

GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



***Making Prop 13 Work For the People:
Emil Margolis, Evolve-California
Tuesday, October 20, 12:30–3PM
Unitarian Universalist Center
1187 Franklin @ Geary***

Since 1978, Proposition 13 has devastated California schools, social services, and homeowners by allowing corporations avoid billions in property taxes each year. using legal maneuvers to avoid reassessments when their properties change hands. Emil Margolis from Evolve-California will describe a new campaign to reform Prop 13.

GRAY PANTHERS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & EVENTS

**Board Meeting, Wed, Oct 7, 1 PM
Main Library, Stong Rm, 1st Floor
Members welcome.**

**Newsletter Committee, Thurs, Oct 8,
Noon, GP Office, 2940 16th St, Rm 200-3**

**Book Club Mon, Oct 26, 11:30 AM
Celtic Café, 142 McAllister
between Hyde & Leavenworth
Please call 415-931-1126 to confirm.**

**Abuses over Third-Party Utility Billing.
Sun, Oct 18, Noon, Main Library, Koret.**

Our September Meeting: Stop Forced Removals and Luxury Housing at Yerba Buena Island!

A capacity crowd heard evicted Yerba Buena Island housing activist Betty Mackey speak about how all 100 YBI residents are being driven from their affordable housing to make way for luxury housing. Both Treasure Island and YBI are City property, and by State and City law the land must first be offered to affordable housing developers. Instead, the land is being given to Mayor Ed Lee's friends at Lennar Corporation to build luxury condos with no permanently affordable units.

Current YBI residents were given the choice of a few thousand dollars of relocation money, or being moved to Treasure Island, which is heavily contaminated with radiation and toxic chemicals from the earlier Navy base. The Yerba Buena Island issue affects all San Franciscans. We need that 300 acres City-owned property to build 100% affordable housing. It's not Ed Lee's property to give to his cronies!

Listeners were aghast as Betty Mackey peeled away layer after layer of corruption in City government and the Lennar Corporation: the giveaway of public land, the lack of clean-up at Treasure Island resulting in cancer cases, and the treatment of families on both Yerba Buena and Treasure Islands.



Betty Mackey at City Hall rally against displacement of Yerba Buena Island residents.

Voting Is Our Right

The Supreme Court invalidated the Voting Rights Act of 1964, the landmark civil rights era law that determines racial discrimination in voting procedures and elections. Immediately, states began initiating voter ID laws disproportionately affecting seniors, African Americans, and poor people. This Supreme Court ruling forces civil rights groups to fight state-by-state, jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction, rather than relying on the original 1964 Voting Rights Act.

Fortunately, here in California we have not yet had voter suppression ID laws. We can vote this Nov. 3 here in SF on several important ballot measures.

Our SF Gray Panther Board Recommends:

Measure F: Yes: (Regulate Short-Term Rentals)

Measure I: Yes: (Suspension of Market-Rate Development in the Mission District)

Measure K: Yes: (Surplus Public Lands)

Measure F: It limits short-term rentals of a unit to 75 days per year, whether the host is there or not, and requires the Planning Department applications for the short-term rental registry contain proof of authorization by the unit's owner as a short-term rental. The Planning Department would be required to post a notice on the site of approval for this use and would be required to mail notices to the owners and neighbors. Many renters and the SF Budget Analyst believe that Airbnb short-term rentals cause a rise in evictions and have taken units off the rental market.

Our Board did not act on **Measure G** (Disclosures Regarding Renewable Energy), but Eric Brooks of Our City warned our General Meeting that Prop G was a PG&E attack on CleanPowerSF, blocking the City from labeling local rooftop solar installations as Clean and Renewable energy, and barring SF from buying renewable energy credits to help meet state clean energy requirements. But PG&E would continue buying and counting the very same credits toward its own requirements!

A compromise was recently reached. See article: <http://tinyurl.com/oy24ffc> (PG&E also backs state AB1110 using similar tactics to block clean power in other areas of the state). Assemblyman Phil Tang is working to amend this bill.

The Navigation Center

For several years our curiosity had been aroused by a dreary fenced-in set of vacant wooden buildings at 1950 Mission, near Walgreens at 16th St BART. How is this property being used now?

