Unanswered Questions Remain for the Patient Gift Fund

by Patrick Monette-Shaw

Since a Whistleblower complaint about potential inappropriate spending from Laguna Honda Hospitals (LHH) Patient Gift Fund was filed last March, no corrective action has been taken. After KGO TV’s "I-Team" investigative journalist Dan Noyes aired a story on May 20, nothing meaningful has been done. Numerous public records requests subsequently placed have lead to only more questions, and few answers.

LHH was cited by California’s Licensing and Certification (L&C) Division for a fairly serious "deficiency" involving patient choice in therapeutic activities, as a direct result of potential misappropriation of funds to LHH’s Patient Gift Fund. In a citation involving "misappropriation of property/activities," L&C issued an "E" deficiency — citing a violation of Federal law — against LHH on May 19, the day before Noyes’ story aired. The State citation documented that patients now wait up to three months for bus trip outings to culturally-appropriate restaurants.

And "E" deficiency involves a "pattern" having a potential for more than minimal harm, but not immediate jeopardy and with-out actual harm.

It is thought that the State is required to report potential violations of Federal regulations to the U.S. Department of Justice, which remains concerned about the welfare of residents at LHH.

Shortly after LHH’s 2004 revisions to its Patient Gift Fund policy, increases in gift fund expenditures benefitting LHH’s staff, rather than patients, soon skyrocketed, after three staff education sub-accounts were created on August 12, 2005 shortly after Kanaley took control; the other education account was created in January 2008.

The day after the KGO story aired, City Controller Bed Rosen-field recommended on May 21 — following a cursory "review" to determine whether LHH’s accounting practices were consistent with City policies — that in order to avoid continuing questions regarding the Patient Gift Fund, the Department of Health should “create a separate account … for employee training and development,” effectively ordering DPH to segregate funds donated to “create a separate account … for employee training and development.”

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Deputy City Controller Monique Zumdak acknowledged on May 25 the Controller’s review was “not an audit.” Indeed, no audit has been performed to anyone’s knowledge or the City would have already released results.

Later, Zumdak provided documentation indicating there are 20 separate sub-accounts within the Patient Gift Fund, four of which are for staff education purposes used mostly to fund catered meals for staff. The staff education accounts remain embedded within the Patient Gift Fund.

A potential audit denied funding from the Patient Gift Fund in the current fiscal year for a mechanical lift needed for discharge.

In stark contrast to the $2,500 needed to purchase the mechanical lift, documents provided responding to public records requests placed by former LHH physicians Dr. Maria Rivero and Dr. Derek Kerr revealed that in current fiscal year 2009–2010, the Patient Gift Fund spent at least $12,675 on catered meals for senior hospital staff members.

LHH suddenly, and deliberately, revised its Patient Gift Fund policy #45-01 on December 2, 2004 one month after former LHH Executive Administrator John Kanaley was hired, removing a patient representative from its Gift Fund Management Committee and a required quarterly report of gift fund activity.

Merchants Struggling to Survive MUNI’s St. Francis Circle Project

by Elliot Wagner

Merchants up and down West Portal Avenue are struggling to survive the chaos of the St. Francis Circle rail replacement project.

Although MUNI conducted several community meetings to provide outreach to the stakeholders in the neighborhood, they waited until the last minute to drop the bomb of gory details that caused an uproar. The merchants were dismayed that they were never consulted on a project that could potentially devastate them economically.

The project has created far more intrusive challenges than anyone could have predicted. By some accounts, merchant traffic is down 20% with merchants losing as much as $250,000 per month in revenues.

The challenges run the entire length of the district. At the “circle,” the street, poor signage and unexpected street closures were causing confusion for drivers. The full potential impact of the project hadn’t been communicated by the SFMTA. As the frustration mounted, merchants composed a letter to the Mayor asking to be heard and offering solutions to some of the major problems, particularly recommending that MUNI promote a “West Portal Grand Re-opening Event” once the project is completed within the next 3-4 months.

Input from Muni Customers sought on restoration of service

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which oversees all surface transportation in San Francisco including the Municipal Railway (Muni), will include at its Tuesday, July 6 Board of Directors’ meeting a hearing on improving Muni service September 4.

Additional information can be obtained from www.sfmta.com or by calling 311 which also provides assistance in other languages.
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Supervisors’ Salary Scam

BY Quentin Kopp

Since my last column several San Franciscans, who believe in honest, effective administration of public affairs, estimated that the annual salary of $100,000 for each of the eleven members of the Board of Supervisors and asked rhetorically for justification, or, at least, an edification of their faith.

In 1932 the rewriting of San Francisco’s Charter by a so-called Freeholders committee resulted in a section describing the duties and obligations of a Board of Supervisors member and establishing the salary as $2,400 per year. That represented the level of compensation for the part-time Board members until 1956. The term “part-time” is accurate. Unlike the other 57 counties in California, San Francisco is both a city and county, and functions under the administration of an elected mayor.

The Board possesses no administrative responsibilities, and don’t allow supervisors to allege otherwise! In 57 other counties, the Board of Supervisors operates with both legislative and administrative duties. For example, in San Mateo or Alameda County the Board of Supervisors exercises responsibility for administration of the Department of Public Works, the Department of Health, the Civil Service Commission, the Planning Department, the Department of Parks and Recreation and any other county service, unless by ordinance the Board of Supervisors is transferred to the county manager or admin-istrator, which has occurred in some counties. In San Francisco, the Board of Supervisors constitutes strictly a legislative body. In fact, the 1932 Charter specifically barred supervisors from interfering in the operation or management of any department, rendering it misconduct and an act which could lead to impeachment. Unfortunately, that prudent provision (Section 2.114) was modified by an ill-advised “reform” of our Charter. Under Section 2.114 neither the Board of Supervisors, its committees or any of its members could dictate, suggest or interfere respecting any appointment, promotion, compensation, disciplinary action, contract or requisition for purchase or other administrative action taken by any administrative matters at a public meeting of a city board, commission, task force or other appointed body and allowing the Board of Supervisors to adopt legislation regarding administrative matters. The result is reflected on a weekly or daily basis with supervisors attempting to coerce commission or department supervisors into taking administrative actions on assignments which have been abolished. A substituted figurehead City Administrator occupies space in just one of hundreds of unnecessary city government positions.

In 1956 (24 years after the 1932 salary had been set) voters were asked to raise a supervisor’s salary from $2,400 annually to $4,800. That made sense, and voters did so. In 1964, a Charter amendment increasing compensation to $9600 per year was presented for voter approval. Voters again consented.

In short, the Board of Supervisors dismissed history in inducing voters to allow the Civil Service Commission to utilize the pay of full-time supervisors with administrative responsibilities in counties such as Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Contra Costa and others for a virtual tripling of their previous voter-approved salaries, and also included these part-timers, who can, at best serve but eight years, in the generous City Retirement System.

Then came the City’s first experiment with district election of supervisors in 1977, spawning a breed different from supervisors who properly treated their Augustus position as a part-time responsibility and comport themselves (with one exception) by engaging in proper business or business affairs. Successful efforts were assayed to remove voter approval of any supervisoral salary change in favor of linking the salary fictitiously to a favorable comparison. One effort sought alliance to the salary of a superior court judge; another used a comparison of supervisors in large cities like Los Angeles. Voters responded an effort to abolish their salary-setting power over their elected representatives and rejected such tactics.

Following a restoration of city-wide election of supervisors and a Charter initiative mandating presidency of the Board of Supervisors for the highest vote-getter, as the leading vote-getter in the 1982 supervisoral election, I was sworn in as Board President. I round $4,800 as the floor for part-time legislators, noting that those part-time legislators con-
The Regulatory Morass of the SFPUC Financing System

By Brian Browne

T he San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) is going deeper and deeper into debt, and voters no longer have the right to approve of how SFPUC incurs this revenue based debt. Ratepayers still have to pay for this debt through their utility bills. The structure of this debt has become considerably complex, and it appears that the SFPUC has become a financial intermediary, to the chagrin of debt instrument issuers. In the absence of voter oversight there does not appear to be any real regulatory constraints and oversight. This is exacerbated by the legal and financial complexities surrounding these programs in the overall context of a fragmented and unystatic regulatory process. The unraveling of the thread between authorization of a project and the application of commercial paper is daunting. The business model changes with planning and implementing possibly $10 to $15 billion in capital improvements and operating one of the largest multi-utilities in the US so this must be scrutinized. However, time and space are not available in this essay. Actual progress to date on water system improvements v promised deliverables weighs against a positive evaluation at this point.

