

GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



**This Land is Our Land
1:00 PM—3:00 PM
Saturday, July 14, 2012
The Dorothy Day Community Center
54 McAllister at 7th Street**

GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

All meetings and events take place at 1182 Market, Rm. 203, unless otherwise noted.

**Board Meeting 12:30 PM
Wednesday, July 11 and August 1**

**Newsletter Committee 12:00 Noon
Thursday, August 2**

**UDHR Library Presentations 3:00PM
Saturday, Aug. 4 @ Main Library
Saturday, Aug. 18 @ Park Branch**

**Mime Troupe 1:30 PM
Sunday, August 19
Yerba Buena Gardens**

**Book Club 10:30 AM
Monday, July 30 & August 27**

**Civil/Human Rights Comm. 12:00 PM
Tuesday, July 10 & Wednesday August 8**

June General Meeting

In our June GP meeting we reviewed the current attempts to privatize our city, and then discussed ways to fight back! Tommi Avicolti Mecca shared the great victory of forcing back a bank eviction of several family renters in a Mission dwelling. At a press conference, seven of the children taped their letters to the bank windows asking that they not be thrown out of their homes. Faced with the public exposure in the press, the determination of the families and Mecca's Housing Rights organization, the bank agreed to stop evictions and even meet other tenants' demands.

Jessica Lehman informed us of work by SAN's Senior Housing Action Collaborative (SHAC) to expose safety violations in SF SRO's. Lynn Gavin brought us up to date on Park Merced and her plan to file suit in connection with the Board of Supervisors' violation of the Sunshine Ordinance. She also is running for Supervisor in District 7.

Paul Currier gave us the insights from his 6-month monitoring of the SF Housing Authority. He spoke of plans for wholesale conversion of public housing to private ownership—on the road to privatizing our city.

After hearing about the housing crisis facing us from our speakers, we energized ourselves to not mourn but organize. We offered ideas to fight back the privatization of our city. We can join in the petition drive to stop 8 Washington. Gray Panthers continue to attend the home foreclosure auctions on the steps of City Hall, Van Ness side, each day at 1:45. Bring along loud noise makers to drown out the bankers!

We all agreed that keeping people and organizations informed is crucial to organizing against gentrification plans. GP will have a specific link to issues, meetings and demos about housing at our web site: <http://graypantherssf.igc.org/>

Society for Community Works Grant

Gray Panthers attended a Society for Community Work at the Unitarian Universalist Center. We received a grant to continue and build our UDHR project. Thank you, Society for Community Works for your support.

Gray Panthers in July and August

The July meeting will be our Sing Out to celebrate Woody Guthrie's one hundredth birthday, July 14. There will be no August membership meeting. Instead we will gather at **Yerba Buena Gardens (3rd & Mission), August 19** for The San Francisco Mime Troupe play, "The Last Election." Based on the classic "The Poor of New York," the Mime Troupe ironically turns the story on its head, telling it from the point of view of the misunderstood Godzill-ionaires who have made this country what it is today: *broke*.

Speaking of the Mime Troupe, their opening performance on the Fourth of July in Dolores Park, is an opportunity to distribute our July 14 fundraising leaflets! Meet outside the Dolores Café at the corner of 18th & Dolores at 1:30 pm.

**New email address for
SFGPs as of June 1:
graypanther-sf@sonic.net**

Civil Liberties/Human Rights Comm.

We will present two readings of our script on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) at SF libraries in August. The first, August 4, 3pm in the Latin Room of the Main Library; the second at the Park Branch Library on August 18, 3pm.

SF Gray Panthers will have an intern from UC Santa Cruz for the fall semester thanks to Assemblyperson Tom Ammiano. She will be an unpaid volunteer but will need housing for the semester here in San Francisco. Do you have room for a house guest?



El Rio Fundraiser

A group of GP's enjoyed a Salsa Sunday at El Rio fund raiser. GP received an El Rio community gift from the cover of \$360. El Rio supports non-profit organizations with these special events

Housing Is A Right

Governments exist, *by the consent of the people*, to facilitate and provide *for the people's* basic needs—food, healthcare and housing. In our city, housing is becoming something only for the wealthy. Realtors view hi-tech companies minting millionaires as a pool of eager buyers. If these millionaires can't find a multi-million dollar Victorian, they can wait for proposed multi-million dollar condos like the 134 unit 8 Washington. Pacific Waterfront Partners expect to make \$470 million from this high-rise.

More Give-Aways: The city gave private developer Hines of Houston the right to build a 1070-foot high-rise, the tallest skyscraper on the West Coast, on our public land set aside for the new Transbay Terminal. Low-income people will be priced out of their South of Market neighborhood as property values are expected to rise by nearly \$4 billion! And what will be the impact on residents and transportation of the proposed arena to lure the Warriors basketball team to SF? All supervisors supported this one and waived the city's competitive bidding requirements so developers can take over Piers 30-32 and seawall 330.

