6 pm | How is the Ocean Beach Master Plan being implemented and what will it impact? Free /\$10 non-members. SPUR Urban Center, 654 Mission St info@spur.org / 781-8726

MON • SHARP

Mon Oct 27 | 7 pm | Sunset Heights Assoc. of Responsible People. Last Mon of each month - sharpsf.com for details. 1736 9th Ave @ Moraga.

MON • CENTRAL COUNCIL

Mon Oct 27 | West of Twin Peaks Central Council meets to discuss topics of interest to Westside residents. Meets the last Monday each month. westof-twinpeaks.org

TUE • PLAYLAND: GOLDEN YEARS

Tue Oct 28 | 7 pm (program 7:45) | James R. Smith author, *SF's Playland at the Beach: The Golden Years* will present an illustrated chronicle of the rise and fall of one of America's favorite historic amusement parks. Rare photographs of Playland's rides, attractions, and behind-the-scenes operations and a retelling of the stories. Free / \$5 non-members. St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond Street (between Elizabeth & 24th St).

SAT • SF CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL

Sat Oct 28 | 2-4:30 pm; 7-9:30 pm | San Francisco Craft Beer Festival New craft beer festival featuring 75 brewers offering unlimited 2 oz. tastings of 150 varieties of local and national craft beers plus educational tips from craft beer experts at the Craft Concierge Information Center Fort Mason's Herbst Pavilion, 2 Marina Blvd. \$49-\$125 www.sfcraftbeerfest.com Ages 21 and over.

THU • HOW TO USE LINKEDIN

Wed Oct 28 | 6-7:30 pm | The biggest professional network on the Internet Latino/Hispanic Meeting Room B - Lower Level. Main Library, 100 Larkin St.

THU • OMI NEIGHBORS IN ACTION

Thu Oct 30 | 7 pm | Meets last Thu each month. This meeting is at Temple UMC 65 Beverly/Sheilds Street. October program: Ballot measures. No Nov mtg.

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At the Movies / By Don Lee Miller

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

Tracing the Philosopher's Stone to the Paris catacombs, young archaeologist Scarlett: Perdita Weeks believes the rumor related to the artifact that it is capable of turning metal into gold. Others on the team include George: Ben Feldman, Benji: Edwin Hodge and Pappilon: François Civil. They crawl over skeleton remains below ground. This often incoherent found-footage tale also adds a little Freud into the combo of alchemy, Dante, Egyptology and Satanism. Director, co-screenwriter John Erick Dowdle, with Drew Dowdle (*Quarantine, Devil*), fashion this psychological thriller that delves into terror and madness. Bloody violence/terror with pervasive Profanity throughout.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ELEANOR RIGBY—THEM

A couple, Eleanor: Jessica Chastain and Conor: James McAvoy, are dealing with a family tragedy, together and separately, longing to understand each other in the Now of their lives. The tremendous supporting cast populates the compelling tale: her instructor, Prof. Friedman: Viola Davis; her father, Julian: William Hurt; her French mother, Mary: Isabelle Huppert; Conor's dad-employer, restaurant-owner Spencer: Ciarán Hinds; and his chef, Stuart, Bill Hader. Director-writer Ned Benson unfolds his tale sporadically over 122 minutes, never rushing the natural rhythm. Sly old foxes, the producers, the Weinsteins, are re-editing the same footage in October for two other versions of this film for *HIM* and *HER*, presenting the point of view of Eleanor and Conor separately, totaling 162 minutes. *Them*, wistful and quiet, stands firmly on its own merits. Profanity.

THE GIVER

Director Philip Noyce (*Salt*; the pilot for the ABC hit, *Revenge*), with a career of strange tales and unusual choices, adds another one, this story of a society without pain or suffering, war or choices, set in the near future. When youths reach their eighteenth birthday, they have a ceremony which thrusts them into a career chosen for them. When Jonas: Brendon Thwaites celebrates, he is given special training by The Giver: Jeff Bridges, an old man who remembers the way it was before and conveys this to Jonas. The Chief Elder: Meryl Streep makes the announcement to his parents, Father: Alexander Skarsgård and Mother: Katie Holmes, and all the graduates and families gathered. Rosemary: Taylor Swift (with black hair) is barely recognizable in a supporting part. Co-writers Michael Mitnick and Robert B. Weide have adapted Lois Lowry's book to the screen. Most of the movie is in black-and-white but by the end turns to color as the plot evolves. Mature thematic image. Some sci-fi action-violence.

THE HUNDRED-FOOT JOURNEY

A famous French chef, Madame Mallory: Helen Mirren and daughter Marguerite: Charlotte L Bon meet and are charmed by the Indian family whose van has broken down roadside near their French village and requires overnight repairs. Papa: Om Puri and his young culinary talent, Hassan: Manish Dayal find the house for rent across the street from Mallory's Michelin-rated French restaurant and decide to turn it into an Indian restaurant. Madame's attitude soon changes as she tries to sabotage their plans. By the time Hassan attends

the Paris culinary academy, he has matured into a bearded adult. Papa has five kids but the story concentrates on Hassan. Mirren is smashing as always despite her two-note character. Director Lasse Hallström and screenplay writer Steven Knight with novelist Richard C. Morais could have done a better job of keeping things moving in what should have been a simpler story. Maybe they put too much faith in the exuberant score by A.R. Rahman. Some violence. Profanity. Thematic elements. Brief sensuality.



