

# GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO

## Moratorium on Luxury Housing



### The Housing Crisis in SF

Speakers: Tim Redmond, Kay Walker, Hillary Ronan

Tuesday, April 21, General Meeting

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, April 1,  
1PM, Main Library, Stong Room, 1st  
floor

Newsletter Committee, Thursday, April  
2, Noon in the office

Book Club, Monday, April 27, Noon,  
Celtic Café, 142 McAllister,  
(between Hyde/Leavenworth)



Call California senators to support SB 608, The Right to Rest Act, end the citing and imprisoning of Californians for resting & sharing food. Stop jailing people for resting in public spaces and end harassment of homelessness people.

N. California - Lisa Marie Alatorre 510.982.9275; S. California – Eric Ares 213.458.3909

## Our March Meeting: Public Banking

Susan Harman led a discussion and enlightened us on the need for public banking. This would end predatory lending, *payday loans* taking up to 30% interest from the mostly low-income people. We could be independent of corporate banks and control of our assets in local communities. North Dakota has had a successful state-owned bank for 92 years! Susan pointed out that a public bank does not interfere with current community banks or credit unions, but would form a partnership. US Post Office banks would provide another alternative to payday lenders, and have the advantage of being available in many small cities and rural areas which Wall Street banks ignore. Another reason to Save Our Post Offices! We had postal banking in the U.S. until 1967. Some banking services available would be to pay bills, cash checks, transfer funds, issue postal savings bonds, open a savings account, and avoid the high corporate bank fees.

*www.commonomicsusa.org/ Call your Congresspersons; it is time for Public Banking.*

### In Past Aprils

**April 9, 1865** US Civil War ends, 500,000 died.

**April 19, 1943** Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto staged an armed revolt against Nazi SS troops.

**April 17, 1961** U.S attempts to overthrow Fidel Castro and fails disastrously in the Bay of Pigs.

**April 30, 1967** Boxer Muhammad Ali stripped of world heavyweight championship for refusal to be inducted into the American military.

**April 4, 1968** Civil Rights leader Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King was killed by a sniper in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1986, Congress established the third Monday in January as a national holiday in his honor.

**April 14, 1986** U.S. President Ronald Reagan orders bombing the Libyan's Tripoli and Benghazi; 37 persons are killed including the infant daughter of Muammar Qaddafi.

**April 26, 1986** Chernobyl nuclear power plant explodes in the Ukraine, a meltdown of the nuclear fuel spreads a radioactive cloud covering most of Europe.

**April 6, 1994** A plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down, triggering genocide where over 500,000 persons were killed; 2 million fled the country.

## Our April Meeting: SF Housing Crisis

Our April meeting is on how to respond to the housing crisis in San Francisco.

Tim Redmond, past editor of the SF Guardian, will explain why business-friendly Ed Lee's approach of building more expensive housing cannot possibly make housing more affordable to workers.

Hillary Ronan, from David Campos' office, will talk about plans being considered to preserve and expand truly affordable housing and discourage market-rate housing construction.

Gray Panther Kay Walker will describe how Ed Lee wants to finance his housing plans on the backs of City workers and retirees.

This will be an interesting and timely meeting: Tuesday, April 21, 12:30 PM, in the Fireside Room of the Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin St.

### Writers, Editors, Volunteers

Do you have writing, proofreading editing, computer skills? A car to take our newsletter to the Post Office once a month? The GP newsletter committee seeks more *newsies* to help with what many say is one of the best sources of activist information in the community. You can participate in the entire process: editorial meetings, submit articles, help with editing, & labeling. Computer knowledge is helpful; we still work together in figuring out the layout and articles for each edition. It's a very collaborative effort and very satisfying.

