

GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO



David Young Allen, 1937-2016

Please come to our gathering.

Sat, Feb 27, 1-4 PM, Redstone Bldg, 2940 16th St
Corner of Capp St, 1 block from 16th St. BART

Board Meeting, Wed, Feb 3, 1 PM
Main Library, Stong Rm, 1st Floor
Members welcome.

Thurs, Feb 4, Noon, Protest the TPP at
Feinstein's Office, Post, Montgomery &
Market, Montgomery BART. See pg 4.

Mon & Tue, Feb 8 & 9, National Call-In
Days to Washington against the TPP.
Dial 1-855-856-7545. See page 4.

Regular Gray Panther Meeting
Tues, Feb 16, 1-3 PM, 1187 Franklin
Fireside Rm *Black Lives, Police, Tasers*

Newsletter Comm, Tues, Feb 9, 2 PM
Celtic Café, 142 McAllister
Between Hyde & Leavenworth
Please call 415-215-7575 to confirm.

Book Club, Mon, Feb 22, 11:30 AM
Celtic Café, 142 McAllister
between Hyde & Leavenworth
Please call 415-931-1126 to confirm.

David Young Allen, 1937-2015

(David Allen, continued)

David Young Allen was a painter, musician, a volunteer in Bay Area LGBT activities, and an important researcher and writer for the SF Gray Panther Newsletter for years. He died at 79 in his apartment on Capp St. January 5, barely two weeks after so many of us saw him at our Holiday Party. Although he had been battling cancer for years and was often fatigued and sometimes indisposed, he was nevertheless active and we relied on him. He loved Baroque classical music, particularly Bach keyboard pieces, one of which he was learning to play in his last few months.

David told an Open House interviewer that he moved around a lot in childhood and early adulthood. His mom died early and his dad changed jobs frequently. He attended a high school where students drove Cadillacs and he began experiencing the social isolation and self-loathing of being a closeted male homosexual. It ultimately ended in a suicide attempt. In David's words "Repressing your sexuality as a kid is terrible for the development of your personality. I was never abused but hid everything about myself.... I couldn't stop berating myself for being homosexual although no one else thought I was."

After a short stint as a pre-med student in Texas, David joined his sister in Berkeley and majored in music composition and piano at UC, where he met Pauline Kael, who hired him as a projectionist in her art theaters. She introduced him to her crowd, where he became a regular, lost his fear of being gay, and discovered he wanted to be a painter.

In San Francisco, he befriended painters and poets and had a one-man show at the Buzz Gallery. In New York he studied figure drawing and painting. Back in Berkeley, he made a series, *Shaped Canvases*, and started a guide to all San Francisco galleries and museums. Back in New York, he cared for his friend with AIDS for three years. He became a strong activist in ACT UP during the tumultuous fights following the NY Police raid on the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, one of the few bars admitting gays at the time. About the same time, he got a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Hunter College and later did graduate studio work at SUNY, and a Masters including study in Italy.

One description of his painting: "we stumbled upon perhaps the most talented painter of the day—and he wasn't even in the program. David Young Allen's dark glimpses into a netherworld strike the casual viewer as abstract. At second glance, the subjects creep off the canvases, and forms take shape before your eyes. Tired splotches trudge across the painting until you recognize them as soldiers, bayonets pointing out across to... another viewer? Ah, you're in a theater, and you can make out the head of a man watching a war movie"

Unfortunately David's website, where you could see these paintings, is down. Some paintings are on the Gray Panthers website at <http://tinyurl.com/zqu792p>, and his giant canvas *Chimborazo Volcano* is on display at the Gray Panther office, and you will be able to see it next door to the February 27 gathering in David's honor at 2940 16th St in the Mission District. Patricia wrote, "I remember the incredible time David, Zoe and I had hanging his huge picture in the office! David, the tallest, standing on floor with Zoe and me teetering on a table trying to find the hooks to hold it. We actually had a fun time, and that picture makes the office such a welcoming space."