LOVE IS STRANGE

New York City residents, Ben: John Lithgow and George: Alfred Molina, wed in a ceremony attended by friends and relatives after a 39-year relationship. When the Catholic school where George teaches disapproves and fires him, they are forced to sell their flat. Ben moves in with his nephew Elliott: Darren E. Burrows, his wife Kate: Marisa Tomei, and shares a bunk bed with their temperamental 16-year old son Joey: Charlie Tahan. George finds shelter with two cops who live downstairs, Ted: Cheyenne Jackson and Roberto: Manny Perez. The story is very much about how people take care of each other while confronting marriage inequality and religious discrimination. Co-writer/director Ira Sachs and his co-writer Mauricio Zacharias present a modern day love story about the consistent flow of the seasons of our lives; their previous collaboration, *Keep the Lights On*, premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival. Profanity.

THE MAZE RUNNER

Once his memory is erased, Thomas: Dylan O'Brien awakens on an elevator with this month's supplies to an encampment of teenage boys. They are living in a walled-in area with very tall concrete walls that move at night. Six-foot scorpions, called Greivers, prowl at night killing any youths who remain overnight in the Maze. Runners are tasked with keeping map-track of the changes and routes, always seeking the way out. The original bunch, who have been there for 24 months, are called The Glade. Their leader, Gally: Will Pouter, makes life difficult for anyone who threatens his rule. Just when they think they know the system, a comatose girl, Teresa: Kaya Scodelario arrives with the new month's supplies. She remembers Thomas which upsets Gally. Noah Oppenheim, Grant Pierce Myers and T.S. Nowlin wrote the screenplay from James Dashner's novel for Wes Ball's direction. Sci-fi action/violence. Some disturbing images.

A MOST WANTED MAN

German counterterrorism agent, Günther Bachmann: the late Philip Seymour Hoffman gives a posthumous Oscar nomination-worthy performance. His stomach hangs over his belt; chain-smoking, there's always a half-burned cigarette in his hand or dangling from his lips. US embassy official Rachel Sullivan: Robin Wright tracks a half-Chechen, half-Russian fugitive, Grigoriy: Issa Karpov, through Hamburg's Islamic community. Director Anton Corbijn (*The American*) builds the John le Carré novel with a strong supporting cast including banker Tommy Brue: Willem Dafoe and cyclist Annabel: Rachel McAdams who tries to aid Grigoriy. Profanity.

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At the Theater / Flora Lynn Isaacson and Linda Ayres-Frederick

SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE

It's an engaging show, *Slaughterhouse Five*, especially if you are a Kurt Vonnegut fan. And given our continued involvement in war, certainly *au courant*, raising issues about the physical and psychological destruction battle wrecks, and the reasons behind government decisions to continue bombing when the enemy (in this case Nazi Germany) is close to defeat.

The very precise choreographed movement throughout the play adds a visual element reminiscent of a well-trained military unit. The 90 minute play itself jumps through time and space as much as its main character Billy Pilgrim—played by several actors: Ryan Hayes, as adult Billy, Brian Martin as Young Billy, and Alun Anderman/Myles Cence alternating performances as Boy Billy.

Performed without an intermission, *Slaughterhouse Five* is Billy's journey, or rather several journeys, in and out of Dresden, Germany before, during and after the firestorm bombing that incinerated the city that was once considered the cultural center of Northern Germany. One such journey takes Billy to the planet Tralfalador where, unlike earth, peace is known to reign on occasion, and Billy finds respite from earthly conflict. The narrator Man, presumably Vonnegut, (Dave Sikula) wanders in and out of the action much as he does in the novel itself. Adapted for stage by Eric Simonson of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre, *Slaughterhouse Five* is directed by Custom Made Artistic Director Brian Katz, who rises to the most challenging aspect of the piece—keeping the threads of the story visible, a task much like dressing an octopus. If there is any annoying aspect in the production, it might be the blinding flashes from the upstage baton of stage lights that assault the senses of anyone sitting in the center section of the venue. One can view this as a taste of torture experienced by the American soldiers placed in the P.O.W. holding cell of the slaughterhouse after capture by the Germans, or just a dramatic indicator of change in time and space.

The ensemble's work is stellar, keeping the pace moving forward continuously. Among the highlights is the intense monologue about poisoning an annoying dog delivered by Sam Tillis as Paul Lazzaro—so reminiscent of the character Jerry in Albee's *Zoo Story*. Speaking of Edward

Albee, next up at Custom Made is his *Three Tall Women*.



Slaughterhouse Five (or the Children's Crusade) Thur-Sat 8pm; Sun. 7pm; Sun Oct 5 & 12 3pm. at Gough Street Playhouse, 1620 Gough St (at Bush) SE. Tickets: \$20-\$50. Discounts available for Seniors, Students & TBA members. www.custommade.org/slaughterhouse. Linda Ayres-Frederick

THE FOX ON THE FAIRWAY

The Fox on the Fairway is a hilarious farce by the incomparable Ken Ludwig (*Lend Me a Tenor* and *Leading Ladies*). It takes us on a romp which pulls the rug out from underneath the stuffy members of a private country club. This play is a charmingly nutty adventure about love, life, and man's eternal love affair with golf.

Bingham (Louis Schilling) President of the Quail Valley Country Club, is in a difficult position, less by finding out that his newly hired hand, Justin (Derek Jepsen) is in love with Louise (Lydia Singleton), the waitress at the clubhouse, but by finding out that the golfer he thought would play for his club has switched sides - recruited by his counterpart and opponent, the cocky and arrogant Dickie (Javier Alarcon), and the huge bet he had foolishly wagered is likely to be lost. Fortunately, he discovers that Justin is actually quite a good golfer and finagles his nomination.

