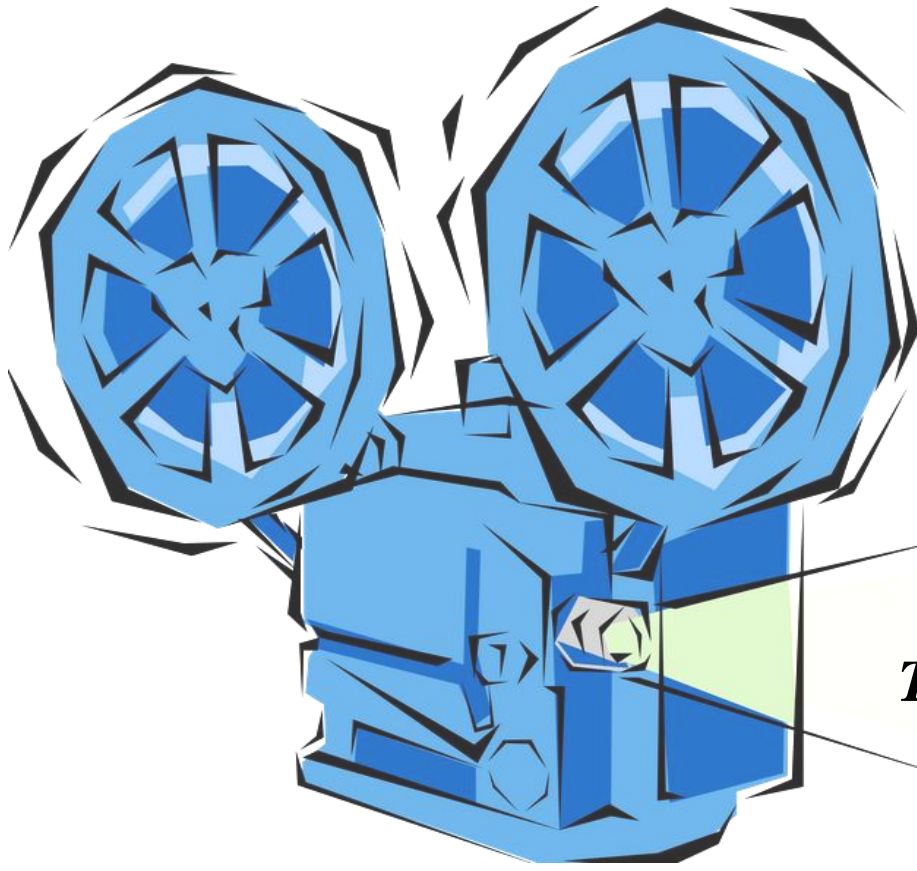


GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



*The Gray Panthers
Showing of the
documentary film*

The Health Care Movie

How Did Canada Get Single Payer?

Tuesday, January 15, 2013, 12:30 PM

General Membership Meeting

Unitarian Universalist Center

1187 Franklin @ Geary

GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

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

**Board Meeting Wednesday, 12:30 PM
January 2, and February 6**

**Newsletter Committee Thursday, 12:00
Noon January 3 and February 7**

**Our Poetry Reading Sunday, 2-4PM
January 6 Dorothy Day Community
Center 54 McAllister at Market**

**Book Club (two meetings in January)
Monday, 10:30 AM January 7 and Mon-
day, January 28 and February 25**

**Civil Liberties/Human Rights Wednes-
day, 12:30, January 9 and February 13**

Richard Blum-Hands Off Post Offices



Tuesday, Dec.4 The Save Our Post Office Coalition of SF, Save the Berkeley Post Office, Berkeley-East Bay Gray Panthers, SF Gray Panthers, Living New Deal, Grandmothers Against War, and current postal workers, told Richard Blum, CBRE, Inc.

“Stop selling our post offices!” Occupy SF & Occupy Oakland camped out over night in front of Blum’s financial district office with tables of information on CBRE. We marched from there through the financial district to Senator Feinstein’s office. After a rally outside, a delegation led by Margot Smith of Berkeley-East Bay Gray Panthers entered Senator Feinstein’s office, and met with her aide who encouraged the delegation to tell Congresspersons to call a hearing. Feinstein just happens to be the spouse of Richard Blum, and, as Richard Koritz of N. Carolina State Assoc. of Letter Carriers said at the rally- “what an example of a marriage between political and corporate corruption.” *Since 1971, post offices have not received any tax dollars. Compare that to the bank bailouts with our tax dollars.*

Flash Mob



Gray Panthers joined CARA, Jobs for Justice, and Senior and Disability, to dance away the Fiscal Cliff falsehood. *See all the live action at http://youtu.be/i_kok6Y73_A*

Free MUNI For Youth

Gray Panthers happy to announce that our work in coalition with POWER to get MUNI passes for low-income youth achieved that goal. As of March 1 these passes for youth will be available. Now on to passes for low-income elders!