Patricia also wrote, "I met David when he came to volunteer with my Friendly Visitor program at New Leaf, and immediately fell in with his so unique sense of humor. He later joined GP and began working on the newsletter. He, Mitzi and I had many laughs together as we joked about his choice of words, his too-long articles, and his gracious understanding of how we would cut his articles! David did an incredible investigation of the coming gentrification of Market Street, the tech invasion, and the developers. He went to the sites and interviewed workers, put together an incredible accounting of this in a series of our newsletters." A few of his Newsletter articles were: "Revamping of Mid-Market Street" (2/2013) <http://tinyurl.com/gn5nu7d> "Revamping North Market Street" (4/2013) <http://tinyurl.com/hyofjho> "Meet Ron Conway Stealing SF!" (1/2014) <http://tinyurl.com/gn83avq> "The Tech Takeover of Mid-Market" (2/2014) <http://tinyurl.com/msv3qka>

David Young Allen, présenté!

Gray Panther Testifies on Tasers

“For most human beings it takes an awful lot to allow them to kill another human being. The only way is to justify the killing is to make the enemy look as evil as possible. The U.S. Military has become expert in dehumanizing people whose countries we invade, thereby indoctrinating our soldiers to continue killing people without guilt.”

“Black people are in that category of *the other*. This *other* image is so embedded in the fabric of society that it takes impulse control, even among anti-racists, to fight off fleeting racist images.”

“You don’t see a white man or woman killed within two seconds of a police encounter, as with the murder of a 12-year old Black boy, Tamir Rice. In fact there are many examples of white people brandishing guns aimed at the police and never being shot or even arrested.”

Denise D’Anne, at the SF Police Commission.

Of course, numerically, many more whites are killed by police simply because there are so many more whites in the US. But because of racism, the *proportion* of blacks killed by police is much, much higher. It all goes in a circle. Dehumanization of Blacks makes it easier for police to kill Blacks. And acceptance of police killing Blacks makes it easier for police to kill whites.

No Mental Health Jail

Obviously, there’s a huge lack of mental health treatment leading to mass incarceration of the mentally ill in barbaric conditions. DA Gascon, to his credit, opposed a new jail, but his apparent plan for a locked mental health facility as part of the jail system is not the answer: (1) being a prisoner in jail is the worst possible setting for mental health treatment, (2) inpatient mental health treatment, where needed, should be available to the whole community, not just to jailed population, (3) inpatient mental health treatment, where needed, should be in small residential settings, (4) the average stay in SF jails is 30 days, which would be much too short for any jail-based program to do any good, even if the confinement conditions didn’t make good care impossible, and, (5) most importantly, building a jail mental health facility will deeply undermine the real reform needed, diversion of mentally ill arrestees to treatment *before* trial. This will be a big issue. Please stay tuned.

Little Things Mean a Lot

As a society we tend to ignore the little things that add up to gigantic things. We take for granted and ignore material that supposed to be convenient and make our life easier, but these materials actually make life more precarious by introducing poisons into our bodies and environment.

Few people recognize that using Styrofoam cups is dangerous to our health and to the planet. Styrofoam production causes ozone depletion. Styrofoam cups can also cause cancer and hormone disruption when used with hot liquids. (Mother Jones, *That Takeout Coffee Cup May Be Messing with Your Hormones*, <http://tinyurl.com/k7yxpwh>). Most senior centers use these cups, and they are also dangerous to infants.

Every year 25 billion Styrofoam cups are produced. Styrofoam cannot be recycled, cannot be burned without causing air pollution, and we can hardly find landfill space for disposal.

This is repeated over and over again with other so-called convenient items: 15 billion wood chopsticks (25 million trees), 100 billion plastic utensils, 16 billion condiment packets (such as catsup, mustard, soy sauce, etc.), 250,000 paper cups per day (equivalent to 250 trees), and on and on.

