

GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



Protect Our Social Safety Nets!

Tuesday, November 20, 2012, 12:30 PM
General Membership Meeting
Unitarian Universalist Center
1187 Franklin @ Geary

GRAY PANTHERS MEETINGS

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

Board Meeting, 12:30 PM
Wednesday, November 7, December 5

Newsletter Committee, Noon
Thursday, November 8, December 6

Civil/Human Rights Committee, Noon
Wednesday, November 14, December 12

Book Club, 10:30 AM
Monday, November 26, December,
TBA

(See page 6 for other events)

SF GP Board of Directors Elections

The SF GP Network is governed by a Board of Directors, elected by the members at the December party. Each Board member is elected for a two year term; if reelected, may serve two consecutive terms before going off the Board for at least one year. The Board may have up to 25 currently dues paying members. Duties include determining network programs and activities and active participation. At its January meeting, the Board selects officers for the year, convener, co-convener, secretary and treasurer. The Board meets on the first Wednesday of each month at the office at 12:30 pm. Board meetings are open to all, but only Board members can vote.

There were 12 members of the Board in 2012. Two of these, Marshall and Barbara have served two terms and are not eligible for reelection. We thank them for their service. Ongoing members finishing the 1st year of their 2nd term include Ila, Joanne, Earl and Ruthanne. Members finishing 1st year of their 1st term are David, Denise, Caty and Harriet. Members finishing their 1st term are Patricia and Sonia.

Nominations are open for the 2013 Board. Anyone can nominate any SF GP member, including themselves, by mail, e-mail, phoning the office, or informing any Board member. We really need some new active participants. Nominations will be open until election at the December party.

Clean Out Your Clutter!

Now is your chance to donate all those usable things that you no longer use and help the Gray Panthers.

Nov 17th & 18th GP will pick up items for donations and deliver them to Community Thrift for credit to our account. Call to schedule **552.8800 or 215.7575 and we will come & get it!**

Some Acceptable Items: clothing, jewelry, leather shoes, books, art, mirrors, bicycles, housewares CDs, records, cassettes, videos, DVDs, lamps, luggage, baskets, crutches, wheelchairs, walkers.

Some unacceptable items include: baby furniture children's clothing, toys, linens, chemicals, electronic systems, exercise equipment, food, inflatable items, bedding, hangers, medical supplies, ski equipment, encyclopedias, blinds, steam cleaners, cosmetics, Xmas tree stands, rugs, curtains.

Community Thrift is a 501(c)(3) org. Donation is tax deductible if you list & estimate the costs of donations include your name and address.

November Meeting: Save the Safety Net

Between the November election and January's \$10 trillion sequestration cuts, US corporate rulers expect the Lame Duck Congress to rise above petty partisanship and do its civic duty to eviscerate the safety net. We say Hell No!

Although Medicare accounts for only 1/5 of national healthcare spending, it is singled out as the target to cut to restrain all health care spending. Major parties propose different ways to clamp down Medicare spending, but leave in place the high profits that drive up all healthcare costs. Medicare spending clamps are built into the Obama plan, and Ryan plan, and aimed at reducing payments to both patients and healthcare providers, like doctors and hospitals.

Medicare is not broke. Its Hospital Trust Fund has a surplus to fund full hospital benefits (Part A) until 2024, and payroll tax income can fund 87% of benefits after that. Outpatient care (Part B) is paid by the General Fund, and is no more bankrupt than the rest of the economy.

Social Security doesn't contribute a penny to the national debt and is not in financial crisis, yet Republicans openly call for raising the retirement age, cutting benefits, reducing benefits for above-median earners, reducing the cost-of-living raises, and privatizing the system. Democrats, including Obama, Biden, Pelosi, and Bill Clinton, call for adopting the Bowles-Simpson plan, which call for the same things, plus reduced taxes for the 1%.

We need a huge outpouring from seniors, people with disabilities, kids, and working families, to stop the nation's gears from turning, Nobody has called for it yet. Who will be the first?

Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi

GPs Sonia and Mitzi joined the lively Stand With Ross demonstration at City Hall before the Board meeting. The S. F. Board of Supervisors voted in October to reinstate Ross Mirkarimi to his elected position of Sheriff of SF County, ending a 10-month soap opera led by Mayor Lee and the Chronicle to replace our elected leading progressive. It cost over a million dollars and weakened and trivialized the fight against domestic abuse.

Whose Side Are You On, Gov. Brown?

Sunday, Sept 30th, was the last day for the governor to take action on bills passed by the legislature. Here are bills he vetoed:

1)The Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, AB889 (Ammiano) would extend to domestic workers overtime pay, meal breaks, paid vacation leave, and basic right that other workers enjoy. The legislature agreed. The governor vetoed it, claiming that unknown consequences outweigh the benefits of “improving the circumstances of these workers.” and recommended further study. *These workers* are overwhelmingly minority females. Denying them minimum rights is both anti-feminist and racist, and of course, blatantly unfair.