The amount of SF affordable housing last year fell by 63%. Rental prices have climbed 26% since last December. Of the 12,330 housing units completed through 2011, only 37% were affordable. ABAG (Assoc. of Bay Area Governments) states that we need 31,200 new units by 2014, 60% to be affordable. Mayor

Lee's affordable housing fund calls for 9,000 units only. The devil is in the details of the Lee plan, one of which has already surfaced: developers can reduce by 20% how much on-site affordable housing they must build. Meaning they can throw up units unaffordable to most of us in a "desirable area" and shuffle off most "affordable units" elsewhere. Studies cite an income of \$50-70 thousand yearly to live in SF. Those "greedy city retirees" average income is \$30,000, and the majority fall below that. As one Western Addition resident said about gentrification, "If we can't afford to live here, there is no city."



Why We Occupy

Wells Fargo and Company is a multinational financial services corporation headquartered in San Francisco. From 2004 on Wells Fargo engaged in widespread mortgage and securities fraud. In a practice known as "reverse redlining," it intentionally gave high interest and adjustable rate mortgages to low-income and minority borrowers, knowing that they would eventually default. It then bundled and sold those sub-prime "designed-to-fail" loans to middle income investors, misrepresenting them as secure, high-rated investments. By lying to borrowers about the terms of their loans and deceiving investors about the quality of their mortgage-backed securities, Wells Fargo made billions of dollars defrauding tens of thousands of ordinary Americans.

Despite criminal predatory lending and blatantly violating the Securities Act of 1933, which "prohibits deceit, misrepresentation, and other fraud in the sale of securities," not a single Wells Fargo executive has been prosecuted. Instead, the corporation was rewarded with \$25 billion in Government bailout funds. It then dramatically increased salaries for its senior executives, more than doubling that of its CEO, John Stumpf. Wells Fargo reported Stumpf's compensation as valued at \$19.8 million in 2011 when the company reported record profits. (*Information from www.occucards.com*)

Join WOW (Wild Old Women) at their weekly picket of Bank of America, 29th/ Mission, Thursdays at Noon.



The Constitution of the United States

The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

US Constitution, Article I, Section 9

Congress shall make no laws abridging the freedom of speech or of the press or the right of the people peaceably to assemble. *1st amendment*

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the person or things to be seized. *4th amendment*

No person ...shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor to be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law... *5th amendment*

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the rights to a speedy and public trial....and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense. *6th amendment*

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fees imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted. *8th amendment*

Nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. *14th amendment*

Definitions:

Habeas corpus: the right to challenge your detention in civilian courts. The age-old contest between the individual and the state.



Due process: right to trial by an impartial jury, to know what you're accused of, to confront witnesses, to have the assistance of counsel.

2012 National Defense Authorization Act Sections 1021-1023

Authorizes military detention without trial until the end of hostilities. Hostilities include real wars involving the military that may end some day, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the so-called War on Terror—an action that can go on forever against an undefined enemy called terror. The President is authorized to act against nations, organizations or persons....associated forces that are engaged in hostilities against the US or its coalition forces, including any person who has committed a belligerent act or who has directly supported such hostilities in aid of such forces. Belligerent act is not defined (peace march?) nor are associated forces (humanitarian aid? protests against the government of Bahrain, part of our coalition?).

Those detained may face “transfer to ...any foreign country or any foreign entity,” known as extraordinary rendition. And what is a foreign entity? A new Blackwater in Abu Dhabi?

The Department of Defense—the military—determines who will be accused as terrorists. This effectively repeals the Posse Comitatus Act that barred the army from engaging in domestic law enforcement. If you are a non-citizen and alleged to be terrorist, detention is mandatory—no chance of defense, no trial, no due process. If you are a citizen, you may have more chance of exercising your constitutional rights—but there is no guarantee that you will. It's up to the President.

On May 16th a preliminary injunction barring enforcement of sections 1021 and 1022 as unconstitutional was granted by Federal Judge Katherine Forrest in a case brought by Noam Chomsky, Daniel Ellsberg, Christopher Hedges and others who claimed their professional, journalistic, and advocacy activities made them vulnerable to detention under the broad generalizations of the law. The government is expected to appeal.

In May the House approved the 2013 NDAA. By a vote of 238 to 182 they rejected an amendment that would have banned any president or government official from ordering the military to place anyone in the US into indefinite detention without charge or trial or from ordering anyone in the US to be tried before a military commission.