There are solutions but it takes work. Little efforts grow into big efforts. For instance, New York City banned single-use Styrofoam products. Some states and cities have adopted laws affecting the production, use, and disposal of packaging, including standards for environmentally acceptable packaging, minimum requirements for recycled content, restrictions on the use of certain substances in packaging, and even outright bans on certain types of plastic packaging. There have been extra charges or bans on plastic bags, including 67 ordinances in 88 California municipalities.



Migrant Mothers Hunger Strike

Some of the 78 mothers on a hunger strike at Karnes Detention Center in Texas have been placed in isolation with their children. The group launched a hunger strike and demanded that they be released along with their children while they pursued asylum claims outside of detention.

Mothers and children fled Central American during a surge of gang related violence. They are being treated as criminals in these detention centers, most of which are contracted out to Corrections Corp. of America, a notorious for-profit prison group. Several women and their children have been put in isolation as retaliation.

Jonathan Ryan, executive director of RAICES, a legal group conducting a pro bono program to represent women at Karnes, said, "We're talking about an isolation room with a bed, a toilet, a sink from which you have to cup your hands to drink water, and lights off until meal time." While held in detention women work all day for \$3. If a mother wants to buy an ice cream for her child in the center-run commissary, it costs \$3.50!

Women also told of sexual harassment by guards. For some women domestic violence was the reason for seeking asylum. The women are not a threat to our national security, and many have relatives and homes to go to. Why are they detained? CCA makes \$200 per day per prisoner.

Meanwhile, Obama has promised a stepped-up program of raids and deportation against Central American refugees in 2016, and new SF Sheriff Vickie Hennessy is reversing City policy and allowing deputies to call ICE with information on all arrestees, allowing ICE to deport these immigrants. We need to join actions against this!



TPP: Corporate Control

The U.S. Constitution, with Preamble and 27 Amendments, is 20 pages long. But the Affordable Health Care Act has 2,032 pages. Now the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) has 6,000 pages!

This proposed Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) is less a trade agreement than a handover of every aspect of civic life to the control of various U.S. trading partners, foreign corporations, and multinational U.S. businesses. Any corporation anywhere in the TPP area could sue any government within the TPP area for any action the corporation says reduces its profits.

This agreement would violate important articles of the Constitution. Article III, establishing the Judicial branch, establishes the right of trial by jury. The TPP gives decisions to an international panel of arbitrators whose decisions could not be challenged in U.S. courts.

The TPP would make prescription medicines unaffordable and bankrupt health systems like Medicare, Medicaid, and VA Health, because it would greatly extend the drug makers' patent protection for advanced drugs for cancer, making it harder to produce cheaper generics. Government discounts for Medicaid or VA drugs could be challenged by any company that said its profits were reduced. Gilead Science's \$1,000 per pill Sovaldi, for Hepatitis C, could become a commonplace.

Copyrights would be for life plus 70 years, transferring wealth to large, rights-holding corporations and making it more difficult for libraries, journalists, and ordinary users to use works from long-dead authors.

Imported food would not be labeled, and laws protecting us from outdated food, toxic chemicals, and protection against destructive environmental policies can bypass our court system to be settled by foreign arbitrators.

Call our representatives in Congress and tell them to oppose this agreement. Call toll free 877-762-8762 and ask separately for Senators Boxer and Feinstein. Call Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi or Jackie Speier. Follow up by calling all three legislators' home offices. February 8 and 9 are national call-in days against the TPP. See page 1 for more.

Criminal Negligence

Thousands of people in California have been imprisoned, and may still be imprisoned, with no legal justification, because the court orders they supposedly violated were themselves illegal, with errors and omissions that made them legally void and invalid. 2/3 of those imprisoned have been young black men.

State law mandates that individuals under restraining orders must not own firearms and must turn in any firearms they own. But between 1999 and 2007, the printed forms that judges filled in to file restraining orders against individuals had no warning that they must not own firearms, so large numbers of people were jailed for violating a law they were not informed of.

The absence of the warning information on the printed restraining order forms is itself illegal, so all restraining orders using those forms are legally void and invalid, yet thousands were jailed for unwittingly violating state law because of these invalid legal documents.