The SFPUC (Commission) the politically appointed board of directors (commissioners) of the SFPUC: water, power, and sewer are responsible for running and maintaining the City’s water and power systems. At the heart of the problem is the need to issue between $5 billion and $15 billion in revenue debt instruments. Rounding out up:

1. $5 Billion for the Hetch Hetchy system fix-up.
2. $5 Billion for implementing community choice aggregation (AB117), and
3. $5 Billion for a city-wide sewer fix-up.

Total and annual repayment schedules for projected capital improvements are summarized below. Annual payments were estimated at a long-term coupon rate of 5.5% over a 25 year term.

Prior to the passage of Proposition E in November 2002, voter approval was required for the SFPUC to issue revenue debt (bonds) to tie future rate increases. This system was straightforward and a relatively transparent process. The SFPUC would put forward a 25 year term.

In the 1997, the state law is that it is a self-regulating municipality. State law passed shortly after the energy crisis, cities may organize a company to compete with PG&E. Although the energy crisis was wound, Greens joined the long-time pub-

The vehicle for selling competing, greener power is called Community Choice Aggregation, or CCA. San Francisco is organizing its CCA, called CleanPowerSF. Once organized, CleanPowerSF will notify all households that receive a bill for electricity that they have joined the CCA, unless the household opts out. For three years the city CCA will sell power for the same price as PG&E sells it. The CCA power will come over the same grid, PG&E’s grid, as it does today. It just is to be “greener” power.

How much greener? Not too much. PG&E’s power is currently about 15% from renewable sources like wind mills. The CCAs power will start off at 24% from renewable sources. In the second year that will rise to 25%, and in the third year to 26%. By the tenth year it is supposed to rise to 51%.

How was the City CCA to sell electric power as cheaply as PG&E for the first three years? It was to have gone into debt. The City CCA would borrow up to $400 million, that they are joining the CCA, unless the household opts out. For three years the city CCA will sell power for the same price as PG&E sells it. The CCA power will come over the same grid, PG&E’s grid, as it does today. It just is to be “greener” power.

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How was the City CCA to sell electric power as cheaply as PG&E for the first three years? It was to have gone into debt. The City CCA would borrow up to $400 million, which will be paid off between years 4 and 15. If a household were to fail to opt out at the outset, could it do so later? Yes, but it must give six months notice, and it will cost. How much it would cost would be decided by rate-making authorities. Would the City CCA really provide 51% renewable power in ten years? That was the target. Until recently the target had been by 2017. The percentage would include not only renewable sources like wind mills. The CCA’s power will start off at 24% from renewable sources.

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redistribute the number of PCOs to avoid conflicting instructions, thus SFMTA vehicles will no longer park in the circle at the tunnel's entrance, and PCO vehicles will be prohibited from waiting between meters for metered customer parking spots.

**Issue #4: West Portal is Open?**

According to the MUNI website, the West Portal is in operation since July 2010. However, dissatisfaction from the merchants is prevalent due to the lack of coordination for a project that has been in planning for years; issues should have been resolved as early as possible because it affects the business and revenue we are losing now. The K bus drop-off location was recently changed to West Portal Avenue, where only 17 MUNI's LRVs no longer pass by them. Solution: SFMTA has rerouted the 17 MUNI's to the Taraval section announcing “West Portal is Open.” Unfortunately, it’s going to take 3.5 months — long enough to change shopping habits.

**Issue #5: Restrooms:**

Lack of restroom facilities for passengers on MUNI, who pour out from all directions, is a major challenge. Solution: SFMTA will implement a series of measures: Proceeding with work 7 days a week to finish construction as quickly as possible, working am–to–pm M–F & 8am to 9pm on weekends. But that hasn’t been the case. Work actually ends at 3pm with no work on Sundays. Yet we were told September 1st is still scheduled for its completion. This begs the question: could the project have been completed more than a month earlier by working the implied “full schedule” or could just working Sundays shave it by 14%?

Unfortunately, it’s going to take 3.5 months — long enough to change shopping habits. When it’s inconvenient to come to West Portal, customers change their routine, go to a different branch of their bank, or a different restaurant. And when they go to these other areas, they start to form new relationships with new merchants. Will they keep on coming back to West Portal? It’s not only about the business and revenue we are losing now, but what we will lose in the future, the long-term economic consequences. It’s our economic survival. Marketing and points that work in one place don’t always help another. A great deal of time was spent waiting and working with PG&E to physically locate power grid points. SFMTA Traffic controllers make them wait for approvals and instructions. Additional complications, such as the availability of rails from the manufacturer and budget constraints necessitate spending as money is available. Many complained about the lack of coordination for a project that has been in planning for years; issues should have been addressed as early as possible because it affects the business and revenue we are losing now. The K & M LRVs no longer pass by them. Solution: SFMTA has rerouted the 17 MUNI’s to the Taraval section announcing “West Portal is Open.” Unfortunately, it’s going to take 3.5 months — long enough to change shopping habits.

**Issue #6: Invisible Businesses:**

West end West Portal businesses are “invisible” because the K & M LRV’s no longer pass by them. Solution: SFMTA has rerouted the 17 MUNI’s to the Taraval section announcing “West Portal is Open.” Unfortunately, it’s going to take 3.5 months — long enough to change shopping habits.

**Issue #7: Realistic Timetable:**

Probably most important, as I pointed out at the meeting, SFMTA’s own literature says “To minimize these inconveniences, the SFMTA is implementing a series of measures. Proceeding with work 7 days a week to finish construction as quickly as possible, working am–to–pm M–F & 8pm on weekends. But that hasn’t been the case. Work actually ends at 3pm with no work on Sundays. Yet we were told September 1st is still scheduled for its completion. This begs the question: could the project have been completed more than a month earlier by working the implied “full schedule” or could just working Sundays shave it by 14%?

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**Issue #8: Signage:**

There are no easily readable overhead signs with arrows informing drivers, in advance, about which lane leads to which of the intersection’s multiple streets. Currently, only ground level signs exist, visible at the last moment. Solution: New large “West Portal” (with an Arrow) sign and promises to keep working on the project.

**Issue #9: Lack of Coordination:**

Because of the proliferation of the walking undead to mainstream perversiveness, these suburban mall vamps are consequently forced to raise the fantasy stakes to where the entire genre is tumbling into ridiculousness. Most frustrating is nobody plays by the rules anymore. Time is not even considered to be something being discarded like blood amulets at a neck bitters winter solstice mortuary retreat. Garlic is no big deal unless it is. They can run extremely fast. Except when they can’t. Superhuman strength is at their command—silence, silver, daylight, holy water and wooden stakes: Take em or leave them. That’s the problem with kids today. No respect for their elders. If it was good enough for Brave Stoker, it should be good enough for these lunatic kids' vampires.

You don’t have to be Freud to get the repressed sexual desires theme. But wasn’t it a lot more interesting when society was repressed and not flaunted by young starlets emerging from limousines sans underwear? And what is it with the brooding? You’re a thousand years old. How much time do you need to adjust to the agony of immortality? Stop it with the teenage angst already.

And yes, yes, youse. To be young is to identify with the alienation and the dressing all in black and the being pale and stuff. But the only thing less sexy than an ancient man caressing the carotid of a pubescent girl with his swollen incisors may be the prospect of the and he swapping decon cream. You think Anna Nicole Smith was creepy, multiply her husband’s age by eight or ten and try imagining that. Not enough Ambien in Patrick Kennedy’s medicine cabinet to quell those nightmares. Makes Harold and Maude seem like fairy tales. Tales. That’s Tinkerbell in Vegas.

