

GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



Whose City? Our City!
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, June 19, 12:30—3:00 PM
Unitarian Universalist Center
1187 Franklin @ Geary
Bring a Snack to share

GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

Board Meeting 12:30 PM
Wednesday, June 6

Civil/Human Rights Comm. 12:00 AM
Wednesday, June 13

Newsletter Committee 12:00 Noon
Thursday, June 7

Book Club 10:30 AM
Monday, June 25

May Day in San Francisco



10:00AM: Immigrants Rights march down Mission on their way to join the noon May Day Fair

10:30 AM: A lively protest in the UN Plaza against violations of the Bill of Rights contained in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) signed into law at the end of 2011. Featured reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

11:00AM: Several hundred janitors and maintenance workers from SEIU 2010 and UFCW Local 5 demonstrated in front of the Westfield Complex on Market Street for a decent contract with downtown department stores. They then marched down to join...



12:00 Noon: May Day Fair and Celebration at Montgomery & Market. The Immigrant Rights demonstrators came from the Mission. The Occupiers came from the Ferry Building. Thousands of San Franciscans wearing “We Are the 99%” ate, chanted, and enjoyed street theater.

4:00 PM: Occupiers marched up Market to Turk & Van Ness and took over an empty Catholic Church building to dramatize that buildings stand empty while people are homeless! PS: Since the laws give property rights priority over human rights, at 5 AM the next morning police cleared out the building.

June Membership Meeting

Once again housing for the multimillionaires pushes low-income, affordable housing aside. At our June meeting we will discuss how Gray Panthers can put housing for the rest of us as a priority. Joining us will be long-time housing activist Tommi Avicolti Mecca of Queers for Economic Equality Now (QUEEN) and a representative from SAN’s Housing Committee.

Arise Ye “Wretched Groups of Seniors”

Arise ye “greedy geezers.” These insults were hurled at us in a letter from Allen Simpson of the infamous Deficit Committee because we demonstrate against Bowles & Simpson speaking in Oakland calling for cuts to Medicare & Social Security. GP will discuss plans to request a rebuttal not only to his letter but also to a recent SF Chronicle article giving only Simpson’s views on Social Security without fact checking his statements.

May Membership Meeting

Our small, but lively May meeting sparkled with stories from various members on why and when we joined unions, what we did as members, and we hope our successors will do. The upbeat tone was set by Pete Seeger & the Almanac Singers singing “Taking Union– alas on tape not in person.

Sing Out with the Gray Panthers to Celebrate Woody Guthrie’s Birthday July 14

Join us for first annual July fundraiser at Dorothy Day Community Center. **Spread the word. Post the enclosed flyer.**

Lynne Stewart on May Day

Lynne has not lost her fire and damped down her idealism because she is unjustly stuck in jail, think again. Her May Day email ends with “The only *progress* to be sought on May Day 2012 by all of us is a unity of purpose, by truly believing that an injury to one is an injury to all, and acting in self-defense against the powerful, unscrupulous forces who seek to destroy our movement.”

Important Information

Gray Panthers new email address as of June 1 is: **graypanther-sf@sonic.net**

Save Your Postal Service

Congress has pushed the United States Postal Service, a public institution since 1792, to begin in July consolidating mail processing centers. By 2014, 229 centers would be consolidated, eliminating thousands of good-paying, union jobs in a time of unprecedented unemployment. The USPS is also considering 5-day delivery, reducing its work force of 574,000 full-time employees by about 150,000 by offering retirement incentives. This plan is supposed to save the postal service, but Sally Davidow, American Postal Workers Union says, "It's a terrible plan that's not going to save much money and drive customers away." In addition, a Senate Bill included a provision that would reduce workers compensation to 50% of their pre-disability pay after retirement age— currently 75%.

These job-cutting, service-slashing ideas affect persons depending on medication deliveries, goods delivered to small businesses, and eliminate services in mostly poor neighborhoods and rural areas. Though we live in a digital communication society, the arrival of our mail is the only communication in the country that reaches everyone 6 days a week. This service is a public resource and these measures are steps toward privatizing another service belonging to the people.

Why is this pillar of our communication in danger? In 2006, Congress created "budget crisis" with the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act requiring USPS to pre-fund its future health care benefit payments to retirees for the next 75 years! This mandate saddled USPS with a \$20 billion debt. No other government or private corporation



is required to do this.

The Community & Labor United to Save

the People's Post Office Coalition of SF is growing and Gray Panthers is a member. The Golden Gate Branch 214, National Ass'n of Letter Carriers will submit a resolution in July at their national convention calling for other postal unions to form Community/Labor Coalitions and build a nationwide movement to defeat privatization, maintain living-wage jobs, expand postal services, and save the Post Office-vital to our communities..