**If you are interested helping with the newsletter, let us know your availability by email [gray-panther-sf@sonic.net](mailto:gray-panther-sf@sonic.net), or call 415-552-8800.**



Activists close Mission police station. See Patricia Jackson's *Shutting It Down for Alex* March 24, , [indybay.org](http://indybay.org)

## No Monsters in the Mission or Anywhere

On March 4, community members and organizations told Maximus developers, loudly and definitely, that we do not want a 10-story condo high-rise that would go up near the 16th Street Mission BART station. People in the Mission are strong and vocal opponents to gentrification which has grown more in this area than the rest of the City. Maximus holds so-called community meetings aimed at convincing people that more high-end housing will benefit everyone. Mayor Lee with businesses such as AirBnB, Uber, Lyft intend to turn SF into a city for the wealthy only.

According to a Maximus' statement, the proposed building at 1979 Mission Street will comply with affordable housing law by providing 49 low-income units. But these are units off-site! The project would replace the Walgreen and Burger King at 16th and Mission Streets. It proposes building 290 market-rate rental units and 41 condos for sale to people making between \$61,000 and \$145,000 a year. That income level does not reflect the long-time neighborhood residents: "I've never made more than \$30,000 a year and none of my co-workers do. Our managers don't even make \$60,000 a year," Mission resident and Plaza 16 Coalition member, Garry Gregorson said. "We're really clear about the demands that we're making. We want 100 percent affordable housing," Maria Zamudio, an opponent to the project said. "Many families are getting kicked out and priced out of the city, so it's either 100 percent affordable housing or not," said Chirag Bhakta, from the Mission SRO Collaborative.



The community takes over the Maximus phony community meeting where Maximus hoped to buy off opposition with worthless "community benefits."

## Housing Built for the Rich

A new 8-story complex at 1844 Market St offers 2-bedroom units for about \$4,500 a month, an annual rent around \$54,000! Often quoted is the area's *median income of \$74,000*. This high level of median income is the result of the influx of inflated-income venture/vulture capitalists. Meanwhile average working families, people with disabilities, single parents, and seniors are surviving on minimal wages, Social Security, pensions, or welfare. SF is no doubt like the rest of the nation, with top 10% controlling 90% of all the wealth. "Moderate income" according to the state guidelines is 80 to 120% of the area median income. In SF, that would mean households earning from \$59,200 to \$89,000 a year! Most SF housing in the pipeline as of the third quarter of 2014 is for the rich. As Sup. Campos points out, "In the last 7 years, we've built more than 23,000 luxury units and only 1,200 for middle-class families."

## Housing Is A Right

Mayor Lee, Ron "Con-away", and developers push the propaganda, "Building more luxury housing will allow more affordable housing." While progressive housing rights activists call for a moratorium on luxury condos, developers and the Mayor insist that prices decline when luxury supply increases—the "rising tide lifts all boats" theory. However, as the water rises, we're still in a leaky rowboat and they're in a luxury liner. We've seen rents increase by 50% since 2011. That luxury housing will save us all is a lie, and it is now promoted by Sonja Trauss who came to SF to promote the Bay Area Renters' Federation (BARF). Trauss brings this philosophy to our SF housing crisis: building more for the rich leaves the old housing for the poor. "That's one of the things about being poor; you don't buy new," says Trauss, who lives in West Oakland, an area facing gentrification. BARF convened a panel recently including Michael Cohen, real estate developer, and Roger Valdez of Smart Growth Seattle who says the free-market economy will solve housing problems.

Homelessness, being houseless, is of course not included in their BARF economy. Those without homes are evidently expected to leave SF.

## Dirty Laundry

It is a known fact that for health and hygienic purposes people must wash their clothing. Moms tell their children not to forget to wash behind their ears and to wear clean underwear. Appliance advertisements are directed towards women. Women traditionally make decisions on interior decorations including appliances to purchase for the home. As these things may seem ordinary to the readers, I was shocked to discover an incident that qualifies for “elder abuse.” During research on the number of Three-Day notices issued by Parkmerced, I discovered a Three-Day notice of eviction issued to a long-term resident for having a washer and dryer. I was startled to see a notice issued for something that is necessary for any home. I wondered how frightened the tenant must have felt to receive something so appalling on the door. How could a washer and dryer jeopardize their tenancy? The notice cited that as stated in the lease “a tenant needs the approval of the landlord to put...a washer, dryer or deep freezer in their apartment.” When did the tenants of San Francisco relinquish their rights to Big Brother?