And this anguishing over the weight of the eternal hunger is getting a bit old. You’ve had multiple centuries to come up with an easy way to feed. You’re not tormented, you’re incompetent. You know, if Hollywood is really interested in a new way to make big bucks frightening America, they should greenlight a series of movies about the inner workings of Congress. Now, those soulless zombies are scary.

Will Durst is a San Francisco based political comedian who often writes. This being a fine example. Catch his one- man show, “The Lieutenant Governor from the State of Confusion” at a Performing Arts Center near you. His new CD, “Raging Moderate” from Stand Up! Records, now available on both iTunes and Amazon.
The Oil Spell Symbolism

Hat has been described as the greatest man-made disaster to ever hit this country shows no signs of abating after more than two months. The ruptured oil well located one mile below sea level has been leaking as many as 60,000 barrels (or 2.1 million gallons) a day of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico. This has led to major problems for the entire region, including the banks. The leaders of the three major companies that own the Gulf oil pipeline, put so much pressure on the government that they did not need to take the time to do it right. They were blind to any possible environmental damage their corner-cutting could cause.

The banking, real estate and automobile industries in this country have had their own systemic ruptures recently. In each case the decision makers were greedy as well as arrogant. The combination made them all blind to the problems they were creating. As with the oil well, the problems in each industry continued unabated for a long time. First there was denial, then there was minimizing the problems, and then there was a problem too big to disguise or disregard. In each case there was the externality, the spill over effect, of these huge catastrophes that affected the innocent victims.

The leaders of "the big three" were arrogant enough to think that they could get away with using their success as a reason for their greed and arrogance. They became increasingly arrogant and made risky investments that ended up almost destroying our economy.

Today our favorite religions seem to be unable to control their own destructive tendencies. The Catholic Church has been unable to stop the eruptions of charges of priestly abuses that are being reported all over the globe. When the truth is finally told, the sexual abuses that are being reported are going to be far worse than we thought. It makes one wonder how many of these "tolerant" bishops had themselves been molested as children? Then there is the religion that is so much in the news for its violence in the Middle East, that is so greedy for more power and is arrogant enough to believe that inciting their flock to violence will somehow get them what they want. Who knows how many of these "believing" bishops had themselves been molested as children?

The corporate leaders of our car companies were also greedy. They wanted easy bigger bonuses and took up too much space. Never the other effects greed and arrogance are having on our nation and its people.

The leaders of "the big three" were arrogant enough to think that they were gas-guzzlers and took up too much space. They were arrogant enough to think that they could get away with using their success as a reason for their greed and arrogance. They were arrogant enough to think that they could get away with using whatever they wanted. The arrogance made them believe that they could get away with anything, and that if they failed the government would bail them out.

The banking, real estate and automobile industries in this country have had their own systemic ruptures recently. In each case the decision makers were greedy as well as arrogant. The combination made them all blind to the problems they were creating. As with the oil well, the problems in each industry continued unabated for a long time. First there was denial, then there was minimizing the problems, and then there was a problem too big to disguise or disregard. In each case there was the externality, the spill over effect, of these huge catastrophes that affected the innocent victims.

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A Parks Commission Gone Wild
By George Wooding

Welcome to San Francisco’s version of pre-scripted Kabuki theater.

The RPC’s new mantra is to make the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) financially self-sustainable through the creation of revenue-generating projects, events, and privatization of our park facilities. If you want to stop and smell the flowers, it’s the RPC’s job to approve making you pay for the privilege. This is completely sad, because the RPC was originally created to represent the citizens and be our advocates to the RPD and the Mayor’s Office. Now, no member on the RPC listens to the public and all they want is our money.

San Francisco’s rubber-stamp RPC meetings are just a symptom of the Mayor’s Office having the power to select all seven RPC members. If you have friends in high places, or if your union or non-profit makes a major donation or concessions on your behalf, or if you personally make a large donation to Gavin Newsom, you, too, can be on the Commission. Citizens with little money and no political connections to Gavin Newsom on their resume need not apply to join this exclusive club.

This is a great resume for someone who is trying to develop San Francisco’s parks, attract investment capital, privatize park services, increase private donations, and create park enterprises that will compete with private businesses. If we want to turn Golden Gate Park into a Six Flags theme park, Mark Buell is probably the perfect man for the job.

San Francisco Civil Grand Jury Report

PENSION TSUNAMI: The Billion-Dollar Bubble

During recent periods of economic prosperity our City officials, along with compassionate voters, created relatively generous pensions for many City employees. With the recent downturn in our economy and loss of millions in value from the City’s pension fund, these rapidly increasing costs threaten to jeopardize the City’s financial future. The Office of the Controller estimates that the funding of pension and retiree health benefit costs for fiscal year 2010 is $413 million, which is expected to rise to $1 billion in 2015, approximately a third of the City’s current General Fund. The expected General Fund contribution, which is approximately 61% of the total pension and retiree health benefits costs, will increase annually by $60 million for the next five years. This shift in resources may drastically impact funding to other basic services, affecting all San Franciscans.

The $100K Club: The typical San Francisco public servant will receive a modest pension after many years of service and the Grand Jury is grateful for their dedication and hard work. However, we note that 24% of retired firefighters, 12% of retired police officers, and 1% of non-safety (non-safety) employees receive retirement benefits of over $100,000 a year. The California Pension Reform website designates these as “the $100K Club,” and San Francisco has more than 900 retirees in this category.

Forgotten Proposition H: In 2002, San Francisco voters passed Proposition H, a charter amendment that altered the formula for Police and Firefighter retirement benefits and mandating that, should the City’s contribution rate to the pension fund exceed 0%, the City and Safety employees’ representatives should “meet and confer” on a “material pension cost-sharing arrangement.” The City’s contribution rate has exceeded 0% since fiscal 2004-05, yet the Jury found no evidence that the City and Safety employee bargaining agents established such a cost-sharing arrangement.

Pension Spiking and Pyramiding: Pension Spiking is an end-of-career promotion or an excessive raise to increase or “spike” workers’ final pensionable income during the last year of employment, the base period for calculating the pension amount. The Jury found that seventy-one Firefighter retirees received a 10% or more increase in pensionable income in their final year before retirement — approximately 68% of the total number of Firefighters who retired over the past 22 months. There were few instances of pension spiking among San Francisco Police officers or other smaller collective bargaining units (at least 9,883 employees). In May 2010, the City and SEIU Local 1021 entered into an agreement that employees pay their own 7.5% contributions, and, in return, that the City increase the employees’ base wage by 6% or approximately $60 million, effective July 1, 2010. This “swap” was described by the news as “cost neutral” for budgetary purposes. However, the City’s negotiation team apparently failed to consider that the $60 million swap would significantly impact the City’s future pension obligations.

The Civil Grand Jury is empowered by the Constitution of California to investigate the various officials, departments and agencies of the City and County of San Francisco.
Perils to our Parks

If you have read my previous articles in this newspaper (perilstoparks.com) you will not be surprised to learn that I support the proposed Charter Amendment which would change how Recreation and Park Commissioners are appointed.

I attended a the Board of Supervisors Rules Committee hearing on June 18th to consider the amendment. The testimony from Commissioner President Mark Buehl was particularly enlightening. Herein, I quote some highlights - I encourage readers to consult the video http://www.civicwatch.org/ for a full text.

Commissioner Buehl. “We have this enormous budget problem and we are trying to deal with it...

Mayor Newsom approached me and asked would I go on the Recreation and Park Commission with a specific goal intended. And that was to find a way to bring more philanthropic dollars and I think give less confidence in the Rec and Park Department.

So, you are at a time when Rec and Park, I think, has never been better and we are trying to shape a philanthropic portion of the community which really hasn’t been there to a great degree. So at the same time we are improving services, cutting our budget, trying to generate new revenue (and I’m sure that you will hear from people who disagree with the way that happens), that you are going to put on the ballot a divisive measure that I think would be bad for the philanthropic dollars and I think give less confidence in the Rec and Park Department.

Will there be a formal announcement of this policy and a detailed plan for the public’s review and discussion? Or will it be implemented quietly, bit by bit, until we turn around and our parks are out of our reach — or at least fenced and closed to general use?