Justin does not disappoint and has a huge lead, when close to its end the tournament is interrupted by bad weather. When Justin learns that Louise has lost the engagement ring he gave her - she accidentally flushed it down the toilet - he comes unglued. The game resumes the next day, but Justin loses the lead and, upset, takes an unfortunate swing, breaking his arm.

Bingham is desperate, and the appearance of his wife Muriel (Sumi Naendran) complicates the matter, as she catches him much too close to Pamela (Eileen Fisher), his sex-starved Vice-President.

Can Bingham find a replacement for Justin to win the game, win the wager, and get his life in order? Come and see this madcap comedy at Ross Valley Players, and find out. Julianna Rees, the Director, knows how to keep the machinery

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www.westsideobserver.com

Local Writer's "Survival In Paradise"

By Vernon Miles Kerr

Part of the magic in a literary work can sometimes be ingested from what is between the lines. This is true of the autobiographical book, *Survival in Paradise*, subtitled *Sketches from a Refugee Life in Curaçao*, by Manfred Wolf, a long-time San Francisco Sunset District resident. The author, who in the beginning of the narrative is seven years old, sees his happy life in an affluent warm family in Germany turn into a horrific flight from internment and possible death.

Along the circuitous escape route from Germany to Holland to Southern France, Monte Carlo, Spain, Portugal and eventually South America, there are many close calls and experiences, even to the extent of watching fellow travelers caught and shipped out for Auschwitz—and desperate refugees reaching the end of their money or planned escape routes and doing away with themselves. The family finally makes it to a tropical place of safety

in Curaçao, off the coast of Venezuela, where the author manages to focus on the colorful, carnival-like, engagingly chaotic cultural environment, putting the darkness behind him.

Later, as a seventeen year-old, thinking that he has excised the mass of dark memories, the author goes on to Brandeis University in New England.

There he is immersed into an environment of fellow-students and faculty who are mostly Jewish, but something is bottled up inside him. Compared with the easy-going, wisecracking American students, the author, although endeavoring to put on a casual, happy face, is a brooding, enigmatic presence. What has been walled off in a dark corner of his mind is suddenly released in a torrent of argument when a middle-aged Jewish woman at a party lectures him on how hard World War II was for Americans as well as Europeans—since they couldn't buy sugar or decent underwear with elastic waistbands. To his puzzlement, in America even the Jews seem oblivious to the real depths of the Holocaust story and its full ramifications.

Although the ostensible purpose of the author is to describe his own coming to terms with his family's

horrific near-unsuccessful escape from a hellish end, he seems to, almost inadvertently, chronicle a history of the entire range of varied reactions by many of the cohort of fleeing Jews to the danger and impending demise. As Wolf tells it, many of them apparently well knew the fate that awaited them if caught. One can imagine an effective European Jewish grapevine transmitting data back and forth across the continent.

And down below that adult data stream is the author, looking up and being exposed to adult conversations, which were, due to their dire subject matter, sadly unfit for tender ears—but which his precocious mind was storing, and partially repressing.

Among the people in this odyssey is Max, Wolf's father, formerly an affluent, dynamic factory owner, who is often seen during the family's flight as distracted, almost unbelieving of where he is finding himself, though—as the story relates—resourceful when it counted. There is Bertha, the mother, gregarious, assertive, using her personality to directly engage the officials who hold the key to their ability to escape from Europe. There is the couple who, after failing several times to run the border between

Cont. p. 18

A MASSIVE NEW HOUSING TAX

will only make the housing crisis worse and hurt **Westside residents** — vote no on Prop. G.



Prop. G imposes a massive new tax on many homes, including single-family homes with in-law units, sold in San Francisco. This new tax of up to 24% of the total sales price of a home is one of the highest taxes ever levied in San Francisco or any city.¹ Worse, not one cent is obligated to go towards creating more housing — it can all be diverted to other uses.

Take a closer look at exactly who gets hurt if Prop. G becomes law:

New Homebuyers and Renters Lose: There are zero protections against passing on all the costs to new owners or new tenants.

Owners Forced to Sell Homes Lose: Owners forced to sell because they face an illness, job loss or job transfer are not protected from Prop. G.

Seniors Lose: Their retirement nest eggs could be scrambled by this massive new tax.

People Looking for Affordable Rentals Lose: Prop. G creates an incentive for homeowners to take secondary rentals, known as in-law units, off the market — leading to even higher rents.

San Franciscans deserve thoughtful solutions to address our housing crisis, not Prop. G.

Find out why former State Assembly Speaker pro Tempore Fiona Ma, the San Francisco Alliance for Jobs and Sustainable Growth, Westside Chinese Democratic Club, San Francisco Taxpayers Association and many others say no on Prop. G.

VOTE NO on PROP. G

ON NOVEMBER 4 OR WITH YOUR ABSENTEE BALLOT.

To learn more, go to: www.StoptheHousingTax.com

Paid for by Stop the Housing Tax, No on G, a coalition of homeowners, renters and real estate organizations. Major funding by National Association of Realtors, California Association of Realtors Issues Mobilization PAC Committee and San Francisco Association of Realtors, 425 Market Street, 26th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105, FPPC #1363949

¹ Read the full text of Prop. G on the City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors' website at www.sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/bdsupvrs/committees/materials/rls071014_140695.pdf

Second Thoughts / By Jack Kaye



What to Do with Our Uninvited Guests

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors recently voted unanimously to invite and help recent immigrants who were caught trying to enter America illegally. The Board wants to sponsor 200-300 needy immigrants each month. More recently, the Board authorized the expenditure of \$100,000 per month for two years to pay for lawyers to represent recent immigrants intent on proving that they and anyone coming here illegally should be able to stay. Our undocumented residents are living here because of a sanctuary policy that was created to aid refugees from El Salvador's bloody scenes in the 1980's. The policy just kept expanding to cover everyone here illegally, allowing them to live here without any fear of deportation, and with every possible social service available to them.