Many people hang around outside the obviously unused fenced area, but according to a man attending a new entrance office, police are now bringing whole encampments of homeless folks who know each other, and don't want to go into shelters and be separated.

According to the same man, this "Navigation Center" brings service providers, such as General Assistance, the Human Services Agency, and the Department of Public Health's Hot Team. Those who stay are expected to have some way of earning income through Cal Works.

At the Center are dormitory-style living quarters, including showers, bathrooms, laundry, and a 24-hour dining room. Up to 75 people can be served at a time. There is counseling and help finding social services and long-term housing or, if requested, a bus ticket home ("Homeward Bound"). Despite the words that can sound Orwellian, the attitude of these places seems decent. Episcopal Community Services (ECS) is the lead service provider overseeing the Center.

We visited another ECS place, the Sanctuary, at 201 8th Street. It is an Emergency Shelter, but people can keep a bed for 90 days while they attend medical appointments, and interviews. ECS oversees several other facilities in the City: The Sanctuary, Next Door, Interfaith Winter Shelter, SF-START, an Adult Education Center, the CHEFS food center, and the Canon Kip Senior Center, where there's daily lunch, and case managers. Administrative offices are at 1658 Street, SF 94103; their phone is (415) 487-3300.

The Navigation Center seems a model program and is due to be expanded, but as Homeless Coalition Director Jennifer Friedenbach said "We support the Navigation Center. However, clearly it will not be able to serve the thousands of San Franciscans who have no place to go and no home." This issue will heat up as the City starts building Super Bowl City in the Embarcadero.

Super-Sized 5M Project Approved

The San Francisco Planning Commission ignored ten hours of impassioned pleas from South-of-Market community members, and approved the giant 5M Project at 5th & Mission behind the Chronicle building.

It is SF's largest development proposal, covering 4 acres with three huge towers: a 614,000 square foot office tower, a 400-unit luxury condo tower, and a 288-unit rental housing tower with 58 affordable units. Two of the towers are as tall as those in the Financial District.

This giant project is being put in a poor residential neighborhood composed largely of Filipino families and elders who were displaced from Manilatown and the I-Hotel area in the 1970s, and then from the Yerba Buena Center area in the 1980s.

Angelica Cabande, Director of the South of Market Community Action Network told the Planning Commissioners "We resent the fact that once again, the City and developers are treating a working class community filled with people of color as blight. We are a thriving community that supports diversity, families and the cultural heritage of Filipinos who have called SoMa home." In 1970, Redevelopment Director Justin Herman said "This land is too valuable to permit poor people to park on it." Nothing has changed.

Some community groups support 5M because it supplies 33% affordable units, although almost 3/4 of them are off-site and half of those off-site units are in the Tenderloin. Most community and housing rights groups oppose 5M, knowing rents will shoot up in the surrounding working-class low-income residential areas with many SROs.

The long-term effects would be equally bad, because proposed zoning changes and exemptions would set a precedent, making current and future housing protection laws negotiable, and therefore worthless. 50% of the project's area depends on changing codes. Height limits would have to be ignored. A community-based Central SoMa Plan and a Youth and Family Zone would be ignored.

What's the point of trying to pass laws to protect our housing if rich developers and real estate interests can just buy their way out of them?

The Medicare Doc Fix Is a Disaster

The 1997 Clinton-Gingrich Balanced Budget Act, which devastated social services, required that each year Medicare expenses increased above an unrealistically low amount, the following year's payments to Medicare doctors had to be cut. That growth limit has been exceeded every year since then, and every year Congress has postponed the required cuts. By now the cumulative cut to Medicare doctors would equal 21%, which clearly would be impossible. There had to be some "doc fix" to prevent these cuts from occurring.

The Doc Fix was HR-2, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, passed in March and April of this year. It did drop the 1996 Balanced Budget Act's requirement that Medicare doctors' payments be cut. But it also added other provisions which make healthcare advocates say HR-2 was written to privatize Medicare.