So I guess what I’m telling you is be very careful as you put something on the ballot that is going to do very, very little to improve our parks.

I applaud Commissioner Buehl for his clarity and candor, and I do not doubt his good intentions. However, his statement raises important issues:

1. Does Mr. Buehl’s statement outline the long-term policy of Mayor Newsom?

2. Will there be a formal announcement of this policy and a detailed plan for the public’s review and discussion? Or will it be implemented quietly, bit by bit, until we turn around and our parks are out of our reach — or at least fenced and closed to general use?

3. Why is RPD using the City’s current financial crisis as a rationale for sweeping changes?
responded that Volunteers, Inc. had been assured by LHH’s staff and the City Controller port calls for an audit of LHH’s patient gift fund, the board’s administrative consultant and it had 760 patients in January 2010, indicating that the census had fallen by just 3.7

had his dates wrong; LHH’s census had already dropped to 790 patients by March 2009, meaning that what has happened to three major bequests, and are concerned about irregularities in expense and revenue records. Rivero and Kerr are still investiga-

ting what has happened to three major bequests, and are concerned about irregularities in expense and revenue records. Rivero and Kerr are still investiga-

Laguna Honda Volunteers Inc. have been misappropriated is an affront, “ says George Wooding, president of the
city’s poor, frail elderly.

The sparkling new main lobby of the $585 million reinaugurated Laguna Honda Hospital has been in the works since Mayor Edwin PNesines determined that the former 1867 Almirante from the Gold Rush era, needed rebuilding to serve the city’s poor, frail elderly.

(Cont. from p. 1)

and physician education, instead.

accounts for patients.

One of the many checks obtained under the Sunshine Ordinance indicates misspent funds that should have gone to patients welfare to the Health Commission, weakening oversight. When LHH suddenly revised the policy on April 15, 2010, the Gift Fund Management Committee was simply eliminated.

Shortly after LHH’s 2004 revisions to its Patient Gift Fund policy, increases in gift fund expenditures benefitting LHH’s staff, rather than patients, soon skyrocketed, after those staff education sub-accounts were created on August 12, 2005 shortly after Kanaley took control; the other education account was created in January 2008. Although Dr. Rivero and Dr. Kerr have proposed a six-point action plan to restore the charity-donating public’s trust in the Patient Gift Fund, none of their proposed remedies have been implemented since KGO’s May 25 story aired.

Their action plan requested an independent fiscal audit of the gift fund’s income and expenses for the past five years, full restitution for any misappropriated funds intended for patient benefit, the reinstatement of a patient representative or ombudsman to the Gift Fund Management Committee; inclusion of a summary of all disbursements over $500 from the Patient Gift Fund in published monthly meetings of the Gift Fund Management Committee; and submission of quarterly reports itemizing all donations and expenses to the Patient Gift Fund to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors’ Budget and Finance Committee for public review.

Other remedies proposed include returning the gift fund policy to its pre-December 2004 status, and a mission statement describing the intended uses and “restricted pur-

poses” for each of the 20 sub-accounts must be restored and posted on LHH’s web site. In mid 2009 LHH’s current Executive Administrator Hirose combined previously-held community meetings with her monthly Town Hall staff meeting, opening the combi-

ned meeting to the public. But in reaction to the KGO story, on June 4 LHH’s combined meetings went closed, locking out the public.

“After two years of arm twisting by neighbors demanding LHH hold community meetings, now we can’t even get return calls or email replies. Denying us access to com-

munity meetings to ask whether our donations to the Patient Gift Fund and Volunteers, Inc. have been misappropriated is an affront,” says George Wooding, president of the West of Twin Peaks Central Council.

On May 24, Dr. Kerr and Dr. Rivero submitted a complaint to the California Attorney General’s Registry of Charitable Trusts, requesting that the State audit LHH’s Patient Gift Fund. They have since submitted supplements to the Registry documenting additional problems.

They documented that at least $188,442 in questionable allocations and expenses that should have benefitted patients, did not. The City has provided some conflicting public records highlighting potential accounting discrepancies. Rivero and Kerr are still investi-
gating.

“Various oversight authorities have an obligation to investigate,” Kerr maintains, convinced that “what patients thought to be responsible for direct patient benefit were deposited into sub-accounts for nursing, administration, and physician education, instead.

Like most of us, patients enjoy going out to enjoy a meal at a nice restaurant Patient bus trips to restaurants plummeted 66 percent between first quarter 2009 and first quar-
ter 2010, even while staff education sub-accounts earned $89,998 in interest on May 11, 2010. Of the remaining balance, 17% ($123,517) is dedicated for staff use, and only $603,291 remains in sub-

accounts for patients.

At the rate of current earnings and spending, the Patient Gift Fund may be completely insolvent within three years.

Three donations totalling $54,502 from Laguna Honda Volunteers, Inc. likely intended for direct patient benefit were deposited into sub-accounts for nursing, administration, and physician education, instead.

Most speakers during LHH’s ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 26 — with the exception of LHH Resident’s Council president Elizabeth Cutter, in wheelchair— wrongly credited former City Attorney Louise Renne for filing San Francisco’s consumer protection lawsuit against the tobacco industry.

The tobacco settlement, which provided significant funds for the rebuild, is projected to earn San Francisco $594 million by the year 2060, plus interest. In 1996, then Board of Supervisors president Angela Aliloto initiated, authored and passed legislation (Resolution 469956) to sue Big Tobacco. Pages 218 through 221 of Aliloto’s book Straight to the Heart: Political Contests, details how Renne tried to stop Aliloto’s groundbreaking legislation outlining the lawsuit, which Renne then out-sourced to a private law firm.

Surely Renne, now president of the LHH Foundation, would not engage in revisionist history taking credit for Aliloto’s work, yet, Aliloto was seated among the audience, not among the honorees and Renne’s name is featured in an artwork installation in the hospital’s new main lobby but Aliloto’s is nowhere.

A téte-à-téte with the Mayor, Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Supervisor Jim Rigby and Mitch Katz bask in the moment.

Above: Mayor Gavin Newsom applauds Elsbernd as former City Attorney Louise Renne and Mitch Katz bask in the moment.

Right: The less than optima-

Left: Mayor Gavin Newsom assists Louise Renne with the quilt curse for the memorable cutting of the ribbon as Elizabeth Cutter looks on.

Under: The sparkling new main lobby of the $585 million reinaugurated Laguna Honda Hospital has been in the works since Mayor Edwin PNesines determined that the former 1867 Almirante from the Gold Rush era, needed rebuilding to serve the city’s poor, frail elderly.

And On With The Show…
The Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at Laguna Honda Rolls Ahead Unabated

why would volunteers, Inc. believe the very LHH staff thought to be responsible for potential misappropriation of funds from trust purposes to non-trust purposes?

To his discredit, Supervisor Elsbernd — who has the power to do so — hasn’t called for a full audit, nor has he held any hearings to explore potential Patient Gift Fund abuses. Donors and patients have a right to know what happened to these restricted-use donations.

Momette-Shaw, an accountability advocate, is a San Francisco Hospital Examiner at Exam-
AlmaVia, an Elder Care Alliance community, a nonprofit organization, is cosponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas West Midwest Community & the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. RCFE Lic # 385600270.

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Source: SF MLS

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Get a taste of Summer at the Stonestown Farmers Market! Now is the time to indulge in the fruits and vegetables you miss terribly in the depths of winter - like the perfect peach. Here, you’ll experience how Mother Nature intended blueberries, apricots, tomatoes, melons & sweet corn to taste.

Join us to connect to the farmers who grow your food, the bakers who bake your bread, the neighbors who create your community, and the ritual of sharing a meal with your family and friends.

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Teddy Bear Festival
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Empire of Thirst | Photographer Robert Dawson | June 26-Aug 1 | Jewett Gallery Main Library, 100 Larruk St. Color and black and white photographs that address the issue of water. Some of Dawson’s work looks at our culture’s desire to possess, control and shape the land and water to city needs, others photograph the misuse of water and still others examine a complex, evolving relationship to water that Dawson hopes to influence with his work.