San Francisco is also the home of more than 6,000 homeless. We are spending approximately \$30,000 a year per homeless person (that equals \$2,500 a month or \$80+ a day) to house, feed and provide medical care for this needy population, and still have more than half living in the streets and in our parks, relieving themselves wherever they can.

The City of St. Francis is known as the most liberal and generous major city in the country, and perhaps the world. Many of our residents are doing very well economically. We have more billionaires per capita and per square mile than any other city in the world. We can afford to pay our workers well, even those here without permission. Nannies, housekeepers, construction workers, landscapers and dog walkers here without authorization make about \$25-\$30 an hour. Most of these workers pay no payroll or income tax, and so net more than does the average American.

But San Franciscans are not the only Americans who want to help our new, uninvited guests. Many Americans realize how lucky we are to live here and bemoan the fact that so many people cannot live as we do. Many of us feel a sense of noblesse oblige and want to help these unfortunate people whose only fault was being from a poor, corrupt, violent, and unhealthy country and culture. Some of us don't even blame the leaders of these countries for their people's poverty, nor their culture, beliefs and practices. We choose to blame outside sources. Some of us want to blame America and other successful countries for these poor countries' failures, even though their problems go back hundreds of years. In any case, we want to help the helpless innocent.

For the past several years, tens of thousands of people have migrated from Central America to find a better life. And although the rate of poverty is declining in Latin America as it is in many parts of the world, we are told that these people still live in poverty in countries like Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, where the average wage is less than \$1,000 a year. They must pay \$7,000 to \$10,000 to have a family member brought here the 1500 miles without invitation. (We have never asked how these impoverished people were able to save so much.) We now have what is being called a "humanitarian crisis" resulting from a "broken immigration system." What should be done with these tens of thousands of new interlopers? Can we send them back to suffer in their native lands? Can we help them here in our great nation?

The United States of America is, without a doubt, the richest in the world. We have the largest gross domestic product and the largest annual budget. But we also have some problems. We have an accumulated federal debt of more than \$17 trillion, adding half a trillion dollars in annual deficits to that amount each year. More than 10 million of our people are unemployed. Job seekers without a high school diploma make up a large share of our long term unemployed. Many of these applicants are Latino or black. They cannot find entry level jobs because many are taken by the eight million people already working here illegally.

Fifty million Americans live in poverty, relying on the government for their basic needs; many are blacks or Latinos.

But still we want to help the poor from other lands. There are more than three

billion people living in abject poverty all over the world, including 2.5 billion living on less than \$2 a day while America's poor live on as little as \$40 per day. In Latin America, there are more than 165 million people living in desperate poverty (29% of the population); the vast majority would much rather live in America with its population of 300 million.

But America has only 53% of its 116 million households that can afford to pay any income tax at all, meaning that about 61 million families must pay for the needs of 320 million Americans and 10+ million illegal immigrants already living here. Can they also be asked to support the many new immigrants who lack the education, intellect, and training to support themselves in this new land? If they stay, they will become totally our responsibility for generations. We must educate them, treat their healthcare needs, and find shelter for them as well as good-paying jobs.

So what is the solution? Can we turn our backs on the tens of millions of Latin Americans who must suffer lives of poverty and violence in countries riddled with corruption? Can we accommodate these people in our rich country even if it means doing less for the poor Americans living in our country?

We can and must completely secure our borders and our Visa system. We should eliminate the temptation to take a long, dangerous, and expensive journey to gain illegal entry.

Then, I think that the answer lies with the countries from which so many citizens want to leave. While I am against most of our foreign aid which too often goes to corrupt governments and makes even decent ones dependent upon our continued largesse, I believe that it is in our national and regional interest to help our neighbors to the south. The aid should not be in the form of weapons systems, or money that usually goes to the powerful. The aid should be in the form of advisors. We should advise on education, which will be the foundation for future development in these underdeveloped nations. We should provide guidance for business development and management, and for developing government systems to discourage the fraud and corruption so rampant in these countries. We can help set up checks and balances in the various arms of government. And we can help educate the population on the merits and necessity of birth control. If you are too poor to feed yourself, you probably should not be having children.

PBS recently did a piece on the poverty in Central America by telling the story of one family. The mother was a woman who appeared to be about 60-very difficult-years old. She had hardly any teeth and lived in squalor. She had six children who were malnourished, causing them to be much smaller than normal and with diminished intellectual capacities. The youngest was less than a year old. As with all such reports, the reporter did not ask the obvious questions: why did this seemingly very old woman have six children and how could the youngest be a baby? The answer must be that the woman was not 60 but just a very old 50 and that she had kids she could not afford because someone had sex with her many times without benefit of contraception. If the poor in Central America could stop having children they could not feed, it would

Cont. p. 19

Let the market decide - Utility services



By Brian Browne

The gasoline shortages of the 70s and 80s were exacerbated by well-meaning policies to control prices. Anyone with a reasonably long-recall will remember lining up for hours in gasoline queues. These shortages and associated lines could have been avoided by doing away with price controls and that is exactly what happened when retail price controls were eliminated. The lines disappeared, and the price of gasoline generally rose and fell as a function of supply and demand. Shortages were by definition eliminated.

Many drought prone countries, such as Australia, are edging toward market reliance in allocating scarce water resources. As the population swells and weather uncertainty increases, this is probably where the U.S. and California in particular must move.

