

# GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO

## Health care



## Is there a cure?

**September Membership Meeting**  
**Tuesday September 17, 12:30-1:30 pm Business and Social**  
**Speakers & Discussion 1:30—3:00pm**  
**Unitarian Universalist Center 1182 Franklin @ Geary**  
**“The Affordable Care Act and the Future for Healthcare?”**

### GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

All meetings and events take place at 2940 16th Street 200-4, unless otherwise noted

**Board Meeting Wednesday, September 4, Only Library, 100 Larkin, 1st floor Mary Stong Rm 651 October 9, 12:30PM**

**Civil Liberties/Human Rights Reforming: Discussed at General Membership Meeting**

**Newsletter Committee Thursday, September 6, October 10, 12:00PM**

**Book Club Monday, Sept 30, Oct 28, 10:30 AM in the Main Library**



*Call For compassionate release of Lynne Stewart*  
**Director of Bureau Prisons Samuels (202) 307-3250/3062, Attorney General Holder(202) 353-1555, President Obama (202) 456-1111**

## Board Actions

*September 4 Board Meeting Mary Louise Stong  
Room on the 1st floor, Main Library, 100 Larkin  
St Rm 651.*

Our first Board meeting in our new office, August 7, generated lots of new ideas and suggestions. Long-term plans are proposed for joining with other organizations to hold a community meeting on the crisis in our prison system and the need for a paradigm shift toward restorative justice rather than punishment, recidivism and indefinite incarceration. Our board also authorized sending a letter to Gov. Jerry Brown calling for resolution to the hunger strike by meeting with the prisoner mediation team, the prison hunger strikers, and forcing the CDCR to meet prisoner demands.

GP SF will send 2 delegates to the CARA convention in October with a resolution on solving the crisis and status of Community Colleges in California, especially Community College of SF. Our delegates will be Michael and Lynne.

In light of the present and clear danger to our civil liberties, Gray Panthers of SF will increase our emphasis and focus on civil liberties and human rights issues. We see “stand your ground” laws, vigilante and police killings of youth of color, increased spying on all of us, linked together as attacks on our basic human rights. We will continue our work and educational play about Eleanor Roosevelt, UDHR, and a new script on the Patriot Act. We welcome member ideas, suggestions and encourage your participation for all these upcoming plans and projects.

The board also decided to rearrange some of the times for our monthly general membership meetings. The 12:30 – 3:00PM time will be the same. However, the first hour, 12:30-1:30PM will be devoted to GP general business, announcement, followed by social time. Presentations, speakers, and/or group discussions will take place with the remaining hours, 1:30 – 3PM.

Thanks to all who recently responded to our membership renewals and sent in good wishes. Many of you expressed interests participating in our Civil Liberties/Human Rights committee, helping with newsletter, website, or events.

## September Meeting

Our September meeting presentation, Tuesday, September 17, will be a discussion on “The Affordable Care Act and Future Healthcare” Speakers will answer questions about the act and our efforts to obtain single payer, and Healthy SF Come with your questions and comments on this monumental change in the healthcare system, some already in place and due to be fully in effect by 2014.

### News From the Gray Panther National Office

The national chair, Judy Lear, moved from Washington, DC, back to her hometown of Minneapolis and retired from her chair position, although she remains a member of the national Board of Directors. The new chair selected by the Board is Jan Ben Dor. We will miss Judy and look forward to meeting Jan.

### Appeal for Lynne Stewart Rejected!

On August 9, Judge Koeltl rejected Lynne Stewart’s appeal for compassionate release. The Judge asked the Bureau of Prisons to concede that Lynne qualified in every respect for the release. But, he said the need to rely on the Bureau of Prisons to make a legal motion on her behalf.