January Meeting

Our meeting will be a showing of the documentary film, *The Health Care Movie*, the real story of how the health care systems in Canada and the United States evolved to be so completely different, though at one point they were essentially the same. Most are not aware of the public relations campaigns, still active today, that have been prevalent in the United States since the early 1900s to stop support for Universal Single Payer. Canadians have access to universal health care because people stood up 50 years ago. The film also reveals the on-going struggle here for the right to quality health care. Discussions to follow.

A New Year and New Board

A somber mood was present at our Holiday Party this year as we all reflected on the horrendous killings at Sandy Hook Elementary school in Connecticut. While sharing our meal, many members discussed the senselessness, the effects on children and communities, and what we can do now for the future. We did elect board members: Members finishing their 1st term and elected to a 2nd term Patricia and Sonja. Newly elected members are Lynn, Jack, Michael & Mitzi. Our ongoing members are Ila, Joanne, Earl, Ruthanne, David, Denise, Caty, and Harriet.

Barbara and Marshall have served two terms and are not eligible for reelection for a year. At the 2013 first board meeting, Jan 2nd, we will elect the board officers.

Poetry Reading

Gray Panthers Harriet and Earl have spearheaded an afternoon of poetry reading at the Dorothy Day Community Center, 54 McAllister at Market. Join others Sunday, January 6, 2-4pm. Please sign up in advance by calling 415-285-9564, or that Sunday before the readings.

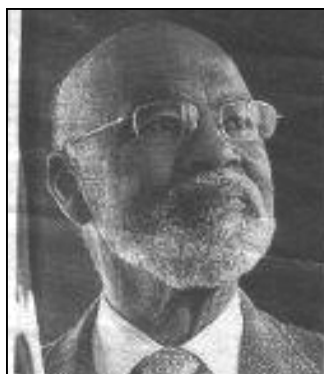
UDHR Reading Cancelled

Our GP reading of the UDHR on the steps of city hall with Everett Middle School students was cancelled due to scheduling issues. We regret not publicly celebrating on International Human Rights Day, Dec. 10th the date of the U.S. signing date of UDHR in 1948.

Oakland Police Department Under Fire

Reported in December

The Oakland Police Department {OPD} narrowly avoided being the first local police agency in the country to be placed in federal receivership when



Mike Kepka / The Chronicle 2005

Thelton Henderson

CLASS OF 1962

U.S. District Court judge (1980-present); assistant dean Stanford Law School (1968-76)

→ First African American lawyer to work for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division; active in the legal struggle to end racial discrimination in the South.

on Dec.12 US District Judge Thelton Henderson approved an Oakland-civil rights lawyers agreement to appoint an independent "compliance director" with broad oversight powers over the OPD. The compliance director will be appointed by the judge to prepare plans and timetables to reduce the unjustified use of force, racial profiling, high speed chases, and complaints of police misconduct, and improve the investigation of citizen complaints. He/she will have the authority to demote or fire the police

chief and other top brass.

As this newsletter reported previously, the OPD has been subject to federal court oversight for the past 10 years as a result of the Riders case, in which four OPD officers were convicted of running wild in West Oakland. At that time the city agreed to make 50 changes in police practices. The court-appointed monitor reported that 10 of these changes have not yet been implemented. They include a system to track at-risk behavior by an officer - unusually high number of arrests, use of force, pointing of weapons - high tolerance by commanders of such behavior, poor oversight of stop data (an effort to control racial profiling), failure to turn on lapel cameras, use of confidential informers to justify stops and pointing weapons, poor handling of officer involved shootings, the violent, military type response to the Occupy protests, and no negative consequences either to officers or the command staff.

Civil rights observers say this illustrates a broken police culture with no political will to change. The court will be keeping a very close watch on results with full federal receivership always a possibility.