Secure Communities—Opt Out

San Francisco has been a proud sanctuary city since the '80s, but both national and local forces have been steadily undermining the protections the city provides. The Federal Secure Communities Act demands that local jails give immigration officials the fingerprints of all arrestees, no matter why they were arrested, before they are arraigned, innocent or not, and hold them in jail if the feds so request. San Francisco has an ordinance on the books forbidding city personnel from doing the immigration department's work, so they objected to those demands and chose to opt out. The feds said they must conform to national law. Now Assemblyman Ammiano has introduced a bill in Sacramento - AB 1081- which would prohibit California law enforcement officials from keeping people in local jails strictly on immigration holds, unless they have past serious or violent convictions. It is part of the nationwide effort to opt out of Secure Communities. So far five states and Washington, D.C. have opted out.

Nuclear Plants in Japan

In spite of widespread public opposition Japan is on the verge of reopening two nuclear power plants. After last year's Fukushima meltdown, all nuclear plants in Japan were shut down due to public safety concerns. But never underestimate the power of the nuclear industry. Meanwhile radioactive cesium has been detected in samples of Pacific bluefish tuna in San Diego. Authorities have assured the public that the radioactivity is well below levels considered unsafe for humans.

**Gray Panthers endorsed the 2012 LGBT
Pride Bradley Manning contingent**



What's Not in Mayor Lee's Budget

Mayor Lee announced his budget plan for the next two years, and that revenues were higher than expected—more money. A media blitz played it as a budget all agreed would avoid the usual fight for give-backs to the cuts in services. But the Mayor's priorities and plans for our city are not something to be celebrated. The police and fire budgets will increase with \$82 million, while retirees' pension COLAs, sacrificed under Prop C, are lauded as saving the city millions of dollars. And what about all the cuts to education, childcare, seniors and person with disabilities over the past years? When do they get put back in the budget? And, due to the big settlement given to 52 downtown corporations who sued the city in 2001, we have to date lost \$50 million in revenue.

Meanwhile more condos are okayed; tech corporations got tax breaks costing the city almost \$4 million last year alone, and business in Enterprise zones got \$300,000 in tax credits. Zynga, an internet gaming company got its \$101 million stock-option compensation excluded; that results in a \$1.5 million payroll-tax break. Yet, the Mayor's proposed ballot measure to change the business tax structure for the city will not raise enough revenue funds to meet the crises of homelessness, unemployment, and low-income housing. Supervisor Avalos plans to place a competing measure on the November ballot to raise more revenue. We will have more information in the fall as the tax plan proposals duel one another.

Gray Panther Board Member's Letter to the Editor in the SF Chronicle exposes Alan Simpson's Letter of False Lies

Simpson and Social Security

When you can't win with logical arguments, revert to name-calling ("Ex-senator belittles Oakland seniors group," May 24).

That is what Alan Simpson has stooped to. He knows full well that Social Security did not, does not contribute to the deficit. Social Security is a separate fund that is self-supporting and has a current surplus of \$2.5 trillion.

All that is needed to keep benefits at the current rate into the future is to raise the cap, now \$106,000 of salary income. There should be no cap, so everyone who makes over \$106,000 should pay into the fund. There is some suggestion that investment income could also be tapped to pay into the Social Security fund as well.

Denise D'Anne, San Francisco

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 **July & August 2012**

Actions and Events

July 1—31, 19th Annual Labor Fest
www.laborfest.net

Daily activities all month and look for booklets in local coffee houses or at the office.

June 21-August 1, Fabulous Exhibit celebrating Fashion, Fame, Identity, & Queer Culture
M-F 10 AM-3 PM; Sat.-Sun 12 PM-5 PM
Creativity Explored, 3245 16th St

Wednesday, July 11 6:00 PM
Which Side Are You On? Harry Hay & Labor Organizing. Koret Auditorium, Main Library

Thursday, July 12, 10:00 AM, SAN
Unitarian Center, (Franklin/Geary)

Thursday, July 12, 1:00 PM CARA CAT
ILWU Headquarters, 1188 Franklin/Geary

Thursday, July 12, Noon, Safe SF Civil Rights Ordinance, 55 Columbus, Asian Law Caucus

Wednesday, July 18, 1-3 PM, Senior Housing Action Collaborative Meeting
1360 Mission, Rm 400 (betw. 9th & 10th)

Wednesday, July 18, 6 PM, SF Living Wage Coalition 2940 16th St, Rm 301

Monday, July 23, Noon, Immigration Enforcement & SB 1070
Asian Law Caucus, 55 Columbus Ave

Sunday, July 29, 1:00-4:00 PM, Our Vanishing Civil Liberties Unitarian Center

Sunday, August 5, 4:00 PM, Livermore Conversion Project, Remember Hiroshima.
Theme: "Foreclose on the Bomb."