Just days after, Eric Holder stated his department was expanding its criteria for “compassionate release” of medically persons to include elderly who did not commit violent crimes. A Gray Panther member sent a letter to Charles Samuels, Director of Federal Prisons reminding him of his responsibility in Lynne Stewart’s case. If she were released, her original doctors at Sloan Kettering could be treating her properly and requested, as one of many organizations, that the decision of the prison warden who granted Lynne compassionate release be respected, and that Judge Koeltl be allowed to act with the spirit of the law and grant Lynne’s release. A full copy of the letter is in our office. Members may recall at one of our many fundraisers for Lynne someone sang “The September Song”, and Ralph, Lynne’s husband, invited Lynne to dance. Lynne Stewart is a political prisoner and a renowned human rights lawyer serving at **Federal Medical Center, Carswell TX. Her address is 53504-054, FMC Carswell, POB 27137, Fort Worth TX 76127. Write to her.**

## Secure Communities Update

On July 24 Supervisor John Avalos introduced an ordinance that reiterated standing SF policy that would prohibit officials from detaining someone at the request of the federal government solely because they are suspected of being an undocumented immigrant. The ordinance is co-sponsored by 7 other supervisors. Similar legislation by Assemblyman Tom Ammiano was passed by the state legislature but was vetoed by Gov. Brown and will be reintroduced this year. California Attorney General Kamala Harris issued an opinion stating that the federal detainees are requests, not requirements. and San Francisco has repeatedly said that it will not be an agent of ICE.

## California Pacific Medical Center

Our May Newsletter reported plans for CPMCs new hospital on Van Ness and Geary. At the end of June the Board of Supervisors okayed a scaled back hospital of 274 beds, rebuilding St. Lukes in the Mission, treating up to 30,000 charity cases a year, and hiring local residents for at least 40% of entry level positions for the next 10 years. The original sweetheart deal with Mayor Lee would have allowed 555 beds, let CPMC decide how many if any charity cases they would accept, and had no guarantees about keeping St. Lukes open. The rebuilt St. Lukes Hospital will have 120 beds, 40 more than originally proposed, to serve many of the city's lower income residents. Thank you to the concerned citizens and the supervisors who blocked the original plan.

## Saving the Berkeley Post Office



People have rallied, occupied & camped on the steps of the downtown Berkeley Post Office for weeks to stop its sale. They call attention to the privatization and de-unionizing of the entire Post Office System, privatization sweeping here and around the globe - from City College to Social Security and Medicare. <http://www.savethebpo.com/>

## Fight to Keep City College of SF

City College students occupied City Hall all night, August 20, and 30 were arrested. The California Federation of



Teachers filed a suit with the US Dept of Education, and in mid-August, the federal Department of Education sent a letter to the Commission saying it had not followed several federal regulations when it investigated City College. The Dept of Education gave the Commission 12 months to comply; the Commission promptly said the letter would have no effect on the City College ruling. Unions officials disagreed, saying the entire decision needs to be reversed. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges received \$1.5 million from Lumina in 2011. The Association is the parent organization of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges which is threatening to close City College. Lumina made its money from student loans. **CCSF is Open; Enroll Now!**

## Oakland Police Department: Poster Child for Bad Policing.

Oakland and Alameda County will pay more than \$1 million to 150 people who were arrested Nov. 5, 2010, while protesting the outcome of the Oscar Grant killing by Bart police. The protesters were mass arrested, handcuffed, held in sheriff department buses for hours, and then kept overnight in crowded jail cells. This was the first of several suits over mass arrests during rallies over Grant's killing and Occupy Oakland. The Oakland Police Department (OPD) has been accused of similar rogue behavior many times over the past years and always made empty promises to reform. This case was in 2010. Similar activities were reported in 2011 and 2012, culminating in the takeover of the OPD by a federal court appointed monitor, a major shake-up of the top brass, and an ongoing attempt to change the prevailing culture that finds every action taken by an officer proper, no matter how out of line it is. The monitor should start with a review of the First Amendment.

## Manufactured Fear

Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden put the dangers of surveillance before us. Their whistle blowing highlighted the ongoing erosion of our civil liberties. Prior to 9/11 in 2001, people's distrust of the FBI reached an all-time high. After 9/11, the Patriot Act seized the opportunity to revoke restrictions that prohibited U.S. intelligence agencies from spying on American citizens; enacted roving wiretaps that follow the subjects of investigation; and allowed for heavy online monitoring of email and web-traffic.