2)In 2005, California passed strict safety regulations for farm workers. Those regulations have been so ineffective due to lack of enforcement that the legislature passed 2 bills allowing farm workers to sue their employers if repeatedly denied access to shade and water and to declare such denials a misdemeanor-in other words to sue for enforcement. The governor vetoed both bills, declaring the regulatory process should deal with such issues. But that process has not worked.

3)An SF ordinance forbids city employees to act as agents of ICE. Assemblyman Ammiano’s AB1081, The Trust Act, extended prohibition to all of California-allowing the state to opt out of Secure Communities. The legislature agreed but the governor vetoed it on grounds that “It didn’t include a number of heinous offences in its definition of a serious crime.”

4)SB1434, Electronic Privacy Protection requires search warrants to obtain location tracking information from cell phones, etc.

5)SB1161,Telephone Deregulation despite strong opposition of nearly every public interest advocacy group in California

He signed: SB9(Yee) allowing juveniles serving life sentences without parole to appeal sentences-after serving 15 years with no offenses!

AB2189 (Cedilla) allowing drivers’ licenses to some young undocumented immigrants without criminal records.

SB 1172, a bill protecting LGBT youth from "therapies" that attempt to force changes in sexual orientation.

Painting Over History



Bernal Heights Public Library, built by the WPA, had a mural on three of its facades to commemorate those who died in the September 11, 1973 military coup in Chile, when Augusto Pinochet forces overthrew democratically elected Socialist President Salvador Allende.

That day, our CIA helped bomb the Presidential Palace in Santiago, kill Allende and corral thousands of Chileans who were trapped and machine-gunned in Chile’s boxing stadium. We continued to support Pinochet and his reactionary policies and deadly brutality and disappearances through the cold war and for the sake of keeping copper (nationalized by Allende) in private hands.

Our local mural featured Victor Jara, who was an effective and moving activist singer, distinctively handsome, a soaring gentleness in a lyric voice, a cultural hero of the left. Soldiers discovered him among the thousands; he was singled out and tortured. Soldiers crushed the bones in his hands, then taunted him to perform. In response, he sang, *Venceremos* as he died.

In Bernal Heights, artists appealed for restoring the mural instead of painting over it. Protesters banging on pans supported the artists’ appeal. But, on October 4, 2012, bureaucrats ignored them and painted over the historic mural anyway! A staggering array of establishment forces were against preserving the mural: the San Francisco Arts Commission, Friends of the Library and Foundation, Branch Library Improvement Programs (BLIP), City Librarian Luis Herrera, and Bernal Library Art Project Task Force.

Today in Chile, the Mapuche indigenous population is being threatened and persecuted by President Sebastian Pinera Government as if it is reiterating Pinochet’s governance.

History Repeating Itself in Chile—Violent Repression of Mapuche—Next Issue!

The Fight for Public Education

The City College of San Francisco (CCSF) Board of Trustees approved plans to change CCSF from a community asset dedicated to providing lifetime learning and improving the quality of life to a junior college extension of K-12 focusing on job training and getting a diploma. In our October Newsletter we described other demands made by the Western Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, such as more administrators, fewer part-time instructors and cutting their pay and benefits, fewer or no adult learning and non-credit courses, standardized testing, and limiting faculty input in policies. The draft plan passed by the Trustees on 9/27 included all those proposals, in spite of widespread protests by faculty, students and the public-at-large.

The campaign to crush CCSF is part of the transformation sweeping across the country to convert public education into the private-for-profit model. Blame for the threat of closure is placed on teachers for past raises and good benefits, empowering faculty and students with decision making, and creation of a diversity curriculum. But, isn't one major cause the devastating cuts to education by the state?

These People Represent You?

Senator Dianne Feinstein is the ninth richest member of Congress, worth at least \$42 million. Rep. Nancy Pelosi is the thirteenth richest with a minimum worth of \$26 million. Roll Call. A Washington D.C. newspaper, publishes an annual ranking of the 50 richest members of Congress, based on yearly financial forms. 31 are Republicans. Topping the list is Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, worth \$306 million, about 4000 times greater than the average American household. In 2010 the Center for Responsive Politics estimated that 328 members of Congress were millionaires.

Save San Francisco Trees

Stop deforestation of Glen Canyon Park Information & Petition <http://signon.org/sign/stop-the-deforestation-2>
Keep some of our hybrids sycamore trees, on Market Home to Western tiger swallowtail butterflies!

No Privatizers Won't Back Down

Won't Back Down, a two-hour propaganda film with major film actors, purports to be a diagnosis of what's wrong with failing schools and blames lazy teachers, their unions and complacent principals. It is based on the "trigger" takeover of schools supposedly by a dedicated group of parents & teachers. They sign petitions to get rid of school management and teacher unions, then form non-union charter-type schools. The idea of a parent takeover is based on laws recently passed in seven states including California, without teacher involvement. Studies to date have shown however that charter schools make no greater improvements than public schools that involve community and labor cooperation.