St. Petersburg was in 1991. We heard how much it had changed, and in the evening, we could see the helicopters carrying water departments struggled in vain to control the inferno. Later flames shooting hundreds of feet in the air as the local fire Churches. It had been undergoing a major restoration.

Day two started with a one hour ride to Pushkin to visit Catherine’s Palace, but not before Natasha swung by the souvenir shop where a lovely young woman greeted us and offered souvenirs belonging to the people of this marvelous city.

Next stop was the Fortress of Peter and Paul, the oldest prison during the rule of the tsars. Within the walls is the Peter and Paul Cathedral of Peter and Paul, which was the first of the many we were to see.

After our visit, we managed a quick stop at a very small souvenir shop where a lovely young woman greeted us with a tray full of vodka. Actually, we were more interested in the clean, available toilets.

We were told that you could visit the Hermitage every day for eight hours a day, spend three minutes in front of each exhibit and it would take you over eight years to see it all. We saw it all in three and half hours. The Hermitage consists of five connected buildings, including the Winter Palace. The lines are endless and the exhibits mind numbing. We especially enjoyed the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Rembrandt and Rubens as well the countless Impressionists that make the Hermitage one of the largest and most famous museums in the world.

Go for a stroll around the city during the rule of the tsars. Within the walls is the Peter and Paul Cathedral of Peter and Paul, which was the first of the many we were to see.

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Our lovely day was spoiled by the sight of a blazing Day two started with a one hour ride to Pushkin to visit Catherine’s Palace, but not before Natasha swung by the souvenir shop where a lovely young woman greeted us and offered souvenirs belonging to the people of this marvelous city. Catherine’s Palace was in 1991. We heard how much it had changed, and in the evening, we could see the helicopters carrying water departments struggled in vain to control the inferno. Later flames shooting hundreds of feet in the air as the local fire Churches. It had been undergoing a major restoration.

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With room after room of gold leafed walls, hand carved furnishing, and inlaid floors — and the splendor of the Czars' residence — this building was destroyed, people were able to rush in and learn from Natasha the next day that, although the entire building was burned, and the exhibits mind numbing. We especially enjoyed the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Rembrandt and Rubens as well the countless Impressionists that make the Hermitage one of the largest and most famous museums in the world.

Artistic that change really was.

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system to a regulatory morass while burdening its customers with an avalanche of debt.

To fill this uncertain regulatory gap between commercial paper and authorized long-term revenue bond debt, the Board passed Ordinance 266-06. This ordinance attempted to tie together the 1998 Ordinance 203-98 and 2002 Proposition E. It did not simplify the process. The main reason for 266-06 was to initiate a $150,000,000 commercial paper for SFPUC’s new sewer program. This ordinance did acknowledge the requirement that commercial paper (and derivatives thereto) programs could be used only after the Board had approved and identified the issuance of a dedicated revenue bond program.

Proposition E also spoke to giving the SFPUC the right to enter into joint power sharing agreements, set rates, speak to rate fairness and interestingly allowed a conduit for Hetch Hetchy enterprise “surplus” revenues to be transferred to the general fund.

Surplus revenues belong to the ratepayers in the form of a rebate and/or must be plowed back into the system to reduce future charges since surpluses come from rates. Any transfer to the general fund would be contrary to 1996 California Proposition 2.8 (a revival of the old idea of no taxation without representation), a constitutional amendment, especially in light of the 2006 Big Horn Case. All revenue bonds must be repaid through rate increases. A genuine concern is that a rate increase of one percent will see a decrease in actual demand of greater than one percent, i.e., total revenues will fall, and less rather than more will be available for debt service after a rate increase.

Bottom line — there is no real regulatory oversight in SF. It has gone from a relatively simple and transparent system, with ratemakers and citizens involved, to a regulatory morass that is unmanageable. The SFPUC has authority to issue $650 million in commercial paper. They have indicated they wish to double this amount to $1.3 billion. Trying to keep track of actual authorizations and complementary commercial paper will be impossible. One disadvantage San Francisco has under state law is that it is a self-regulating municipality.

The current system does not work. A good start would be to rescind Proposition E.

Brian Browne is a member of the Public Utilities Revenue Bond Oversight Committee, a specialist in economic and regulatory analysis of water, wastewater, natural gas, power, and transportation sectors. Author of numerous studies on these subjects. 1. www.tensarcorp.com/.../SPECTRA_CS_GREENBUSH_10.06.PDF

SHARON THE HEALTH

BURNS, BUGS, AND BASICS
By Sharon Caren

N ow that summertime is official, here are some great tips to make your activities and vacation trips more enjoyable. Below are suggestions for healthy and all natural products you won’t want to be without (for emergencies) to carry along in your first aid kit.

Fun in the Sun

The existence of nearly all life on earth is fueled by light from the sun. A recent study indicates that more exposure to sunshine early in a person’s life relates to less risk from multiple sclerosis (MS) later in life. New research is being done showing that vitamin D is created in the body from sunlight. Don’t be fooled by the fog either. UV rays can penetrate cloud cover!

Eye Protection Not all sunglasses are created equal. In the past, I’ve purchased expensive ones that I’ve lost or broken and turned to the less costly ones with stickers of UV protection. Unfortunately, cheaper sunglasses are unlikely to provide effective protection. We’ll probably have to spend about $100.00 on a pair of sunglasses to cover the full range of protection needed. Wearing a brimmed hat or visor is also a big help.

An article in Time magazine points out that sunglasses can actually do more harm to your eyes than if you were forced to squint. When we squint, our pupils constrict to tiny dots that limit the amount of light getting in. However, when wearing sunglasses, our eyes feel as if they are in a darkened room and the pupils dilate to let in more light. If you are wearing cheap sunglasses, then much more harmful light may reach your eyes. That additional exposure to UV and UVR rays may increase the risk for cataracts, macular degeneration and even development of ocular melanoma—a very rare type of cancer. Read more: http://wellness.blogs.time.com/2009/08/04/can-cheap-sunglasses-be-bad-for-your-eyes/#ezzzrhfZJDTB

What’s new is the application of all we know about the beneficial effects of plant substances to create modern-day oils. These oils are great for people who are searching for an alternative to prescription drugs and their awful side effects.

The suggested products below are treatments I’ve researched and used personally. They do not contain harmful chemicals.

Sun Screens Unrefined Shea Butter, natural SPF of 6.
All Natural Sunscreen SPF 15, 30, or 50 – go to http://shop.mercola.com

Be Physical

It’s time to get out and enjoy your favorite activities like hiking, biking, and swimming. If you haven’t been moving your body much this year, the muscles will feel it. Most importantly, stretching is in order before and after. If you’ll only stretch once, do it after the workout. As a Level 1000 Repotting Trainer, I teach personalized stretch routines to keep you flexible and out of pain from injury. http://www.sharoncaren.com then click “personal posture plan” for more information.

When you feel pain from sore muscles, try these on the affected area:

Purification Oil Blend keeps critters away and reduces the need to carry along in your first aid kit.

Deep Relief - roll on
Peppermint

Eye Protection

Poison Oak Oil of Peppermint helps to dry up the rash quickly and stops itching. Cleaning and drinking water Oil of Lemon disinfects and purifies drinking water. Oil of Peppermint is wonderful. Just add a drop in drinking water and this will bring down the body temperature if one is overcome by heat exhaustion or fever.

Antiseptic, Antibacterial, Antifungal Oil Blend of Thieves put on topically, under tongue, or diffuse. For added protection use Thieves Waterless Hand Purifier, Thieves Wipes, Thieves Throat Lozenges.

Cuts, scrapes, and bleeding Oil of Helichrysum helps to coagulate the blood when poured on an open wound and expedites healing.

Be proactive and beef up your first aid kit before an emergency occurs not just for summer but all year long. You’ll sleep better at night knowing you have some alternatives. I’m sharing all I’ve learned and what has worked for my family and me. As an educator of Essential Oils, I’m passing along these ancient healing techniques using the life-blood of plants.

In ancient Egypt, the Pharaohs used oils to promote physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. So, the use of oils for healing is very old. What’s new is the application of all we know about the beneficial effects of plant substances to create modern-day oils. These oils are great for people who are searching for an alternative to prescription drugs and their awful side effects. http://www.youngliving.com/sharoncaren

Always consult your doctor. I’m not a doctor and I don’t prescribe or diagnose.