Economists in the late 70s and early 80s argued that these shortages were informational. These economists believed that the major oil producing nations had undervalued the demand for their oil products. The disruptions to supply and following market chaos in the major oil consuming countries made the oil producing countries realize the real market-value for their products. It was a demand pull phenomenon.

These higher oil prices catalyzed greater investments in marginal supply areas and also caused an efficient realignment in oil-using industries and consumer goods (compact automobiles, etc). These changes, catalyzed by a more realistic revelation of consumer preferences, and transmitted through the market mechanism, led to greater and more efficient use of the planet's oil reserves for a longer period.

The current shortages of California water are symptomatic of the fiat price being below the real market-valuation. A market solution, by definition, would eliminate "shortages." Shortages only exist when one or both of the two-blades of the supply and demand scissors are fiat-constrained.

Some economists have argued that if Los Angeles (LA) water was not subsidized that the current LA urban sprawl would be considerably smaller. They also make the same argument about many irrigation districts (and crops grown) such as the San Joaquin and Imperial valleys. Farming and urbanization patterns would be changed and the invisible hand would redirect resources to their highest value in use.

The savings in drought-policing costs would be immense, and investments in

water extraction, storage and transmission systems would be significant. A system of pipelines transmitting water throughout the U.S., similar to the oil pipeline systems, is a real possibility when demand is identified and transmitted through the market mechanism. This system could be funded by the private sector or with private-public partnerships.

There is no federal agency for water comparable to the Federal Energy Regulatory Authority (FERC) for overseeing water. Water resources (rivers, aquifers, rain, snow, etc.) in the U.S. often cross interstate lines. A federal agency might seem counter-intuitive to a market solution, but for planning and licensing purposes, as the U.S. water systems become more integrated to move supplies to where the demand is the highest, would appear a complementary and necessary adjunct.

A market solution is considerably more efficient than the current and costly pricing systems which encourages policing, neighborhood spying, and forming well meaning committees (e.g. Revenue Bond Oversight Committee) that are immediately high jacked by bureaucrats and special interest groups, whose agenda is self-aggrandizement (bowing to their masters) and not societal wellbeing.

Many drought prone countries, such as Australia, are edging toward market reliance in allocating scarce water resources. As the population swells and weather uncertainty increases, this is probably where the U.S. and California in particular must move.

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

2014 Voting Guide

SF BUSINESS
VOTES
2014

VOTE YES

Proposition A: Transportation Road and Improvement Bond

* Allows the City to make much needed capital investments in our transportation infrastructure

- Proposition C: Renews the Children's Fund to better serve San Francisco youth and families
- Proposition F: Approves Union Iron Works/Pier 70 Development Project Heights
- Proposition I: Allows Renovation of Playgrounds, Walking Trails, Athletic Fields
- Proposition K: Supports Affordable Housing Goals
- Proposition L: Advocates for Balanced Transportation Priorities

VOTE NO

Proposition G: 24% Surtax on Transfers of Residential Property

* Places burdens on residential property owners with no guarantee revenue will go to housing

- Proposition H: Prohibits lights and turf at Beach Chalet Soccer Fields



SF Forward is the Political Action Committee (PAC) of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. SF Forward is comprised of local business owners and residents who support sound economic policy and exceptional quality of life in San Francisco. The PAC is dedicated to insuring that political reforms strengthen the local economy, improve the business climate, and streamline the operation of government.

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279 Castaneda Ave	Forest Hill	5	5.5	2	3,195,000	3,012,000	100.47
14 Ulloa St	Forest Hill	2	1	2	798,000	1,125,000	140.98
50 Ulloa St	Forest Hill	3	2	1	949,000	1,175,000	123.81
171 Robinhood Dr	Sherwood Forest	2	1	2	879,000	938,000	106.71
166 Yerba Buena Ave	Monterey Heights	5	6.5	5	4,500,000	4,388,000	97.51
1301 Plymouth Ave	Westwood Park	4	3.5	5	1,280,000	1,305,000	101.75



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Group of men putting out a fire in Sutro Forest • Sept 15, 1934. Printed with permission, SF History Collection, SF Public Library

BRAIN FÜD

Three of a Kind

Figure out what the trio in each set have in common. As long as each answer is a six-letter plural word, ending in -s.

Example: Railroad, wild animal, music CD:
TRACKS

- 1) Hunting dog
Compass
Scoreboard
- 2) Dungeon
Jewelry store
Sequence
- 3) Fish
Sheet music
Dieters
- 4) Municipal parking lot
Electric utility
Rhythm in verse

1) Points
2) Chains
3) Scales
4) Meters

Answer

OPEN LATE



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

Sudoku-fun!

Rules:
Each puzzle is a 9 by 9 grid of squares divided into nine 3 by 3 square blocks, with some of the numbers filled in for you.

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

Answer:
The answer appears below.

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

Theater (Cont. from p. 13)

percolating - The Fox on the Fairway barrels along. Ken Rowland's clubhouse set is suitably sporty, and the costumes by Michael A. Berg are swanky.

The Fox on the Fairway knocked one straight off the tee and hit a hole-in-one, as it mixes golf, romance, and fashion, keeping the audience in stitches.

The Fox on the Fairway previewed Sept. 11th runs through Sun, Oct. 12th. Thursday performances are at 7:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m.; and Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. All performances take

place at the Barn Theatre, home of the Ross Valley Players - 30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., Ross CA. Tickets: 415-456-9555, x 1, or www.RossValleyPlayers.com.

Coming up next at Ross Valley Players will be Jane Austen's Persuasion, adapted by Jennifer LeBlanc, directed by Mary Ann Rodgers, from November 14th through December 14th, 2014.

