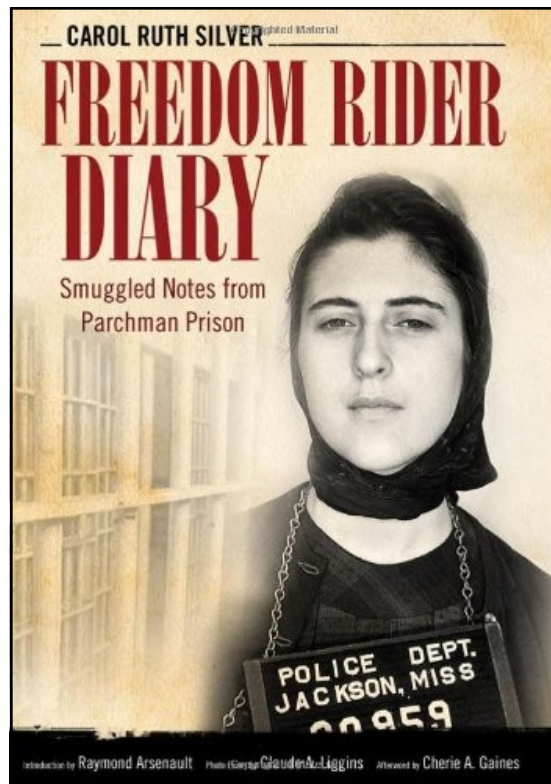


GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



Carol Ruth Silver's *Freedom Rider Diary*

General Meeting

Tuesday, February 17 12:30–3PM

Unitarian Universalist Center

1187 Franklin @ Geary

GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

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

Board Meeting Wednesday, February 4,
12:30, SF Main Library, Stong Room, 1st
Floor

Newsletter Committee Thursday, Febru-
ary 5, in the office.

Book Club Monday, February 23, Noon,
Celtic Café, 142 McAllister,
(between Hyde/Leavenworth)



Come to the SFERS Board Meeting, Wed, Feb. 11, 1 PM, 1145 Market St, 6th floor.
(between 7th & 8th Sts, across Market St from UN Plaza). Don't invest SF City employee/
retiree pension assets in hedge funds!

January Meeting: Actions for 2015

We discussed actions for the coming year. An immediate action proposed is standing as seniors against cuts threatening people with disabilities. A recent Republican rule change prevents the needed transfer of funds within Social Security to supplement the account for people with disabilities. We will work with SDA on an action. Two state-wide CARA events to protect Medicare are Feb 13 (See listing pg 6) and July 30, Medicare's 50th birthday. We also discussed how to support and interface with youth leading the Black Lives Matter movement. We can educate ourselves and others with a series of films and though readings and discussions. As our meeting ended, we got news that MTA had passed free MUNI for seniors and people with disabilities! Our new Board is David, Deetje, Denise, Kaye, Michael, Mitzi, Rhoda, Ruthanne and Kay. Election of Board officers will be at the February 4 board meeting.

In February Past

Feb. 5, 1631 Roger Williams arrives in America.

Feb. 14, 1817 Frederick Douglass born.

Feb. 15, 1820 Susan B. Anthony born.

Feb. 26, 1848 The Communist Manifesto published by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

Feb. 23, 1868 W.E.B. Dubois born.

Feb. 4, 1869 IWW's "Big Bill" Haywood born.

Feb. 12, 1909 NAACP Founded.

Feb. 20, 1937 National Lawyers Guild funded.

Feb. 19, 1942 FDR interns 110,000 Japanese-Americans.

Feb. 1, 1960 Greensboro, N. C., 4 African American students sit-in lunch counter, Woolworth's. Sit-ins through the South, result in over 1,600 persons arrested.

Feb. 21, 1965 Former Black Muslim leader Malcolm X shot and killed delivering a speech in a ballroom in New York City.

Feb. 27, 1973 Sioux occupy Wounded Knee.

Feb. 4, 1985 20 countries in the U N sign Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Feb. 11, 1990 Nelson Mandela, at age 71, released from prison after 27 years of a life sentence for attempting to end the apartheid government.

Feb. 29th, 2004, President Jean Bertrand Aristide of Haiti kidnapped and deported to Africa by US.