Mayor's Giveaway to CPMC

California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) plans to consolidate its SF facilities into a mega-hospital at Van Ness and Geary. Community, labor, and patient advocates have serious concerns about (1) long-term viability of St. Luke's Hospital for medically-underserved, poor, and largely minority SouthEast San Francisco, (2) affordability of care for low-income uninsured and Medi-Cal recipients, (3) gentrification and loss of affordable housing, particularly in the adjoining Tenderloin, (4) rights of RNs to remain in the CNA, (5) loss of long-term and psychiatric care, (6) increased traffic and disruption by construction, and (7) quality of life and environmental concerns.

Opposition groups, including the Good Neighbor Coalition, Jobs with Justice, the Calif. Nurses Association, and the Coalition for Health Planning have demanded a Community Benefits Agreement, a legally binding agreement between CPMC and affected unions and community groups, that would address the above issues and be part of Mayor Ed Lee's development agreement with CPMC.

Instead, Lee has reached a giveaway deal with (1) few jobs guaranteed to City residents, (2) no assurances of affordable housing for its workforce, (3) no improvements on CPMC's abysmal charity care, (3) permission to operate St. Luke's Hospital with an unsustainably low number of beds and with an escape clause in its 20 year promise to keep it open. CPMC is raising its costs to Blue Shield, who will pass those costs on to City employees using that insurer. CPMC has also refused to recognize the union status of its own RNs moving to the new hospital. The SF Planning Commission has approved the deal. It now must pass the Supervisors.

OWL has a better idea. Base healthcare planning on the needs of ALL: OWL recommends that city actions to approve CPMC applications be delayed until 2013 when the Healthcare Master Plan is available to guide official decisions. The Master Plan requires the Dept. of Public Health to conduct an assessment of healthcare needs and to develop a "determination of consistency" to advise the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on land use related to health care facilities.

GMO On the November Ballot

On May 2, food activists turned in more than 900,000 petitions to qualify an initiative on genetically modified organisms (GMO) for the November elections. The initiative would require labeling of genetically engineered foods (GEF). GEF—more commonly known as GMOs—have been changed to include either herbicide resistance or the ability to make their own insecticides. Proponents in California are organic or natural food companies known as California Right to Know, part of a national campaign called Just Label It. The Biotechnology Industry Organization leads the opposition saying labeling implies the products are unsafe.

Japan Unplugs Nukes

Japan turned off the last of their nuclear reactors on May 5. Thousands of Japanese celebrated by waving banners shaped like giant fish that have become a national anti-nuclear symbol. Japan was without electricity from nuclear power for the first time in 40 years.

What Do You Know About Drones?



Unmanned Remotely Controlled Aircraft. Since 2009, nearly 291 CIA drone strikes in Pakistan killed

more than 400 civilians. Drone strikes have been made in Yemen, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Semolina. Department of Defense budgeted more than \$23 billion for drones in 2012. Congress passed the FAA approval of drone use in the U.S. in 2011. Drones in the U.S. are used to patrol U.S./Mexico border in law enforcement and in agriculture. Call Members of Congress to stop drone attacks and surveillance. 1-877-210-5351. For more about drones, read Meda Benjamin's new book, *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*.

Information taken from a leaflet by WILPF-SF The above article just skims the surface about drones. Much like drones themselves information about them is invisible in advance. We shall have more to say in the future about drones and war.

Two Corporations That Don't Pay Their Fair Share—Legally, Of Course

Not the Apple of Our Eye

Apple is the world's most profitable technology company. Like all corporations Apple wants to avoid billions in taxes on its more than 45 billion dollars in profits. To do this on a federal level they devised a technique known as Double Irish with a Dutch Sandwich, according to a NY Times article on April 29. How does it work? Apple routes its profits through 2 Irish subsidiaries. Ireland taxes corporate profits at 12.5%, but Apple avoids paying that tax by immediately sending the money to the Netherlands. Ireland doesn't tax payments to companies in other European Union states, but does tax profits sent to tax-haven Bermuda. The Netherlands has a very generous tax law so the money is sent from there to Bermuda. Bermuda has no corporate income tax. The Bermuda company is technically an Irish company, hence Double Irish. Endlessly clever and complicated. The result: a tax rate of about 9.8%. All legal because of US tax loopholes. And Apple and other companies are lobbying for a tax holiday on profits held overseas that would provide billions of dollars of savings to those companies at a cost of \$79 billion to the government. On a state level Apple headquarters are in Cupertino. But they set up a subsidiary in Reno called Braeburn Capital to collect and invest company profits and avoid state income taxes. California corporate tax—8.4%. Nevada tax—zero.

And Google Gobbles up More Than It's Share

Google uses the same strategy described above for Apple of subsidiaries in low-tax countries. Google's headquarters are in Mountain View. Its initial technology was in part based on research done at Stanford and funded by the National Science Foundation—our money. Google also uses an arrangement called “transfer pricing” with overseas subsidiaries whose effect is to shift some of its profits overseas out of the reach of the US tax man. Transfer pricing was declared legal by the IRS in 2006. In 2009 the Treasury Department proposed levying taxes on certain payments between US companies' foreign subsidiaries. The idea was dropped after heavy lobbying of Congress and Treasury officials by tech companies.