Flora Lynn Isaacson

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Parkmerced (Cont. from p. 1)

Francisco leaders should not have approved the new Parkmerced development because it is inconsistent with City policies and that the environmental review was flawed.

Shortfalls of Parkmerced Not Corrected

Other issues — such as the underfunded 19th Avenue Traffic Corridor, existing seismic inefficiencies, no neighborhood schools, and limited sewage infrastructure — have either not been resolved or have been ignored by the City. 19th Avenue will now become a parking lot, since the 8,900 housing units, offices, and shops will be built near an expanding SF State and Stonestown Shopping Center.

City planners claim the project, approved by the Board of Supervisors in June 2011, is environmentally benign and transit-friendly, promotes affordable housing, and will boost the local economy.

The Appellate justices who heard the appeal were Anthony Cline, James Richman, and by special assignment, Alameda County Superior Court Judge Steve Brick. Lawyer Stuart Flashman represented San Francisco Tomorrow and the Parkmerced Action Coalition. Deputy City Attorney Brian Crossman represented the City and County of San Francisco, as well as the project’s sponsor, Parkmerced Investment Partners.

The Court’s Opinion in Error

According to Judge Anthony Cline, there is “substantial evidence” the proposed Parkmerced project “would not displace substantial numbers of people ... the proposed project would not physically disrupt or divide an established community, would not adversely affect the existing character of the vicinity, and in that respect, it would have a less-than-significant impact on land use.”

Referring to Proposition M, Stuart Flashman, the attorney representing Parkmerced plaintiffs San Francisco Tomorrow and Parkmerced Action Coalition stated, “We (referring to the City) don’t care what the voters said.”

This case has profound ramifications for unbridled growth in San Francisco. The Court, stating at the beginning of the trial, that they were for development, has provided all the tools developers need to have unfettered growth.

Transportation Shortfalls Ignored

The Court states it will not limit San Francisco growth because of a lack of, or because of a poorly designed, transportation system. The decision cited as a precedent

from a Los Angeles court case, is perhaps not unrelated to the traffic gridlock present there today.

MUNI has cut service in every neighborhood since 2006. With piecemeal transit planning, new developments like Parkmerced and the Transbay Terminal are throwing thousands of new residents and workers into a stagnant transit system, and onto an already-strained street system. Any MUNI projects related to Parkmerced could mean taking MUNI project funds from other transit-starved neighborhoods to be used in Parkmerced.

Built in the 1940’s by Metlife as a modern model for middle-class housing, Parkmerced is now San Francisco’s historical stepchild.

No Historical Landmark Status

The Court found that Parkmerced is not a “Historical Landmark,” asserting that there are no buildings of individual, unique character on site. The Court judges have shown an inability to see the forest for the trees. It is not the buildings that make Parkmerced special, it is the space between the buildings, which is the purview of landscape architecture. The Court was unable to appreciate the masterful design of Parkmerced by Thomas Church, the father of landscape architecture in San Francisco.

Since the Appellate Court ruled that Parkmerced is not a “Historical Landmark,” the Court would have us believe that “Neighborhood Character,” is based only on the composition of the residents who live there. The Court appears to believe that — unlike the Victorian housing stock near Alamo Square — it is not the aesthetics of a community that are noteworthy in Parkmerced, but whether or not it has rent control.

Earthquake Safety Ignored, Not Improved

The Court proclaims the importance of earthquake safety in the new

Parkmerced development. This is rather ironic, since the 11 existing towers on site that are 130’ tall, are not part of the development agreement to be seismically retrofitted. These towers, built at a time when earthquake safety was not well understood, leave this project vulnerable. The City, given an opportunity to correct the condition, sided with the developer by ignoring the issue.

The towers — too high to be reached easily by firefighters, should a fire develop after an earthquake — are especially unsafe. This being the case, seismic safety was ignored on this project.

Unfettered development and ill-considered projects are damaging our social structure, just as surely as they alter and often block the skyline. The first responsibility of City leaders is to make San Francisco livable for the people who already live here, not just cater to newcomers and blindly follow a desire for more money in a City that doesn’t know how to spend it properly.

The current Appellate Court ruling on Parkmerced should be appealed and overturned.

George Wooding, Midtown Terrace Homeowners Association, Glenn Rogers, Landscape Architect, License 3223



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Two Great Chances To Help San Francisco Kids Yes on Props C and E

By Carol Kocivar

About 10 years ago, San Francisco did something quite remarkable for kids. It was an act of conscience...a decision to step in and make a real difference.

Here is the story:

State funding for education was so low that many students in San Francisco did not have music and art and physical education and librarians.

They did not have enough health services and there was a shortage of funding for early education.

Rather than wait for a miracle of money from Sacramento

(note: we are still waiting), San Francisco voted to help fix this ourselves.

We voted to pass the “public education enrichment fund” to support our children through a dedicated fund from the city.

That's right. A dedicated fund.

Money to restore school libraries and to bring the arts back into classrooms. Money to support athletics and physical education. Money to provide our youngest children with early education services.

The research is in and no one can quibble about whether these programs help kids succeed in academic and social development. They do. Period.

And boy, was this timely.

When the Great Recession hit, schools throughout California suffered devastating cuts.

Through the wisdom of San Francisco voters, our children were spared the worst of these cuts.

Now it is time to renew that commitment.

On the ballot in November is proposition C.

Programs funded by Prop C will include:

Athletic coaches and PE Teachers

In-school music classes

Arts classes and supplies

A librarian for every school in San Francisco

Universal Pre-School

Support for children in foster care

After-school programs for more than 10,000 kids

Support for homeless youths

Funding for organizations like Boys and Girls clubs and local YMCAs

Proposition C will extend both the Public Education Enrichment Fund and the Children's fund until June 30, 2041.