To make matters worse, the Judicial Council of California, which publishes forms used by California courts, refused to publish an alternative one-page with the missing warning that could be attached to existing forms because "attaching the warning to every restraining order might be burdensome to court clerks and individuals."

The California's Criminal Justice Statistics Center found that over 12,000 people may have been arrested and jailed in just *one* year of this 8-year period, and the UCLA School of Public Health reports that almost 2/3 of those arrested for allegedly violating these void restraining orders were young African-American men of ages 25-34.

This outrageous scandal that has disrupted and wrecked the lives of so many people is the subject of SF Gray Panther Winslow Rouse's book "*The Void Generation: How a Generation of Void Restraining Orders Voided the Lives of a Generation.*" Rouse himself spent six months in Pleasanton's Santa Rita jail on these charges, getting out only after challenging his restraining order. The book has 47 documents showing that in 1999-2007 the Judicial Council of California, had

(continued next column)

"Criminal Negligence" continued.

published thirteen void and unenforceable restraining order forms, then refused to supply the courts with an alternative form.

Rouse's book was recently reviewed in *Forum*, the official publication of the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice. But what Rouse really wants is a law professor to direct a student project to dig into this scandal and win restitution for the thousands of falsely imprisoned people who have been released, and freedom for people who are still falsely imprisoned. So far, all professors approached have refused, saying the scandal is just too big.

Paul Robeson Project

Some Gray Panther members are looking for others who would like to help research Paul Robeson's contributions to the performance of Negro spirituals for the purpose of nominating him as a candidate for the 2016 Annual Award by the Society for the Preservation of Negro Spirituals. Perhaps we could organize a public event, playing recordings of him singing spirituals. Perhaps you have access to such recordings, especially any that feature his long-time piano accompanist, Laurence Brown. Perhaps you have biographical knowledge of his interest in spirituals. To help, please call Deetje Boler at 415-567-8446 or Barbara Lee at 415-668-9572.

Overtime Pay for Domestic Workers Needs to be Made Permanent

SF Gray Panthers worked alongside Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA), CARA, Hand-in-Hand, Jobs with Justice and many other groups to pass AB241, which brought overtime pay to California domestic workers. It overturned an 80-year old concession to Roosevelt-era racist Dixicrats who insisted on excluding domestics and farm workers, who were mostly black, from the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act.

Unfortunately, AB241 was only a 2-year law, and it expires at the end of this year. A campaign to make a permanent version will be launched this month. Please stay tuned, and give support when asked. Who will take care of us when we need it?

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

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

Call the office for membership information.

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Actions and Events

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

Wed, Feb 3, Superbowl Protest, Tackle Homelessness: 4:30 PM, Sindbad's, 141 Embarcadero. Tent City protest to demand money and programs to aid the homeless.
<http://tinyurl.com/j6s8969>

Thurs, Feb 4, Protest TPP at Feinstein's: 12 PM, Market & Montgomery.
<http://tinyurl.com/hl4aqu9>

Sat, Feb 6, Procession: *This is Our Home*: 1 PM, UN Plaza, Civic Center.
<http://tinyurl.com/gqkb2gq>

Mon & Tues, Feb 8 & 9, National Call-In Against the TPP: 1-855-856-7545

Wed, Feb 10, SDA Health Action Team Meeting: 11 AM, 1010 Mission.

Thurs, Feb 11, Senior & Disability Action Meeting: 10AM-12 Noon. 1187 Franklin.

Thurs, Feb 11, CARA SF CAT Meeting: 1-3 PM, ILWU office, 1188 Franklin at Geary, 4th Fl.

Tues, Feb 16, SF Gray Panther General Meeting: See first page.

Wed, Feb 17, Senior & Disability Action Housing Collaborative: 1-3 PM, 1360 Mission, 4th Fl.

Wed, Feb 17, SF Living Wage Coalition: 6-8 PM, Redstone Bldg, 2940 16th St, 3rd Fl.

Sat, Feb 27, OWL-SF Meeting: 10 AM, 555 Ellis (bet Hyde, Leavenworth).