Federally Mandated Reform Oakland Police and Occupy

The mainstream media (MSM) has relentlessly worked at derailing the Occupy movement and downplaying the appeal of “We are the 99%.” Consistently highlighted are the heroic, outnumbered, and restrained police, the apparent lack of leadership of Occupy, the violence of the few as against the non-violence of the vast majority. Too bad, but not surprising, that the MSM didn’t emphasize objective reporting on why Occupy and the 99% have such popular appeal, how the 1% has imposed austerity on the rest of us while they reap the fruits of their own malfeasance, and the less than noble record of the Oakland Police....Over 10 years ago the Oakland Police Department (OPD) was convicted in federal court of imposing “vigilante justice” and ordered to reform how its officers operate. The monitor tracking these reforms reported at the end of April that they were “stagnated,” hadn’t progressed in the last 6 months, and “had gone backward in the past year” and questioned how beanbag shotguns, tear gas, flash-bang grenades, and other non-deadly munitions were used in what he called a “military-type response” to Occupy demonstrations. Federal Judge Thelton Henderson in February considered holding a hearing in March on imposing more federal control. That hearing on potential receivership is now scheduled for December. On May 1 the OPD scaled back its massive use of teargas and beanbag guns and, surprise—reports of Occupiers violence disappeared from the MSM headlines. But the massive threatening police force didn’t disappear; tear gas was still used against peaceful protesters; police task forces still arrested individual Occupy leaders for alleged previous crimes.

Why do we keep reporting on the Oakland police? Because they have been repeatedly praised nationwide as the model law and order response to the 1st Amendment “right of the people peaceably to assemble.” Because this Big Lie of their being reluctantly forced to prevent Occupy violence has been used over and over to paint the Occupy movement as violent in an all-out effort to weaken public support for the We Are the 99% demands.

Of course, the OPD is not the only police department to use intimidation and violence against protesters. But they are the Poster Boys. *Some model.*



Federally Mandated Reform—Not only Occupy

On May 6 Alan Blueford, an African-American senior at Skyline High School in Oakland, was shot by an OPD officer. Four shots were fired; the officer shot Alan 3 times and himself once. The official police report stated that the officer and Alan exchanged shots and both were rushed to Highland Hospital where Alan died. But further reports indicate that *only* the officer fired a gun and *only* the officer was taken to the hospital; Alan was left to die in the street.

On Jan 22 20 year old Raheim Brown was killed by an Oakland Unified School District policeman near Skyline High. Brown was accused of trying to stab an officer with a screwdriver and was shot five times by the officer’s partner, according to the police report. A witness denied that he was threatening the officer.

“Vigilante justice?” No wonder the feds are considering placing the OPD under receivership.

{information in this article from San Francisco BayView Newspaper }

Thousands Cut Off From Unemployment

From April 7 to May 12, 370,000 people on federal unemployment extensions stopped getting their benefit checks. For a state to qualify, unemployment over any three-month period must average at least 10 percent more than the same period in any of the previous three years. California’s unemployment rate decreased from 11% to 10.9 percent. For Californians to continue receiving federal extensions the rate must stay at or above 11%. Those still counted as unemployed reaches near the levels of the ’30s. No jobs are created by the so-called private corporation - time for another WPA?

Gray Panthers of San Francisco

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We believe ALL people are entitled to certain fundamental rights:

- meaningful employment
- economic security
- decent and affordable housing
- quality health care
- a life of dignity from birth to death free from fear and abuse
- a world in peace



Age and Youth in Action

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

Call the office for membership information.

Labor Donated **June 2012**

Actions and Events

Thursday, June 7, 6-9PM

Mint Karaoke Lounge, 1942 Market
Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Coalition on Homelessness

Wednesday, June 13, 6:00 PM

Main Library, Koret Auditorium
“Hope Along the Wind: The Life of Harry Hay”
Documentary followed by Q&A with filmmaker Eric Slade. Sponsored by SF Pride Committee

Thursday, June 14, 10:00 AM

SAN Monthly Meeting, Unitarian Universalist Center, 1187 Franklin/Geary, Lunch \$2.00

Thursday, June 14, 1:00 PM

CARA CAT Monthly meeting
ILWU Headquarters, 1188 Franklin/Geary

Monday, June 16 1:30:00—5PM

Annual Block Party for Coleman BBQ **Vienna Street (Persia & Brazil) MUNI 29,52, &54**

Saturday, June 16 6-10PM Boots Riely

Redstone Building, 2940 16th St
Riely combines hip-hop poetics, radical politics, and the wry humor. Reception with music and refreshments \$5 - \$10 donation requested; nobody turned away for lack of funds.

Saturday, June 24, 10AM-12 Noon

FREE OUR SISTERS FROM SEX SLAVERY IN THE USA, 555 Ellis Street Family Apartments
Presenters: Glenda Hope and Dr. Annie Fukushima

Sunday, June 24, 2012, 9:30AM

San Francisco Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
Pride March -Bradley Manning Contingent
9:30am. Howard and Main Streets