Oh...and it does not increase taxes.

California still has not solved the school-funding crisis. Even with a growing economy, California still lags the nation in funding education.

Prop C is our chance to do the right thing for the children of San Francisco.

This is our City. These are our children.

And we have the chance once again to dedicate funds to support a quality education and children's services in our community.

My vote: Yes on C

Prop. E: The Soda Tax

This one has my YES vote, too.

This really is about choosing health.

We have an obesity crisis in our City. Too many kids consume too much sugar and don't get enough exercise. And the results are not just fat kids. The results are diseases that kill and maim.

San Francisco can again be a leader in public policy through this effort to reduce soda consumption and fund active recreation and nutrition programs.

Prop. E is an important part of an overall strategy to support the health and well being of San Francisco's children.

You can find more information in simplified form here:

http://ballotpedia.org/San_Francisco_City_and_County_California_ballot_measures



Patrick Monette-Shaw (Cont. from p. 5)

reported that Richard Lee, head of San Francisco Department of Public Health's food safety program, noted that for-profit hosts running what amounts to a restaurant out of their homes is completely illegal. That hasn't stopped Airbnb. It's another illegal ancillary venture following Airbnb's illegal venture in short-term rentals.

Chiu's legislation does nothing to stop Airbnb from encouraging its “hosts” to sell home-cooked meals as an ancillary service, sales from which Airbnb will pocket a cut. Chiu will likely not develop additional regulations governing “sharing economy dinner parties,” perhaps out of deference to his benefactor, Ron Conway.

Forewarned Is Forearmed

Developers, high-tech companies, and “sharing economy” companies don't want to pay their fare share of taxes — and have successfully avoided paying taxes in San Francisco for years — and want voters to bear the tax burden, instead.

To avoid David Chiu pulling his same stunts in Sacramento affecting the rest of the State, vote for David Campos, and urge your friends and relatives living in Assembly District 17 to do the same. Say “No” to both Prop. “A” and to David Chiu.

Monette-Shaw received the Society of Professional Journalists-Northern California Chapter's James Madison Freedom of Information Award in the Advocacy category. Feedback: <mailto:monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com>.

This is an edited version, the full version is available on the website.

Local Writer (Cont. from p. 14)

France and Spain, throw themselves under a train in their desperate reaction to the terror of impending arrest and imprisonment. And there is the man who, losing his hope for escape at the gaming tables in Monte Carlo, hangs himself.

The author's turning point, a kind of epiphany, comes at Brandeis when one cold, New England night an unstable fellow-student dons a Nazi Army uniform and stands at attention on a precipice, outside a dorm window several stories above the campus, possibly poised to do away with his own life and perhaps the whole repository of dark memories along with it. The student returns to his room and, in a beautifully rendered scene, the author shows how this affects his own thinking and feeling, and how he then committed himself to his own future, irrespective of the awful facts of his, and the world's, undeniable history.

This book is recommended reading for several audiences. For youth, because it is a classic coming-of-age story, for adults because it provides understanding of the ripples of evil that can emanate from dark places in the human soul and spread throughout the world, and that should never be forgotten but acknowledged and used as a catalyst to somehow yield some improvement to all of our collective souls.

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Real Travel By Sergio Nibbi



A Change in Plans

In the construction industry an addendum refers to a revision to a project's plans or specifications or a clarification to the bid documents. It is not unusual to have a number of changes to a project either before or during construction, and in many cases these changes can amount to added dollars or endless delays to the work schedule. But one thing that never changes is the great food and outdoor experience that one can enjoy at Addendum, a shack of a place right off the main drag in Yountville, deep in the Napa Valley. Hidden behind Thomas Keller's Ad Hoc restaurant, its Washington Street location is immediately off the Yountville off ramp from Highway 29. Open Thursday through Saturday and only during the summer months, it's a pure delight to meander through its small garden with its summer crops of squash, tomatoes, lettuce and a variety of other vegetables that serve its big brother, Ad Hoc, and the world famous French Laundry. The line at the order window can be a bit daunting at times, but the fried chicken is, as they say, "to die for."

If a mineral water won't satisfy your thirst they have a nice selection of wines and beer, not to mention an assortment of T-shirts and caps for the unsuspecting tourist. Redwood picnic tables are nicely placed under a few shade trees, or a handy pergola serves the same purpose. Give them your name and before long a bag full of delicious, crispy fried chicken arrives with a nice slice of golden honey corn-bread and two sides, all served in compostable paper containers, but in my case at least one container always follows us home for evening leftovers. They also have barbequed ribs, but my first choice is always that delicious fried chicken served piping hot and finger-licking good.

The parking lot is not huge but we always manage to squeeze in and there always seems to be a spot at one of the tables, the best part being that you can share a table and meet and greet other diners and compare notes on the food, the valley, and the best wine tasting experiences while enjoying that great

food.

I always felt that my mother made the best fried chicken in her cast iron pan which was always a Sunday night treat, but I must admit that for me this is a close second. And speaking of seconds, after such a nice treat one should meander a block or so down the street to Bouchon Bakery, also owned by Thomas Keller of French Laundry fame, and treat oneself to my favorite, giant macaroons in assorted colors, and in addition there's always the tarts, cookies, and Chocolate Bouchons,



moist brownies with a warm chocolate center. The lines in front of the bakery can at times be a little unnerving but certainly worth the wait.