I was appalled by Parkmerced's abhorrent behavior but not surprised. Parkmerced, the largest landlord in Northern California, with 3,221 apartments, has issued nearly 600 Three-Day notices after the approval of their recent redevelopment project by City Hall. Many of the recent evictions adversely impact working-class, low-income, disabled and senior residents.

Even more disturbing is that the office of the City Attorney has not thoroughly investigated these notices issued by Parkmerced. Long-term residents in the city have not been assisted by the District Attorney office with illegal or wrongful Ellis Act evictions. No one should be evicted for wanting to clean their underwear!

Gray Panthers of SF are members of CARA, the California Alliance for Retired Americans, and eligible to get CARA's email alerts and bi-annual paper mailings free of charge. If interested, please either email us ([graypanther-sf@sonic.net](mailto:graypanther-sf@sonic.net)) or phone (415-552-8800) with your name, mailing address, phone, and email address, which we will forward to CARA.

## Anti-Police Brutality Resolution

In December, Gray Panthers joined other community activists in hours of testimony supporting a non-binding resolution by Sup. Avalos to affirm the SF Board of Supervisors' call for reforms in national and local policing/judicial practices. It was to be our community commitment to support the *Black Lives Matter* movement. Prior to and at the hearing the Police Officers Assoc. (POA) raised strong objections to any references to community tensions from killings by SFPD officers and references to the killing of Alex Nieto in March of 2014. The POA representative declared, “San Francisco is not Ferguson.” Yet 71% of police killings since 1985 were of people of color, 41% of whom were Black. Currently, neighbors and witnesses dispute the SFPD account of the killing of Almicar Perez-Lopez in the Mission District, and according to Police Chief Suhr, officers involved in the killing of Alex Nieto will not be prosecuted.

Former POA president and now consultant for POA, Gary Delagnes, sent emails to Farrell, Tang, Wiener, Breed and Cohen, but sent additional bullying and threatening emails to Supervisors Breed and Cohen. Delagnes: “You better think long and hard before lending your name to this. I am astounded that you would involve yourself in this absolute bull shit.” All who received these emails voted against the resolution. As a result of POA strong-arm tactics, the resolution was voted down 7-4, modified, and referred to the Neighborhood Services and Safety Committee. We remain in contact with Sup. Avalos for a stronger resolution.

The outrageous reaction by the POA spokespersons, the continual police harassment, the killings here and across the country, and the rampant racism within the SFPD require more than non-binding resolutions. We need *binding legislation* and an end to these police practices. It is not just a few bad apples. The Ferguson activists have listed local and national demands. These include immediate end to police brutality; end to the school-to-prison-pipeline; de-militarization of local law enforcement; repurposing law enforcement funds to support community-based alternatives to policing; passage of the end racial profiling act; and see more at <http://fergusonaction.com/demands/>



## ACA at 5 Years - Time for Single-Payer

This spring is the five-year anniversary of the affordable care act (ACA). March 31 marked the end of the second open enrollment. This spring is also witnessing the third time the ACA has been before the Supreme Court.

When the ACA was enacted, it professed 3 goals: 1) providing near-universal access to health insurance; 2) containing health care costs; and 3) improving quality of health care for all Americans. It has fallen short of all three goals five years into the Act. Even if all states had expanded Medicaid, over 31 million would still have been uninsured in 2019. After the Supreme Court made Medicare expansion optional, tens of millions more will be uninsured because 22 states, including those with the highest poverty and the highest percentage of uninsured, chose not to expand Medicaid. In those states, people below 138% of Poverty Level have cannot afford healthcare and cannot get subsidies because they are too poor to buy private insurance! The ACA has also failed on cost containment. It has no significant price restraints. It has been a bonanza for many corporate stakeholders, and Wall Street healthcare stocks have soared since its passage.

Regarding the last goal Dr. John Geyman, Past President of Physicians for a National Health Program, says despite a number of initiatives to improve health care delivery, including changes in payment strategies and electronic health records, none have been shown yet to actually improve the quality of care. The subtitle to Geyman's new book "How Obamacare Is Unsustainable: Why We Need a Single Payer Solution for All Americans" poses a solution to the ACA's shortcomings.