Specifically, HR-2: (1) drives doctors out of Traditional Medicare with new tedious record-keeping, and incentivizes Traditional Medicare doctors to avoid sicker patients, (2) expands means-testing so now both rich and middle-class patients must pay a premium surcharge for Traditional Medicare, and (3) imposes a new deductible on Traditional Medicare that cannot be covered by private Medi-gap insurance. All of these factors will drive patients out of Traditional Medicare and into private Medicare Advantage plans, which will raise Medicare's costs to cover corporate profits.

HR-2 continues funding for safety net programs such as the Child Health Insurance program, but it also makes permanent the Hyde Amendment, which disallows any federal funding for abortions. HR-2 supporters claim this legislation is to reduce federal healthcare costs (no matter how it cuts care!) but its other goal is to privatize Medicare. Significantly, these changes would be part of permanent US Code.

Medicare, which was established in 1965, was greatly privatized in 1985 to allow for these Medicare Advantage plans. HR-2 is about destabilizing the public Traditional Medicare in favor of private plans, which cost more money and give worse care. Single-Payer would be a big step forward. The cost-containment we need is in medical profit, not in medical care!

Good News on City College!

AFT-2121, the City College Faculty Union, tells us that the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), which has been trying to close City College of SF for years, has been examined by a statewide Community College task force. It concluded that the ACCJC "no longer meets the current and anticipated needs of the California Community Colleges," and has "consistently failed to meet" expectations, ignored a decade of suggestions to improve, and that the "system and its member institutions," as a whole, "have lost confidence in the ACCJC."

The report recommends moving to a new accreditor, but also suggests that a shift could be a long process. The Union and City College supporters believe there is no reason to allow the ACCJC to continue attacking Community Colleges for actually serving the community.

We want Community Colleges judged by whether they put their money into faculty and programs instead of administrators. Do they reach out to the community in both credit and non-credit courses? Do they have strong programs for non-English speakers and people with poor educational backgrounds? Do they have programs for people with special needs like seniors, people with disabilities, returnees from prison? Do their job-training programs prepare them for work? City College of SF did all these things, and should be praised, not attacked. Stay tuned for further developments.

What's Next for Single-Payer?

July 30, Medicare's 50th Birthday, was very successful, with over 80 events nationwide. 700-1000 came in Oakland, the largest. Expanding an improved Medicare to cover everyone (Medicare-for-All/Single-Payer) was the major focus. Next?

The Campaign for a Healthy California, the community/labor coalition, hasn't finished its 2016 work plan, but a major focus will be getting a large, detailed financial study of the benefits and costs of single-payer in California. It would show different scenarios of what medical benefits would be covered (including long-term care, we hope) and who would pay how much to finance this care. We need to be able give people a concrete picture of what single-payer would be like.

Book Review: “Bitterly Divided”

Reviewed by a Lodi GP Member

I often wondered how I would have reacted living in Nashville during the U.S. Civil War. After reading *Bitterly Divided* by David Williams, I thought that I would have found many like-minded souls.

Mr. Williams makes the fine point that the first distinction is one of class between the slave owning class and the non-slave owners. The slave owning elite also owned all the fertile land and they wanted to maximize their profits by growing the money crops of cotton and tobacco; they needed thousands of slaves to work these crops. This elite class controlled the political structure that wanted to secede from the Union and form the Confederate States of America where slavery could flourish.

The non-slave owning class could see no purpose in fighting this war, but they were called upon to furnish the soldiers. They were promised by the elites that the soldiers and their families would be taken care of and fed by the Confederates. From the very beginning these promises turned into lies. The cash crops of cotton and tobacco occupied all the fertile land and sufficient land to grow food was not available.

The planter class exempted themselves from serving in the military, which caused resentment and hatred among the fighting soldiers, who called it a rich man's war and the poor man's fight. Desertions from the Confederate Army started practically from the beginning of the war, and was intensified especially conscription was instituted.

Southern women played a brave and important role in weakening the Army of the South. They hid and protected the deserters and draft-dodgers from the Confederacy. Since there were food shortages caused by the planter's refusal to grow food, the southern women organized raids on the food warehouses and distributed it among the hungry.