Our February Meeting



Winner of this year's Eudora Welty Prize, Carol Ruth Silver, will read from her memoir, "Freedom Rider Diary." She will share with us her experiences as a young twenty-two-year-old college graduate who left

New York City to join the Freedom Riders on one of the historic rides to desegregate the busses in the South. Her participation in this nonviolent civil disobedience led to her arrest and imprisonment in the infamous Mississippi Parchman Prison Farm for forty days. The memoir recounts the experience of Silver and other members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the charged atmosphere of the Civil Rights movement. Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/keldo73>

Lynne Stewart

An excerpt from her letter to GP, Dec. 14, 2014

" . . . A year ago we were in darkest despair because it seemed that we could not . . . move the Bureau of Prisons on granting the compassionate relief due to my advancing cancer. . . . When I finally stepped into the office of Ms. Godfrey I was informed that I should "pack out." I was being released. . . . We are now in the little house where the Feds came to take me away.

My health has improved. . . . I am so looking forward to the Holidays with my family—six Christmas' lost is a lot. And now the hard part for me. . . . Our exchequer could use a boost. So if there are any of you out there with spare change, please contribute to Lynne Stewart.org or Lynne Stewart, 1676 Eighth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215.



Lynne & Ralph, Dec. 2014!

Medicare in Dire Danger Fight Back!

Medicare will be 50 years old this July. Republicans in the US House of Representatives have threatened Medicare for years. Now they also control the Senate, and the GOP's first priority is to hack Medicare to pieces. Many Democrats are willing to help them. We must stop them.

A card campaign is under way, and actions are planned in mid-February, when US legislators are back in their home districts. Some labor unions are also planning informational town halls on Medicare for workers nearing retirement, to mobilize them and their whole unions to fight for Medicare.

Republicans and some Democrats are planning to (1) make our children and grandchildren wait until they're 67 to get Medicare, (2) make many more of us pay higher Medicare premiums, (3) eliminate the ACA's all-too-gradual reduction of donut-hole drug costs we must pay, and (4) worst of all, make Medicare a voucher system, where you'd get a check to buy cheap private insurance that would cover only some \$5,000 to \$10,000 of care per year, including hospitalization. In other words, kill Medicare with healthcare rationing.

The Medicare campaigns of California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) and the Campaign for a Healthy California (single payer) emphasize that Medicare must not only be protected, but its benefits must be improved and it must be expanded to cover everyone. This will help Medicare financially since younger people will pay into it, and will provide truly universal coverage for everyone, including undocumented immigrants, with an equal standard of care. SF CARA meetings are 1 PM on the 2nd Thursday of the month (right after the SDA meetings), in the MLK Room of the Unitarian Church at Franklin and Geary.

Medicare provides medical care for some 50 million seniors and people with disabilities. It's our lifeline. Medicare is one of our most important legacies from the 1960s decade of demonstrations, strikes, and social protest. We must save Medicare, improve it, and expand it to cover everyone.

Stay tuned for the Save Medicare action in SF on Friday, February 13. Time/Place to be determined.

BART: Drop the Charges!

Gray Panthers deplores BART management's pursuit of heavy criminal charges and \$70,000 restitution against 14 BlackLivesMatter activists who courageously chained themselves to trains at West Oakland on Nov 28. We are part of a big campaign to drop charges and fines. More next month.

BART's website says *"The tragic death of Oscar Grant will remain a painful memory for all of us. While we cannot alter the past, we have been using the lessons learned as a catalyst to change our future. We on the BART Board have been continuously taking the actions needed to improve the BART Police Department to ensure our officers are better-trained and better-equipped and we're working with the community and our customers to earn their trust and confidence by keeping them safe and secure."*

Safe and Secure? In January 2014, BART police attacked and tasered an unarmed Black man twice, then dragged him off the train. In March, BART police beat and arrested Nubia Bowe, a 19-year old student and a Black woman suspected of dancing on the train; and in September BART police slammed a Black woman to the ground and charged her with resisting arrest. These are not isolated cases. A Black friend of the daughter of one of our members was racially profiled, beaten, and arrested by BART police.

BART justifies their punitive actions against the Black Lives Matter activists saying *"As a public agency fully funded by riders and tax payers, we must never lose sight of the agency's mission to provide public transportation to the citizens we serve."* Right! Their mission is NOT to profile, beat, arrest, and kill Black and Latin passengers.