And when it's all said and done you will have enjoyed some great food at reasonable prices and certainly not the 3 to 4 hundred dollar meals at the French Laundry, especially if you choose the wine pairings. Sure, you end up with plastic utensils (which are compostable), paper napkins and handy wipes to clean those delicious chicken drippings off your chin, but for twenty bucks plus some extra



coins for a cookie or two you will have had a memorable meal that's satisfying and filling. Understandably you won't have the bragging rights of a meal at the Laundry, but if you want good food that won't max out your credit card then Addendum would be my recommendation.

Second Thoughts (Cont. from p. 15)

dramatically reduce poverty in that region. If more Latin American governments could find ways to dramatically change their cultures and values, they could slowly work their way out of poverty. Brazil is doing that now in South America. Costa Rica and Panama are finding ways to change for the better in Central America. Mexico has also seen great improvement in living standards in the past 20 years. Countries like Guatemala and Honduras produce healthy food crops, but are forced to export most of it leaving their people with diets of rice and beans. Women are treated badly by their men. The non-white populations, though in majority, are treated as second class citizens, with most of the leaders being of pure Spanish heritage. These are some of the areas where cultural changes are needed in Central and South America.

But it should not only be America who comes to the rescue of our southern neighbors. There are more than 190 other countries in our world, including 34 Latin American countries that are joined in the Organization of American States. This organization should be instrumental in helping not only these tens of thousands of recent refugees return to find safety in their own region, but also aiding all those who are suffering there now, as well as helping the millions who are without legal authority living in the States return to their beloved homelands with reason to hope for a brighter future. The United Nations can play a large role in guiding these organizations toward constructive change.

This same formula of organizational and cultural change could be applied to those suffering from the same issues in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Feedback: kaye@westsideobserver.com

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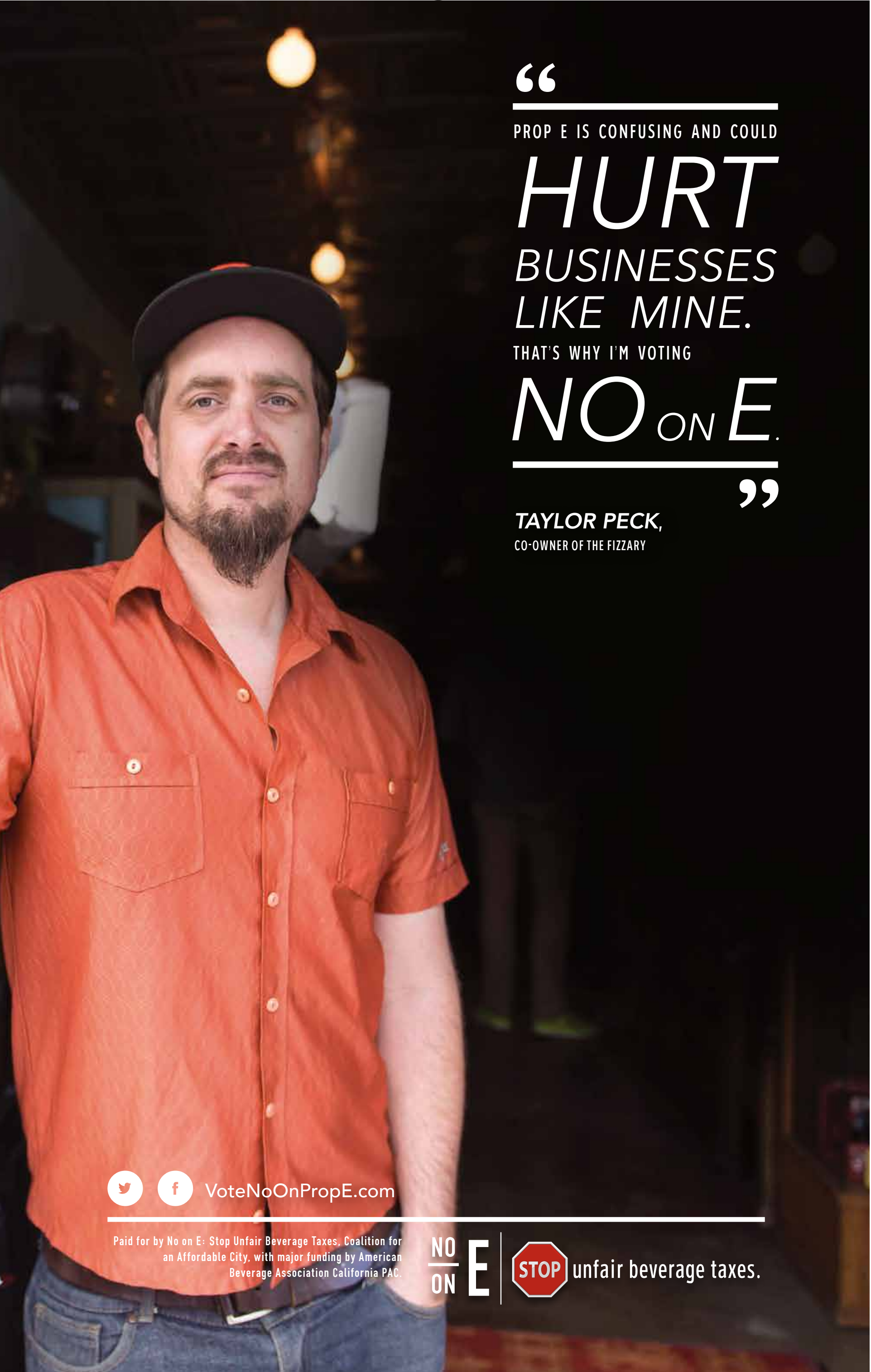


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