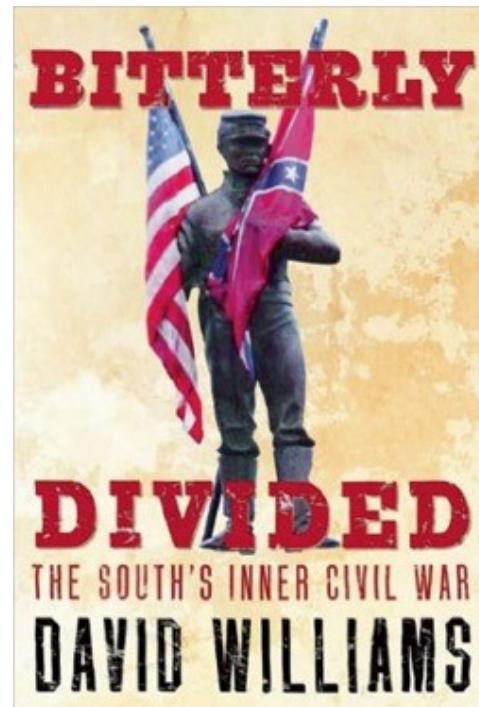
The slaves and ex-slaves worked with Confederate deserters and union sympathizers. And they joined the union armies. Aside from these activities the slaves also sabotaged and spied on the Confederate movements.

When Southerners talk about the heritage of the Confederate flag, they should remember that most

(Book Review continued)

non-slave owning workers were opposed to the war. And that the Union Army was made up of 25% Southerners.

The cover of the book depicts a generic Civil War soldier holding a U.S. flag and a Confederate flag in Double Springs, Alabama. The statue represents the soldiers from the area who volunteered to fight in the war: 239 for the Union and 112 for the Confederacy.



GP Member's Letter in July 17 SF Chronicle

Nuclear power

Does anyone seriously think that Iran would be foolish enough to use a nuclear weapon if they had one? They would immediately be wiped off the map by either Israel or the United States within minutes of a launch. The true nuclear threat would be the U.S., which plans on spending \$1 trillion over the next 30 years on new nuclear weapons and plants. And the U.S. already has a reputation in using its nuclear power without regret on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Denise D'Anne, San Francisco

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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 (Complete on-line Calendar at <http://tinyurl.com/2gy6enb>)

Thurs, Oct 1, How Big Business Uses Broken Windows Policing to Gentrify and Exclude:
2-4 PM, 150 Golden Gate, Criminalizing poverty.
<http://tinyurl.com/qdmujel>

Tues, Oct 6, Voter Outreach Training for Prop I (Mission Moratorium) and Prop J (AirBnB):
12 Noon, SDA, 1360 Mission, 4th Fl.
<http://tinyurl.com/q3pcwta>

Tues, Oct 6, Housing Protections for People with Developmental or Psychiatric Disabilities:
1-4 PM, Main Library, Koret Auditorium.
<http://tinyurl.com/o8wt4tb>

Wed, Oct 7, Forum: Will The Rent Come Down After The Elections?: 6-8 PM, 1010 Mission.
With 48 Hills, SF Business Times, TechCrunch
<http://tinyurl.com/nobskal>

Thurs, Oct 8, Senior & Disability Action Meeting: 10AM-12 Noon. Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin, at Geary, #38 bus.

Thurs, Oct 8, CARA SF CAT Meeting: 1-3 PM, ILWU office, 1188 Franklin, 4th Fl. The SF CAT is the local chapter of CARA.

Fri, Oct 9, Sensible Cinema: My Brooklyn:
6:30 PM, Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin.

Sun, Oct 11, Team Jail Abolition Salsa Sunday, El Rio: 3-8PM, 3158 Mission, Music-Fundraiser.
<http://tinyurl.com/pmpd3vz>

Mon, Oct 12, Indigenous People's Day Celebration: 5:30-9 PM, 518 Valencia.
<http://tinyurl.com/o5zysod>

Sun, Oct 18, Abuses over Third-Party Utility Billing: 12 Noon, Main Library, Koret Auditorium.

Sat, Oct 24, OWL-SF Program "Sleeping Well to Age Well": 10 AM-12 Noon, 555 Ellis.