Geyman says "as most advanced countries around the world have found, a public system of financing healthcare usually coupled with a private delivery system, namely here, for us, a single payer, improved Medicare for all, will provide universal access for all Americans to comprehensive healthcare of higher quality than we have now and with less cost to patients and taxpayers."

**Copies of Gray Panther Gretchen Davis' novel, *Blacklisted*, an account of a family's persecution in the McCarthy period, will be on sale soon as a fundraiser.**

## Medicare Turns 50 on July 30! Protect it / Improve it / Expand it to All

Medicare's 50th Birthday is being celebrated in major events in 30 US cities (so far) that will demand PROTECT Medicare, IMPROVE It, and EXPAND it to cover everyone (Single-Payer Healthcare). **The Northern California action will be Thursday, July 30.**



Many are familiar with the threats to Medicare by Ryan's House GOP budget: (1) Raising the eligibility age to 67 (misery for seniors, bankruptcy for employers); (2) means-testing premiums (and eventually benefits); and (3) vouchers, letting cheap, bare-bones insurance plans compete with traditional Medicare, thus draining away relatively healthy seniors, and sending Medicare into a death spiral with ever-fewer, ever-sicker, ever-more-expensive patients with ever-smaller funding.

But now a new threat: a Medicare Grand Bargain between Democrats and the GOP is developing. Every year since 1997, Medicare doctors' pay has increased beyond the impossibly-low limit established by the Clinton-Gingrich Balanced Budget Act, and every year Congress has postponed the cuts, until the cumulative cut would now be 20%. The Grand Bargain "doc fix" would set aside the cumulative doc payment cut, in return for a whole new supposedly quality-based payment system, MIPS, requiring such complicated documentation that it would drive doctors out of traditional Medicare and into managed-care HMOs, where the profit incentive is to give less care. Also, doctors and hospitals serving poorer, less-healthy patients would be penalized for having poorer outcomes.

## 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](mailto:graypanther-sf@sonic.net)

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We believe ALL people are  
entitled to certain fundamental  
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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

**Sat, Apr 4, March/Forum with Families of 43 Disappeared Ayotzinapa Students:** 2PM, Rally 16th/Mission; 3PM, march to Buena Vista-Horace Mann School (23rd St. betw. Mission & Valencia); 4PM, Community Forum.

**To Sunday, Apr 5, Elizabeth Catlett:** One of the most important 20th Century African-American artists. Museum of the African Diaspora, 685 Mission (at 3rd). Call for times. Seniors \$5.

**Tues, Apr 7, 6:30PM, SF 99% Coalition Meeting:** MLK Rm, Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin.

**Thurs, Apr 9, 10AM, Senior Disability Action Meeting:** Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin.

**Thurs, Apr 9, 1PM, CARA SF CAT Meeting:** May move. Please call 415-215-7575 for location.

**Sat, Apr 18, 10AM-7PM, Earth Day:** Celebrate either in the Mission District (block of 22nd St betw. Mission & Valencia) or Civic Center Plaza.

**Sat, Apr 25, 10 AM, Muslim Women in Today's World:** Ameena Jandali and Samina Faheem Sundas, OWL-SF Meeting, The Sequoias, 1400 Geary (betw. Gough & Laguna).

**Sat, Apr 25, 10AM-4PM, City-Wide Tenants Workshops, How to Stay in Your Home:** 627 Turk (betw. Polk & Van Ness).

**Thurs, Apr 30, 7 PM, Book Event, Robert Scheer, *They Know Everything About You*:** City Lights Books, 261 Columbus Ave (at Broadway).

**Fri, May 1, 2 PM, May Day, International Workers and Immigrant Rights Day:** Rally 24th and Mission, then march to Buena Vista-Horace Mann School (23rd St. betw. Mission & Valencia)

***Shut It Down! National Walk Out Day.  
Tuesday, April 14, Noon. Polk steps, City Hall.  
Black Lives Matter***