Please contact me with comments, questions or information you’d like to share on health and wellness at sharoncaren@comcast.net Also, visit: www.sharoncaren.com
Teenagers Discovering the Truth About a Supposed Sex Scandal

What has such a dull title, Stephen Karam’s Speech and Debate, now undergoing its Bay Area Premiere at the Aurora Theatre’s 18th season, got to do with the play’s content concerning a sex scandal? Not until we see the play do we understand the protested threesome efforts to comprehend and eventually bring freedom of expression and tolerance related to a town sex scandal by starting a club in the school.

Drama Queen Diwata, who started the club with openly gay Howie and school journalist Solomon, also promotes her musical, which leads sexual freedom. At one point in the musical they disrobe, Diwata wearing a nude body stocking, and the boys in their underwear that hilariously brings the house down.

As they grow closer, the play appears to revolve around the threesome’s findings about themselves and their own sex lives - how does it supposedly bring solutions about what it means to be an adult? Do these teenagers probing into their own acts bring about a clearer understanding of the reasons for adults’ actions? One leaves the show believing these teenagers’ persistent third eye has clarified the point of understanding and forgiving the doings of adults. As bothersome as they can be, their sincere attempt to understand themselves and their roles in respect to another generation may, by the same token, enlighten adults. As bothersome as they can be, their sincere attempt to understand themselves and their roles in respect to another generation may.

Director Robin Stanton handles the confining use of space at the Aurora and carefully balances the placement of her characters in each scene in which the actors successfully play the audience on three sides at a fast moving pace that befits the energy of teenagers.

Jayne Deely as Diwata creates a clever go-getter teenage actress who makes the action go round by luring the two unwilling males into making her club survive and her musical recognized. Even when she begins to succeed, she continues to win others over as well as harmonizing and sharing with each other their frank irritation and exasperation with their children.

Jeremy Kahn’s haircut and his infectious grins captures his innocence.

Les Liaisons Dangereuses plays through July 10, 2010 at the Redwood Amphitheatre at the Marin Art and Garden Center, 10 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., Ross. For tickets call 415-251-1027 or www.porbleg.net. Flora Lynn Isaacson ACTORS WANTED FOR BAY AREA AUDITIONS OF THE 26th FALL FRINGE OF MARIN FESTIVALS AUGUST 24/25. SHORT PLAYS CONSIDERED FOR UPCOMING FRINGE OF MARIN FESTIVALS For info call (415)-673-3131 (10 a.m. to noon) or email jeanlust@ aol.com.
This year, the SF Silent Film Festival will present their 15th annual festival at the Castro Theater 15 to 18, expanding the festival from its usual three days to four. The highlight of the festival will be the U.S. premiere of the restored version of Fritz Lang’s Metropolis (1927), with 30 minutes not seen since the 1927 premiere in Berlin. SFSFF artistic director Anita Monga says “This discovery is one of the most important in silent film history.” The tale of how a film archive in Argentina found the long-sought footage—lost for 70 years—is an astounding story.

International renowned musical star Matt BCompare and Ensemble with Benjamin Chasinschi of incomparable Häxan, a witches’ brew of the scary and darkly humorous. A composer and silent film aficionado since the winner of the 2008 Gold bagge Award (the „Swedish Oscar“) for his score of Overlasting Moments, at the 2009 Academy Awards.

Every year, the festival showcases a series of short films, presenting them through the festi- vable before each feature program. For the 15th annual festival, the imaginative and beautiful films of Georgens Melés, will be featured. This year, the festival focuses on silent film music with a new program that will give the audi- ence the chance to hear from the extraor- dinary musicians.

http://www.silentfilm.org or call (415) 777-4908.
Don’t worry. I don’t go around telling my friends I have the cutest and most beautiful granddaughter in the whole wide world. I would never do that. Never ever. I am too cool. I am more into technology than baby boating.

On my phone I say: “Have you seen Camera Genius? It lets you zoom in to take a close up. Here... look at the definition in this baby’s picture.”

And then... “Take a look at this neat app. I’ve been using it. It’s called iVideo camera and love the color and sound. Watch closely. You can see this baby start to roll over and grab for her toys. Nice color, how did you see her toes in her mouth?”

The slide show:

“My daughter just sent me this mobile me gallery. You can watch a slide show and even post captions on the bottom of each picture. See the baby watching the fish in the aquarium?”

The video chat:

“Do you want to know how to record an iChat? Take a look. I have a small collection of chats right here on my computer. It’s really easy. You can even save them on iTunes. The sound is really quite amazing. Hear the baby crying?”

By the way, just let me put this here: that photogenic baby is my BABY BABY. Well, not exactly mine. She lives with my daughter and her husband.

Look, here is a picture of the three of them. Don’t you think her eyes are just like her dad? They are coming to visit next week. I have this cute little App called flash for free. If I take a picture and the room is too dark, I just select the photo and it will lighten up just as if you have a real flash on your iPhone.

There is more than one method to use when they get here. I Talk. Maybe— if I am really conscientious—I can record her first real word. "Grandma."

In addition to being unmatchable with her granddaughter, Carlos hosts a radio show on education in Mexico. "It’s about $500 per month. A high paying job would bring in about $1,000 per month. Apart from that, what are your thoughts about the current situation in Mexico?"

"If I had known this I would have worn Depends."

The Cathedral of Our Savior on Spilled Blood has over 7,000 square feet of mosaics covering the walls and ceilings, and is one of the most memorial buildings we saw in the state. After touring the dazzling gardens, we moved inside to tour this immensely luxurious imperial estate. For over an hour we again went from one gold leafed room to the next. The elaborately carved moldings, statues, gold leafing, silk covered wells, inlaid floors, and lighting fixtures were a mix-up they almost go to the recycle dump. No clothes, cars, buildings, high fashion or good food would exist without us Italians. They listened, but almost threw me off the bus when she is an amazing woman, and the facts and figures in her head astounded us all.

The one thing that impressed me the most was how many Italian architects, engi- neers, craftsmen and technicians were involved in these structures. I kept reminding my friend that, were it not for the Italians, they would be looking at mud huts and tables made of saw horses. No clothes, cars, buildings, high fashion or good food would exist without us Italians. They listened, but almost threw me off the bus when she is an amazing woman, and the facts and figures in her head astounded us all.

The part that was so astounding is that most of the buildings we saw were nearly destroyed by the Germans during World War II. They have since been rebuilt from no more than a skeletal frame to the amazing structures that exist today. The elaborate carved moldings, statues, gold leaf, silk covered wells, inlaid floors, and lighting fixtures have all been meticulously reproduced and restored. Along with the more than 10,000 buildings destroyed in the war, more than 1.25 million people died in the fighting and as a result of disease and starvation.

We listened intently as Natasha spoke about the average salaries for workers about $2,600 per month. A high paying job would bring in about $1,000 per month. Apart- ments rent for $300 to $400 a month. During Communism, the Party built housing for the masses and the resulting apartments are what we would consider slums. The tenants have now been purchase to have their miniscule units for more than the cost of the paperwork, and they can buy even and rent offshore. However, the move to private ownership has left many of the former workers with no homes at all. A 15% of the people are out to kill them and collect the $Million-dollar bounty. Too soon it becomes repetitive when they can’t trust anyone today whom they could yesterday. Violence, Profanity, Sexual situations.

PRINCE OF PHILADELPHIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

Desert spectacle features buffed-up Jake Gyllenhaal as adult Dastan, a smart beggar who is out to take his share of the treasure. The King's brother, Nizam: Ben Kingsley wants to posses the magical DAGGER of Time, which can make time run backwards so he can over- rule Sharman's lineage to the throne. The King of the desert, Princes: Tamsin of Baghdad: Gemma Arterton, after a danger- ous pursuit in collapsing tunnels, stops bark- ing. Poor Dastan: girlfriend of the Afghan princess. To celebrate the royal wedding, George of the desert goes to London and enters into a fascinating world of light. Violence, Profanity, Sexual situations.