The Black Lives Matter people were not disrupting BART for racist events in faraway Ferguson, or New York, or Cleveland. They were sending a message that right here, BART is endangering Black and Latin passengers. Interrupting service when Black and Latin passengers are endangered is as proper as interrupting service when broken equipment endangers any other passengers. Call BART at 510-464-6060 and 510-464-6095. Say: Drop the charges and the money demands.

Imminent Retirement Crisis

There is a relentless drumbeat from legislators, both Republicans and Democrats, to blame workers for our bogus financial crisis. The crisis is a result of a massive shift of income from the workers to the super rich, known as the 1 and 2 per centers. Legislators, who are mostly funded by these super-rich, craft or allow legislation dictated by the rich to keep them dominant in the economy.

Across the United States local, state and federal governments are finding ways to convince workers that we are the problem and the solution is to cut or eliminate our pensions, Medicare, and Social Security. 90 percent of private-sector workers don't have a pension. Most government workers do - but not for long, as government workers are slandered as greedy and overpaid, and the cause of private sector workers getting less.

Will Social Security benefits help the coming retirees? No, it does not pay enough. The U.S. ranks third to last in social security benefits among developed nations.

Edward Siedle, founder of the whistleblower Forensic Opportunity Trust, nationally recognized authority on pensions and investment matters, says at some point, lack of savings, lack of employment possibilities, and failing health will catch up with the overwhelming majority of the nation's elders. America's army of starving old people will drag down younger people too. "Public finances will be pushed to the limit, crowding out other priorities such as education," Christian E. Weller predicts in The Hill. "Moreover, economic growth will be slower than it otherwise would be because employers will have more workers whose productivity is declining, while many older families, who could start successful new businesses, will forego those opportunities."

Siedle: "Conservatives are trying to pare back so-called entitlements that will mushroom in the near future and liberals have failed to acknowledge the crisis or propose any solutions."

We can hit the streets to demand action now --- or we'll be living on them later.

(Source: Creators.com "Millions of Gen Xers Will be Homeless Before You know It.")

Deadly Sanctions on Iran

A recent New York Times reported that the U.S. plans to spend \$1 trillion on new nuclear weapons and bomb plants, including Livermore Lab. (Sept 21, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/kale7c6>)

In light of this information it is hard to fathom why the U.S. is sanctioning Iran for its quest for peaceful nuclear power. Even Iran's proposed peaceful use of nuclear power is not at the point of fruition.

But no matter sanctions are in place crippling Iranian's health sector. According to Jan. 2913 Public Citizen, "After the 1979 Revolution the new Iranian government implemented a national primary care network. Based around community health workers, the network brought health care to 23 million people, many of whom had never before seen a doctor. The program won praise from the World Health Organization, and was largely responsible for a 75 percent reduction in rural infant mortality." See <http://tinyurl.com/mrrh9jd> .

Now there is a medication shortage due to U.S. sanctions and lifesaving medications are in short supply. Massive numbers of people in Iran will needlessly die, as they did from our 13-year Iraq sanctions prior to our invasion. Talking in an interview about those Iraq sanctions that caused the death of some 500,000 children, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright famously said that the "price of the sanctions was worth it."

According to Public Citizen, the debate with Iran about its supposed nuclear weapons manufacture is "tactical rather than moral with its two poles (Israel and the U.S.) arguing whether to launch a military strike now or to wait to strike when the conditions are more favorable to the U.S. (continuing to strangle Iran economically)."



96 Hours & Militant Legend of MLK



Nina Simone in 1969 wrote a song in memory of Lorraine Hansberry, “To Be Young, Gifted & Black”. It became a kind of anthem at the time. It lives again today. “Black Lives Matter” is a Black, youth-led national movement to

stop police killings, school-to-prison pipelines, and a broken system perpetuating injustice. This grassroots movement will not feed its energy into the Democratic party; it provides its own leadership. In Bay Area, 3rdWorld4BlackPower, Onyx, MalcolmX Grassroots, AROC, Asians for Black Lives, Haiti Action, Wild Tiger, BlackBrunch & many others organized 96 hours of protest honoring the radical spirit of Martin Luther King from Jan. 16, to his birthday, to Jan. 19. People expertly executed every action, BART shut down, Die-in at Walmart, films, workshops, Black ministers’ Die-In, & culminating in a mass march from Oscar Grant Station, (Fruitvale BART) to the Oakland Coliseum. Black youth, with multi-racial allies, chained the two main entrances of the Oakland Federal building Friday morning. The peaceful protest, allowing employees & people needing access to enter at an alternate entrance, locked down the building for 4 hours and 28 minutes—4 for the hours Mike Brown was left to die in the street and 28 for the fact that every 28 hours a Black person is killed by a security or police persons. Organizers stated the federal building was chosen, “because of its role in promoting war on Black people and people’s struggles for self-determination in the U.S. and around the world.”