As if to underline the OPDs problems, Oakland paid \$4,600,000 to settle a suit by 39 men who were pulled out of their cars and strip-searched in public. And two federal civil rights suits were filed against the city resulting from Occupy police violence.: one by Robert Ovetz who was hit in the abdomen and back by Officer Ercivan Martin while not resisting, then arrested and jailed but the case against him was dismissed; and the second by Iraq vet Scott Olsen who was hit in the head by a bean-bag and critically injured, and while he was lying on the ground, Officer Robert Roche lobbed a tear gas canister at a group trying to help him.



A taser

Tasers: the Gun Culture

Dec 6, SF Board of Supervisors held a hearing called by John Avalos on the use of tasers. SFPD Chief Greg Suhr wants to equip his department with 100 or so electric stun guns as part of a new pilot program that would specifically train officers to handle mentally ill people. Avalos raised concerns stating "We haven't done the work on developing the crisis response that we can do in the department." Jennifer Friedenbach, head of the Coalition on Homelessness, declared. "San Francisco doesn't want Tasers and San Francisco doesn't need Tasers. Instead of prioritizing the trainings and the culture shift that's necessary to save lives of our most vulnerable populations, Suhr is instead promoting a new shiny lethal weapon." Suhr is to hold 3 community meetings before the Board will revisit the issue early next year

Out of 170 people killed by tasers in California, 41.15% were Latino. These killings date as far back as 1983, and the number of deaths have increased each year since. At what is called, "the official taser web site", you can choose you favorite colors taser yellow, fashion pink, electric blue or red hot for only \$399. Competition for sales has some manufacturers claiming their products have higher voltages. Voltages listed today are 100 times those of earlier versions. One company states that if you hold the gun long enough any voltage works.



A "real" gun- is there any difference?

Secure Communities

This newsletter frequently reports on how the federal Secure Communities program disrupts and terrorizes the immigrant community. Under this program fingerprints of anybody who is arrested for any reason are sent to the Dept. of Homeland Security and compared to its data base of “illegal immigrants.” Then the Dept of Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) asks local authorities to hold anyone it wants to deport. Thus people arrested are immediately at risk, regardless of whether the arrests were justified, dismissed (stop and frisk), "driving while black", minor misdemeanors (fighting in the playground), broken tail-lights, or subsequently proven innocent in court.

Various counties reacted differently to ICE's request, from immediate compliance—Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo— to holding inmates only if they have felony convictions—San Francisco. The California legislature passed a Bill by SF Assemblyman Tom Ammiano requiring all California counties to follow SF policies, but Governor Brown vetoed it. Ammiano has introduced a new version of his bill in the current Assembly.

In early December State Attorney General Kamala Harris advised police and sheriffs that turning arrestees over to federal authorities is not mandatory or legally binding as claimed by Secure Communities. She also commented that the federal claim of focusing on deporting only serious criminals hasn't been true in California, where 28% of those deported had not been convicted of any crime.

No National Guards in our Schools

With the tragedy of Sandy Hook we all need to address the culture of violence. Many solutions are necessary from more funding for mental health programs, banning of assault weapons and ending the culture of violence. But putting the National Guard into our schools, as proposed by Senator Boxer, is not a solution. Youth have better ideas. Students in L.A. are holding month-long vigils to end violence in schools. Youth Alive in Oakland provides advocacy programs, and they convinced the Oakland Tribune to end gun ads.

Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant

PG&E, the owner of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, wants the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to renew its operating licenses to potentially extend the plant's life through 2045. To bolster its requests it proposed to map offshore earthquake faults by blasting the seabed with air cannons. But environmentalists and fishermen bitterly protested that such studies would cause major disruption of the marine environment. In November the California Coastal Commission unanimously rejected PG&E's proposal. The Commission said that PG&E is convinced that Diablo Canyon is earthquake safe, no matter what the studies might show.

San Onofre Targeted to open April 2013?

The reactors at the plant have been shut down since January 31, 2012 due to radiation leaks. San Onofre has for the past 6 years had the highest rate of failures in the US along with the highest rate of retaliation against whistleblowers. Southern California Edison plans to operate the plant while cutting the workforce by 50%. Only 2 years after the replacement of defective parts, which cost \$1billion the replacements already are showing wear. The infamous Peevey, head of the CPUC, says that ratepayers should pay for this cost – just like SFPUC is allowing PG&E to pass along to us the cost of their gas pipeline explosion. More information See www.sanonofresafety.org/

No Fracking in California



Governor Brown caved in to the coal and gas industry when he released his draft of California fracking regulations.