SEX AND THE CITY 2

This is the one film this month designed to please an audience of any age. There's something for everyone! Woody'sSharife, voice of Tom Hanks is the one toy Andy has selected to take to college with him, but the other toys are supposed to go to the attic. In a world they almost go to the recycle dump, he is the Sunnyside Daycare center. Woody has to rescue Buzz Lightyear: Tim Allen; Eve: a mix-up they almost go to the recycle dump; Mr. Potato Head: v.o. Jim Varney; Mrs. Potato Head v.o. Jay Rasulo; as his adopted son, vying for years yet small enough to fit into a chess locales. Jerry is also filming his second star- ring film in the sands nearby. Profanity, Sex-

TOY STORY 3

Here is the one film this month designed to please an audience of any age. There's something for everyone! Woody'sSharife, voice of Tom Hanks is the one toy Andy has selected to take to college with him, but the other toys are supposed to go to the attic. In a world they almost go to the recycle dump, he is the Sunnyside Daycare center. Woody has to rescue Buzz Lightyear: Tim Allen; Eve: a mix-up they almost go to the recycle dump; Mr. Potato Head v.o. Jim Varney; Mrs. Potato Head v.o. Jay Rasulo; as his adopted son, vying for years yet small enough to fit into a chess locales. Jerry is also filming his second star- ring film in the sands nearby. Profanity, Sex-

The fearless foursome is back on the beat, Manhattan, that is. After a rather dull first hour, NYC, things heat up with a big banana peel from Lizzy Minnelli. At the movie premiere of her ex-boy friend Jerry "Smith" Jerrod: Jason Segal finds his true self when his mother, Sherry: Taraji Henson meets Roy Miller: Tom Cruise in the Wichita airport as she’s enroute to Boston for her sister’s wedding. June is in the privy to know that her stepdaughter’s new husband Miller is hiding a secret of the baddies aboard and then lands in a corn field. (Havens is not to be confused with the 1962 film). Metro: v.o. Sean Patrick Flanery, star harbinger of the dagger, whose career was also at 20th Century Fox, the releasing company Roy is hiding an energy for years yet small enough to fit into a chess piece; the inventor is nervously Simon Fco. Paul Dano. The real villain, Fitzgerald: Peter Sars- gaard is a dirty FBI agent, who is supposed to work for FBI Director George: Viola Davis, but has loyalties to the Dubai dealer, Jordan: Jodi Mori. Roy and June wind up on a Caribbean island he happens to own, then bounce to Seville for the race with the bulls, and, next stop, onto an Austrian train. This fast moving thriller is terrific! Never mind that the eighth film in the series, ten years older than Roy. Violence, Profanity, Adult situations.

THE KARATE KID

Dr. Parker: Jaden Smith is very down when his mother, Sherry: Taraji Henson meets Roy Miller: Tom Cruise in the Wichita airport as she’s enroute to Boston for her sister’s wedding. June is in the privy to know that her stepdaughter’s new husband Miller is hiding a secret of the baddies aboard and then lands in a corn field. (Havens is not to be confused with the 1962 film). Metro: v.o. Sean Patrick Flanery, star harbinger of the dagger, whose career was also at 20th Century Fox, the releasing company Roy is hiding an energy for years yet small enough to fit into a chess piece; the inventor is nervously Simon Fco. Paul Dano. The real villain, Fitzgerald: Peter Sars- gaard is a dirty FBI agent, who is supposed to work for FBI Director George: Viola Davis, but has loyalties to the Dubai dealer, Jordan: Jodi Mori. Roy and June wind up on a Caribbean island he happens to own, then bounce to Seville for the race with the bulls, and, next stop, onto an Austrian train. This fast moving thriller is terrific! Never mind that the eighth film in the series, ten years older than Roy. Violence, Profanity, Adult situations.

Kung (Cont. from p. 3)

branch of government. In 2002 as a reaction to then-Mayor Willie Brown, the Charter was amended to empower the Board of Supervisors with appointments of the Planning and Building Commission and the Permit Processing Program. Although the change occurred with the Police Commission. In 2005, the supervisors, still oblivious to the time-honored prin- ciple of separation of power between the executive and legislative branches, failed to secure approval to establish supervisors' appointments into the San Francisco Municipal Tari- portary Agency, according to the Board. On March 17, 2005, the Board of Supervisors represented a Charter amendment to grant supervisors the power to appoint five of the Film Commission’s 11 members. It was defeated. (Can you imagine the reaction of the San Francisco Supervisor? If memory serves me, a United States Constitution amendment to grant the Senate, or House of Representatives, or both, the power to appoint Presidential cabinet secretaries or members of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission members?)

In short, the Board of Supervisors dismissed history in dictating voters to allow the Charter Commission to utilize board members with responsibilities in counties such as Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Contra Costa and others for a virtual tripping of their previous voters-approved salary. and also included supervisors who would be overseeing, at best service, the City’s interconnected and computerized Public Safety System. Maybe historians like John Shalney are correct in crises reinstatement of his- torical voter rights over those who supposedly serve voters.

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Quentin Kopp is the former SF Supervisor, State Senator and Judge.
CONVERSATIONS WITH THE OTHER ME
By Hank Basayne

I

one of my occasional attempts to try to make sense of this strange business of growing older. I'm considering the possibility that imagining my future might make just as much sense as reviewing my past. I can't recall where I hid my magic wand or when I mislaid the wishing ring, but if now — in my 80s — I were to stumble on either one, I'd conjure up some visits with myself at different ages — both earlier and later. — ages. As I look back on my life, I'm struck by how the range of cast of characters I've been: the eager young and some- what superficial corporate executive, the daring, creative and sometimes, eccentric, playwright — weirdly delightful but inwardly resentful son; the sometimes devoted husband, and at other times the squelching, unreliable hus- band. I was also a patient, loving father of young children and the impertinent, self-focused father of teenagers, a docking grandparent, a sometimes tough boss. I've been a patient, attentive lover as well as a person who heedlessly ran over others, ignoring the reality of their feelings. At times I was a compassionate friend, a public performer, a goofy joke-teller, and a concerned teacher and wise counselor. At parties, a "hale fellow, well met," but on the inside, insecure and doubting my own worth. Sometimes a crazed at movies or on hearing certain music. I've mishandled important relationships, taken unwise risks. "Me" turns out to be plural: courageous, cowardly, enthusiastic, depressed, innovative, lazy, energetic — the list is endless. There's comfort in the fact that there's a whole lot I don't have to go through anymore. I'm thinking about me and realizing I don't need to still try to impress anyone, no need to continue trying to be the good guy or the pleaser. Held cau- tion me to judge others less harshly, to let go of preoccupation with the trivial and give up the persistent need to try to understand or know everything.

I really find I don't like a lot of those people. I didn't like some of them while I was being them. I wish that when I was 19 I could have had a serious conversation with me as I am now — or at least when I was in my 50s. I might have made different, better choices. Looking back, much of my life seems to have been lived in a semi-conscious state — unable or unwilling to look at the consequences of my decisions. While somewhat sobering, this exercise has been useful. In looking back I've found some of those past personae to be quite okay. I would now cross the street to avoid some of the others. While none of us knows how many heartbeats we have left, looking ahead I sense an opportunity to still fashion a bit of the person I would have liked to become. What would my conversation with myself be like if I could visit with me at 90? The 90-year-old me might remind the 83-year-old me that the ability to forget is as useful as the ability to remember. There's comfort in the fact that there's a whole lot I don't have to go through anymore. He might congratulate me on realizing that I don't need to still try to impress anyone, no need to continue trying to be the good guy or the pleaser. Held cau- tion me to judge others less harshly, to let go of preoccupation with the trivial and give up the persistent need to try to understand or know everything.