This movement calls for each of us, our organizations to do work in our own communities, to become involved in a people’s movement in Martin Luther King’s spirit of racial & economic justice, of anti-war, anti capitalism & imperialism, to eliminate poverty.

“A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.” *Martin Luther King*

A System That Denies Healthcare Doesn’t Deserve to Exist

This is a speech given at a recent rally protesting Gov. Brown’s proposed budget that puts repaying banks ahead of restoring vital services and providing healthcare for undocumented immigrants.

“My name is Beatrice and I am undocumented and uninsured. My experiences without healthcare started when I was 9 years old and dislocated my elbow. Instead of being taken to a doctor or to a hospital, my father took matters into his own hands and popped my elbow back in.

That same year my mother fell very ill and was eventually brought to the hospital where she fell into a coma for 2 months. She was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes and because my family could not afford health care she was not able to know this information before it got worse.

Miraculously, she woke up from her coma but since then my mother and family continued to not get health care on a regular basis. My mother passed away in 2012.

It didn’t have to come to that. I remember crying and telling my mother before she passed away, “We can’t keep going to the hospital. It’s too expensive, I can’t afford to pay these bills.”

How many of our ill loved ones have to suffer or even die before we finally have health care for all people?

When I got sick, I was scared to go to the hospital because I couldn’t afford it. Instead, I was referred to clinics that provide health services to those regardless of your status. When I went to the clinic, I told them my situation and I was rejected because of my status.

We need health care that’s affordable for everyone. We need health care that accepts everyone. We need funding to keep MediCal accessible to deferred action recipients that includes undocumented youth and parents who are eligible under Obama’s new administrative action. But above all, we need Health4All--SB4--to be a priority for 2015. Our health is California’s health.”

Gray Panthers of SF

2940 16th Street, Room 200 – 4
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-552-8800
<http://graypantherssf.igc.org/>
graypanther-sf@sonic.net

Nonprofit Org.

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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

Tues, Feb 3: Tell Hillary Clinton, Single-Payer Healthcare/Medicare for All. 6:45 PM, Paramount Theater, Oakland, at 19th St BART stop.

Wed, Feb 4: 14 BlackLivesMatter BART Protesters' in Court: Alameda Courthouse, 1225 Fallon, Oakland. Call our office, 415-552-8800.

Feb 6, - Feb. 28, Fight the Power: Black & Palestinian Resistance Photo Exhibit: 762 Fulton.

Sat, Feb 7, The March for Real Climate Leadership. Ban fracking! 11:30 AM, Frank Ogawa Plaza, 14th & Broadway, 14th St BART, Oakland.

Wed, Feb 11, Tell the SF Retirement Board: Don't Invest Our Pension Money in Hedge Funds! 1 PM, 1145 Market, 5th Fl. See why at <http://tinyurl.com/lht722o>

Thus, Feb 12, BART Board Meeting: Drop the Charges and the \$70,000 Demand Against Black Lives Matter Activists. 9 AM, 344 20th St, Oakland. 10 min walk from 19th St. BART.

Thurs, Feb 12, Senior & Disability Action. 10 AM, MLK Rm, Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin.

Thurs, Feb 12, CARA SF CAT Meeting. 1 PM, MLK Rm, Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin.

Fri, Feb 13, Tell Pelosi & Feinstein, Hands Off Medicare: Protect, Improve, and Expand it to Everyone! See <http://tinyurl.com/kzaqhdu>

Tues, Feb 17, Gray Panther Meeting, Carol Ruth Silver, Freedom Rider Diary. See p. 1.

Sunday, Feb. 15, 7:30 PM, Richard Wolff, *Time to Change This Capitalist System!* First Cong. Church, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley. \$12 in advance.: brownpapertickets.com 800-838-3006.

Sat, Feb 28, OWL-SF Meeting. 10 AM, 870 Market St, Rm 1185.

March 1, Report-back, Surviving Human Trafficking in Nepal. 2 PM, SF Main Library, Latino Rm. See <http://tinyurl.com/pq9buzf>