StudentsFirst, with its own SuperPAC and a cadre of seasoned lobbyists was formed by public school reform advocate Michelle Rhee. StudentsFirst is pushing the film and offering free tickets to showings. Rhee closed several D.C. schools without holding public hearings or reporting complete budget figures, excluding parents from involvement, and opposing student protests of security policies. Progressive educator Diane Ravitch questioned the legitimacy of Rhee's results, alleging that "cheating, teaching to bad tests, institutionalized fraud, dumbing down of tests, a narrowed curriculum" were Rhee's results in D.C. schools. StudentsFirst supports Michigan's legislation to revoke teacher tenure after a bad evaluation. Similar laws are proposed in Georgia, Indiana, Minnesota, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

Rhee, claiming to save public schools, instead aligned with political conservatives, evangelical groups and business interests that favor turning public education over to the private sector. Public records indicate donors include billionaire financiers and wealthy foundations-New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Walton Family Foundation, funded by the Wal-Mart fortune, and Charter Schools USA, one of the largest for-profit charter school companies. StudentsFirst spent \$955,000 last fall in Michigan to push a package that included evaluating teachers primarily by student test scores and restricting union bargaining rights.

Don't Forget to Vote! Tuesday, November 6

Defend Our Right To Vote

According to the Constitution

Amendment 15: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Amendment 19: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Amendment 24: The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

ELECTION DAY

2012:

The power of the vote is federally protected by three Constitutional Amendments, and hard-won by the heroic efforts of those who came before us. We should be encouraging more people to participate in the political process — not making it more difficult!

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Proof Positive?

Studies show that 11% of voting-age Americans — 21 million people — lack the government-issued photo ID required at the polls by the new laws introduced by 34 states and passed in 11.

THOSE MOST AFFECTED

- 15% of low-income voters
- 18% of older voters
- 25% of african-american voters

Source: Brennan Center for Justice "The Battle Over the Vote in 2012" 5/1/12. Also, "Voter ID Laws Passed Since 2011" 6/5/12

The Myth of the "Free" Photo ID

Millions of Americans do not have the documents they need to obtain these IDs.

- \$26 copy of a birth certificate*
- \$9 copy of marriage record*
- \$\$\$ Add transportation to an issuing center and lost wages for time away from work
- \$37+ Is more than many students, elderly, and impoverished Americans can afford

*2012 costs in Minnesota, whose residents will vote on a photo ID amendment on November 6

Source: ACLU of Minnesota

Ouch!

Cost* to the citizens of Minnesota to implement a new photo ID law: as much as \$50 million.

* Estimate by MN Secretary of State

Source: ACLU of Minnesota

Gender Bender

17 states have sought to require proof of citizenship to register or vote. An estimated one-third of voting-age female citizens — as many as 32 million — do not possess a proof-of-citizenship document in their current name.

Source: Brennan Center for Justice

Voter ID Prevents Rampant Voter Fraud?

Let's look at Florida:

2008:	2010:
28 shark attacks	14 shark attacks
16 voter fraud cases	10 voter fraud cases

Source: Christian Science Monitor 7/11/12

Poster courtesy of NAACP Legal Defense Fund

Gray Panthers of San Francisco

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Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
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San Francisco, CA
Permit No. 12977

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

November 2012

Actions and Event

Thursdays Noon, On-Going, WOW of Occupy
Bernal Picket BofA, 29th/Mission

**Thursday, Nov 8, CARA, 1-3PM 1188 Franklin/
Geary**

**Thursday, Nov 8, Senior and Disability Action
Party, 6-8PM** RSVP 415 546-1333 \$100/\$50 senior/disability

**Thursday, Nov 8, San Francisco Transgender Film
Festival 2012, 8-10PM,** CounterPulse, 1310 Mission

Friday, Nov 9, 7:30-9:30PM, Bill Mckibben, Do
The Math, on global climate crisis, King Middle
School, 1781 Rose St., Berkeley \$10 adv/\$12 door

Saturday/Sunday, Nov 10-11 Green Festival 8th
& Brannan \$10 Seniors or 4 cans of food donation

Sunday, Nov 11 US Wars-Are They Legal
1:30PM FREE, Main Library, Koret Auditorium
100 Larkin, SF Gray Panther co-sponsors Cindy
Sheehan, Medea Benjamin

**Sunday, Nov 11, Roadmap to Apartheid-SA Min-
ers film 2-4PM,** 518 Valencia at 16th .Benefit for
SA miners by Transport Workers Solidarity
\$7 donation

Monday, Nov 12, Harvest of Empire, 7-9PM
Brava Theater, 2781 24th St film on book by Juan
Gonzalez of DemocracyNow! \$10 tickets at Mod-
ern Times bookstore or brownpapertickets.org

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we will come & get it!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