He would probably advise me to deepen the connections with others that I still have left, spend more time with children and grandchildren and friends, and to pursue my true passions: reading, music, theater and dance. I'm sure he would counsel me to spend more time in cultivating an inner tranquility and prepare myself to accept my death without regret or terror. Any of us who are conscious of aging must, in some small way, be heroic. I have deep respect and admiration for the courage and bravery of every human who struggles to get through the day, the week, the month, and tries to find meaning in life. Looking both back and ahead is a kind of triangulation, helping us to see where we are, what we still get through the day, the week, the year — and tries to find meaning in life. Looking both back and ahead is a kind of triangulation, helping us to see where we are, what we still get through the day, the week, the year — and tries to find meaning in life. Looking both back and ahead is a kind of triangulation, helping us to see where we are, what we still get through the day, the week, the year — and tries to find meaning in life.

By Jed Lane

Any property owner who has tried to sell a house will tell you that the selling price is a lot more complicated than it seems. The difference between a property selling for "more than the asking price" after reductions have taken place and there are cases where the property sells for the original list price after reductions. The purpose of this research is to find out how properties are priced when they are brought on the market and if the market price is reached consistently. That the sale price is a negoti- ated figure that reflects an agreement on the part of the buyer and the seller. It is what the buyer is willing to pay and the seller willing to accept.

The first question was how often do homes in our area, or San Francisco entirely for that matter, sell for the original list price? When I ask that question of agents and non- agents the answers vary around 50%. Interestingly the answer is much lower. In our area, over the past year, only 8% sold for the original asking price. Just 34 of the 420 homes sold by May 2011 had the original listing price. 42% sold for more than the asking price, which is a marketing technique that is favored in San Francisco. The remaining 50% of properties sold for less than the original asking price. Further in this sample the homes that sold for less than the original asking price sold for less than the original asking sold for 30% less than the original price. Homes that sold for less than original asking fetched 3% more on average.

The results show a consistently low percentage of properties sell at the original list price. While most people would expect that the largest percentage of sales would be in the category of properties that sell for less than asking the opposite is true in our market. While this is a function of low supply it also became the normal marketing technique for properties during the run up of value since 1993. The interesting data emerging here is that the current technique to get the best price for the property is to set the price cor- rectly and sell at the original asking price. When the value is correctly calculated it's assumed that the market (buyers) would pay the relatively same market value for properties. So if you had a 3 bedroom 2 bath home that you'd have to pay the same money you arrive at the eventual sale. This data proves that to be a false assumption. Using the average size of the market price would be the same no matter how you arrived at the eventual sale. This data proves that to be a false assumption. Using the average size of the market value would be the same no matter how you arrived at the eventual sale. This data proves that to be a false assumption. Using the average size of sold properties, which is a 3/2, data shows that depending on overall market conditions, the eventual selling price does relate to the original list price. Currently the best price is reached when a sale happens at the asking price. When I ask that question of agents and non- agents the answers vary around 50%. Interestingly the answer is much lower. In our area, over the past year, only 8% sold for the original asking price. Just 34 of the 420 homes sold by May 2011 had the original listing price. 42% sold for more than the asking price, which is a marketing technique that is favored in San Francisco. The remaining 50% of properties sold for less than the original asking price. Further in this sample the homes that sold for less than the original asking sold for 30% less than the original price. Homes that sold for less than original asking fetched 3% more on average.

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**BRAIN FÜD**

**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.

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

**ANSWER:**
The answer appears aside.

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**RIDDLE – INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN...**
Every nation do I know,
But so rarely do I go
Anywhere,
Sometimes people
Come and stare,
Touch me here,
And poke me there,
Spin me round,
Then leave me alone
When what they sought,
They have found.
What am I?

**Answer**
A globe
Butterflies In The Garden
By Hilary Gordon/Photos Blair Randall, ©2010

As summer brings warmer temperatures and some sunny afternoons, one of the most enjoyable sights in the garden is a variety of butterflies flitting from plant to plant, seeking nectar and egg-laying opportunities. Look for butterflies congregating in open, sunny spots with some wind protection.

To make garden areas more attractive to butterflies, plant some of their favorite nectar-bearing flowers. Butterflies like flat-topped flowers formed from many tiny florets. Many flowers in the daisy family fit this profile. Daisies form a great landing platform for butterflies, and each daisy flower is formed from multiple tiny cone and ray flowers, each with its own minuscule nectar source. Butterflies can land in comfort and take advantage of many nectarating opportunities at once. Other examples include verbenas, buckwheats, lantanas, and yarrows, as well as plants in the parsley family. A well-planned butterfly garden will include a sequence of bloom, so that as one flush of flowers fade, it will be replaced by the next wave of blooms. (Photo: Verbena rigida at GFE)

At the Garden for the Environment, the Waterwise Demonstration beds near the South Gate provide a good demonstration of many butterfly plants. In fact, butterfly enthusiasts often drop by on a still, sunny day to spot many of our local butterflies feeding here. In these beds you can see three different yarrows, (Paprika, Moonshine, and our native Millefolium) blooming along with Astericus “maritima” and Erigeron glaucus from the Daisy family. Later in the summer, Milkweed, Lobelia laxiflora, Lantanas, and Eriogonum giganteum, (our native Buckwheat “St. Catherine’s Lace”), will replace these flowers with fall-blooming butterfly snacks.

In addition to the flowers which provide food, butterflies need water. But they can’t drink out of deep standing water, such as a bird bath. Butterflies can be seen clustering where puddles form in damp sand or gravel. They can insert their straw-like mouth parts into the wet sand and suck up water along with dissolved minerals from the mud and sand. Butterfly fans call this behavior “puddling”. Butterflies will be attracted to puddles in sunny, wind-protected spots. You can even create a puddle for butterflies by putting a layer of sand or gravel with a little soil in a shallow dish with some water. Choose a sunny, flowery spot in the garden for your “puddle”. (Photo: Seaside Daisy at GFE)

At the GFE, butterflies, along with other beneficial insects such as honeybees, can be seen puddling near our grey-water demonstration area. In the heart of the garden, opposite our small greenhouse, our kitchen sink drains right into the soil above the exterior border. Here in a rock and gravel basin, water drains from the sink after hands or vegetables are washed, or watering cans are filled. These frequent small gushes of water support a planting of Creek Monkeyflower and our California native Columbine, as well as providing a puddling opportunity for our honeybees and visiting butterflies.

If you provide the right flowers and puddling opportunities, and attract butterflies to your garden, then naturally they will lay eggs and your garden will soon have caterpillars. Some caterpillars, like the cabbage looper, are destructive to food crop plants. But most caterpillars don’t do significant harm to garden plants, although they do feed on some leaves. Caterpillars are just baby butterflies, and we can’t have one without the other. Don’t kill caterpillars unless you can definitely identify them as a crop pest. Avoid the use of the pesticide “Bt”. Although Bt is a less toxic (to humans) pesticide, it is fatal to all caterpillars, not just pesty ones. It is suspected as a factor in the decreasing number of Monarchs. (Photo: Achillea ‘Moonshine’)

A few chewed leaves is a small price to pay for the pleasure of seeing these colorful floating beauties flitting through the garden. Hilary Gordon is Perennial Plants Collection Manager at the GFE. A life-long gardener, trained at the City College Horticulture program, she has worked as a professional landscape gardener from 1984 until the present. Have a question for Hilary? Meet her in the garden Wed. 10-2 and Sat. 10-4. Feedback: hilary@westsideobserver.com
The San Francisco Board of Supervisors will be voting this month on a new city budget. While there are many important priorities that must be balanced, one of the most important should be our neighborhood firehouses.

As San Francisco firefighters, our priority is to protect our community. That’s why we are working so hard to keep open our first line of defense during fires, medical emergencies or any major disaster. *We know money is tight, so we are improving efficiency and even taking less pay so there is enough to keep our neighborhood firehouses open.*

As the budget vote nears, we need your support to let the San Francisco Board of Supervisors know:

**Act Now to Protect Your Neighborhood Firehouse by**
1. Joining online at [www.SaveOurFirehouses.com](http://www.SaveOurFirehouses.com)
2. Joining the Save Our Firehouses page on Facebook [www.facebook.com/SaveOurFirehouses](http://www.facebook.com/SaveOurFirehouses)
3. Filling out and sending this card to: 1139 MISSION STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103

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**NEIGHBORHOOD FIREHOUSES are a COMMUNITY PRIORITY**

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<table>
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