### Tech Sector and Surveillance



In 2003, \$16 billion of government money (our tax dollars) set up a fund for ways to manage huge amounts of data. NSA's current techniques were developed in Silicon Valley with a program called Hadoop. This software program, in 2008, enabled previously unmanageable data collections. Twitter & FaceBook immediately adopted its use. NSA privatized the national security system using this program and hired corporations like Booz Allen Hamilton, one of the largest "defense" contractors. Who worked for Booz Allen in 2010? - current director of national intelligence, James Clapper, who then lied to congress when asked if the agency was collecting information on us. Thankfully, one of their employees, Edward Snowden, had a concern about our civil liberties.

### Consequences of Loss of Liberties

Fear left unchecked invades every corner of our lives. It may start with a 9/11 event, the spawning of vigilantes like Zimmerman who justified killing Trayvon Martin as "suspicious", building fences across our borders, or giving rise to the new Jim Crow with incarceration of black and brown men higher than the number of slaves in pre-civil war America. The CIA partnered with NYPD to develop one of the country's most aggressive domestic intelligence agencies. Now the NYPD police chief, Ray Kelly, is being tapped to head the Dept of Homeland Security!

## The 1917 Espionage Act and FISA

Both Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden have been accused of illegal actions under the 1917 Espionage Act. Two months after the US entered WW1 on June 15, 1917, in the midst of gung-ho war hysteria, the Espionage Act became US law. It declared it a crime to convey information with intent to interfere with the operation of or success of the US armed forces or to promote the success of US enemies. It said it was a crime to convey false reports with intent to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, refusal of duty in military or naval forces, or to obstruct recruitment. During WW1 it was used to harass and jail the IWW (Wobblies), to jail Eugene Debs for opposing the war, and to bankrupt the socialist magazine The Masses, to attack the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (Jehovah's Witnesses) because it was anti-war. Among those prosecuted under the Act have been the Rosenbergs (executed for treason at the height of the Cold War), Wen Ho Lee of Los Alamos National Laboratories (during a period of national confrontation with China, later exonerated), Daniel Ellsberg for the Pentagon Papers (never acquitted but the case was dropped), Jonathon Pollard, still in prison for spying for Israel, and at least 30 others in the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1975 a Senate committee led by Frank Church found volumes of CIA assassination plots, harassment of Dr Martin Luther King Jr. and even a NSA watch list of 75,000 Americans. In 1978 as a check on government surveillance powers, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) was passed after Watergate to limit domestic surveillance. Since 9/11 it has been widely used as a cover for spying on all communication under the guise of discovering potential terrorists. Its activities are supervised by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, all of whose members are appointed by Justice John Roberts, the conservative chief justice of the US Supreme Court. The FISA court conducts their work in total secrecy.

The dedication of Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden can be honored by our engaging to protect everyone's civil liberties and human rights.

*Maybe we should all read or reread Orwell's 1984, currently on the best seller list!*

## Prisoners' Hunger Strike on Day 46

As we complete this newsletter, the Hunger Strikers are into their 46th day. California Dept. of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR) refuses to negotiate. At this length of time, people begin to have serious health issues. This is a violation of internationally recognized health dangers among physicians. Under Judge Henderson's orders the prisoners could now be subjected to force feeding. Laura Magnani of the mediation team called this "torture on torture." On August 12, Assemblymember Tom



Ammiano at a Press Conference in Sacramento spoke as the Stop Massive Incarceration organization invited Legislators to sit inside a life-sized mock Security Housing Unit (SHU) cell to experience a taste of what prisoners

must endure. CDCR Secretary Jeffrey Beard lied in his op-ed piece in the LA Times, "cells have skylights" and "There is no such thing as solitary confinement in California." He also said SHU prisoners have due process; and "the prisoner hunger strike isn't about ending solitary confinement - it's a 'gang power play' to advance their own agenda of violence."