The proposed “regulations” allow companies to keep secret the chemicals used. Health professionals who treat patients exposed to these chemicals must sign non-disclosure agreements. Companies responsible for spills have 5 days before reporting. Nor does the industry have to conduct baseline tests of air and water, therefore there would be no way to document damages caused. These regulations also do not require any seismic evaluation.

(see our September newsletter article on Fracking)

Taking Our Money Out Of Wells Fargo!



On Tuesday, December 18, Gray Panthers and Senior Disability Action (SDA) closed their accounts at Wells Fargo to protest the bank's fraudulent and predatory foreclosure practices and triumphantly joined the protest rally outside the bank.



(Several months ago, we had transferred most of our account to Redwood Credit Union.) The demonstration was sponsored by over 13 SF organizations and led by SDA and GP. It called on other organizations to also take their money out of predatory banks. Wells Fargo has been fraudulently processing mortgage documents with a practice called robo-signing for years.

Employees were given daily quotas of foreclosure files to sign, while other documents required for homeowners to avoid foreclosure were ignored. Wells Fargo has double the number of foreclosures of other banks.



We urge all organizations and individuals to take their money out of Wells Fargo and all the other predatory banks!

The Courage To Hope How I Stood Up to the Politics of Fear by Shirley Sherrod with Catherine Whitney Simon & Schuster. 240 pp.

Shirley Sherrod was the Georgia State Director of Rural Development for the US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA). In July of 2010 a conservative blogger posted an edited video of a speech she made that seemed to be making racist, anti-white remarks. Without hearing her side or seeing the full text of the speech that the blogger had so carefully edited, the USDA demanded an immediate investigation of Shirley Sherrod.

The Courage of Hope is Sherrod's story not only of that headlong, shameful capitulation to the system's right wing by the Obama administration, but of her lifelong participation in the civil rights struggle, along with her husband, Charlie, a major figure in the fight against Jim Crow. It is a moving and fascinating history. It is also told from a viewpoint most of us don't often meet—that of a deeply committed Christian faith that influences and inspires every action. This book is highly recommended and is available in the public library.

A Song from The Wells Fargo Demo

Homeless on the Range
(to tune of Home on the Range)

Oh give me a home
With no subprime loan
Where I can live safely
Where never is heard
A threatening word
Of eviction or rent increase

Home-less on the range
Wells Fargo took my house away
They lied and stold
And put me out in the cold
Now I have nowhere to stay

I had me a home
But a predatory loan
Was sold to me by a thief
They tricked me with lies
Mortgage went sky high
And Well Fargo is making me leave

Gray Panthers of SF

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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

Call the office for membership information.

Labor Donated **January 2013**

Actions and Events

Thursday, January 3 1:00 PM Die-In: Help Stop the Killing in Iraq! SF Federal Building Plaza
450 Golden Gate Ave Polk & Larkin Streets
Declaration of Peace and other peace groups,
Contact: 415-751-0302

Sunday, January 6, 2-4 PM A Memorial for
Howard Wallace ILWU Local 34 (2nd and King
Sts, next to ATT Park) # 10, 30, 45, 47 buses or T

Sunday, January 6, 2-4PM GP Poetry Reading
54 McAllister (see page two)

Thursday, January 10, 10:00-12:00 Senior and
Disability Action (SDA) General Meeting 1187
Franklin Street at Geary Everyone is welcome

Wednesday January 16, 1PM SHAC Meeting
(Senior Housing Action Collaborative) 1390 Mis-
sion Street (at 10th St.), 2nd floor (Mercy Family
Housing)

Monday, January 21, 10:00AM to 6:00PM
Yerba Buena Center, a full day of free and exciting
programs, festivals and activities in honor of Dr.
Martin Luther King and the 50th anniversary year
of his famed "I Have a Dream" address

Thursday, January 31, 7:30pm - 9:30pm Cour-
age to Resist: Saluting Bradley Manning with
Daniel Ellsberg & Kevin Gosztola
Truth & Consequences: The US versus Bradley
Manning, First Congregational Church of Berkeley
2345 Channing Way, Berkeley, \$12 advance tick-
ets: 800-838-3006

Save Monday, February 11 for the Health Students
March for Single Payer Healthcare in Sacramento
Busses leave from San Francisco. More informa-
tion in our next newsletter