It has always been difficult to get information on the prisoners. CDCR will not allow interviews of specific prisoners. We know there are more strikers on strike than CDCR reports. One prisoner, Bill Sell, has already died of medical complications even though he repeatedly asked for medical help. Thus far CDCR has refused to negotiate until the strike is over, even though most of the demands are already part of national and international laws! Prisoners have shown the light on these unacceptable conditions. They have organized in a unity of all races in non-violent ways, and forged an Agreement to End Hostilities among themselves. Support their struggle and demand that CDCR negotiate a just settlement

**Contact Governor Jerry Brown**

**Phone: (916) 445-2841, (510) 289-0336, (510) 628-0202**

## Noble Peace Prize Not Prison!

On August 21, Judge Lind sentenced Bradley Manning to 35 years for 20 crimes and 6 violations of the Espionage Act. He was immediately taken out of court. The last voice he heard was Medea Benjamin shouting: "We love you." The Bradley Manning support group announced plans for a series of appeals. Bradley has already served 31/2 years possibly reducing his 35-year term. He is only eligible for parole after serving at least one-third of the sentence. Bradley sent these words regarding his sentence, "I will gladly pay that price if it means we could have a country that is truly conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men and women are created equal." Norman Solomon has delivered Roots Action's petition with over 100,000 signers to the Nobel Committee in Oslo nominating Bradley Manning for the Noble Peace Prize. He is our hero.

**Call on President Obama to pardon Bradley!**  
**To sign a petition, Go <http://pardon.bradleymanning.org/>**

### More on the 1%

Big banks are doing well in spite of the regulations enacted to rein in the financial industry after a "too big-to-fail" bail out 5 years ago. Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, J.P.Morgan Chase, Bank of America and Wells Fargo reported \$43.4 billion in profit for the first half of 2013, the most since 2007. Finance is the second most profitable industry in the country, hot on the heels of the tech industry, and threatens to surpass it. 10 years ago Enron was convicted of illegally manipulating electricity markets. This year JP Morgan Chase, America's largest bank, agreed to pay \$410 million to settle federal charges of manipulating electricity markets from 2010 through 2012. It will pay a \$285 million civil penalty to the federal government, give up \$125 million in unjust profits, and drop a claim of \$262 million against California's managers of the electricity grid in a settlement with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Chase admitted no guilt; no personnel will be penalized. Deutsche Bank paid the FERC \$1.5 million, and Barclay's Bank \$435 million on similar charges. No individuals have been charged with crimes for this illegal gaming. Business as usual.

## Gray Panthers of SF

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ADDRESS SERVICE  
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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.

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## Actions and Events

**Monday, September 2, 10AM–3PM**, Occupy SF Occupy Labor Day –Bay Area Convergence, Justin Herman Plaza (Bradley Manning Plaza) Everyone welcome. Time to reconnect and make new plans.

**Monday, September 2**, SF Mime Troupe in Dolores Park, Oil & Water, 1:30 for music and play begins 2PM.

**Labor Day Weekend, 2PM**, Free Shakespeare in the Park's Macbeth, Presidio Parade Ground.

**Tuesday, Sep 10 7:00PM**, Books Inc. Opera Plaza Contributor to The Nation and The Progressive David Bacon speaking on how free trade agreements and economic policies and forced immigration for Mexicans.

**Sunday, September 8, 1:30PM**, Opera in the Park, Sharon Meadow in Golden Gate Park. Free.



**Thursday, September 12, 5:30-10PM** Art Auction, Coalition on Homelessness, SOMArts Cultural Center 934 Brannan Street. Tickets beginning \$35 per person. Benefit for the Homeless Bill of Rights, Assembly Bill, AB5.

**Wednesday, September 25, 6:00-8:00PM**, St Mary's Cathedral OWL Legacy of Hope –Rev. Glenda Hope's Retirement &, SF Safe House Fundraiser's 15 Anniversary.

Happy 78th Birthday Social Security!  
Doing Just Fine

