

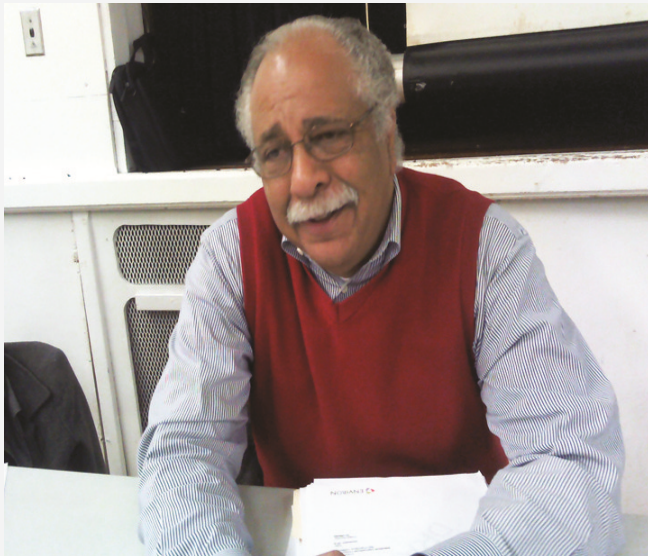
# GRAY PANTHERS OF SAN FRANCISCO

## **Dr. Ray Tompkins: *What Lennar and the Navy Are Doing at the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard.***

**Tuesday, February 21, 1-3 PM**

**Fireside Room, Unitarian Center  
1187 Franklin St (at Geary)**

**Free, Public Invited, Wheelchairs OK**



Dr. Ray Tompkins, is an historian and a scientific expert on pollution in Bayview Hunters Point and the environmental racism that has poisoned a San Francisco neighborhood with over 400 toxic waste sites plus a federal and a state Superfund site.

Today's talk is about what developer Lennar Corp. and the Navy are doing to hide the radiological and toxic pollution that lies below the ground that's supposed to support a glitzy

new neighborhood of condos, parks, ball fields, and office space rivaling downtown buildings.

In 2012, it was revealed that the company the Navy hired to conduct the clean-up since at least the mid-1990s, Tetra Tech, was submitting false samples for analysis. But even without the Tetra Tech problems, environmentalists say the area is unsafe because the Navy's standard of "clean" is dirty by EPA standards. For Lennar, this project is untold millions of profit. For the tens of thousands of people expected to live in this new development, the unanswered questions of nuclear and chemical dangers are a potential time bomb. Read more in *San Francisco Magazine*, January 2017, available on-line at <http://bit.ly/SFshipyard>

### **Dues Overdue?**

**Please send in your membership dues if you haven't already. (Your due date appears on your Newsletter address label.) Dues are \$30/year: more if you can, less if you can't. Mail it to Gray Panthers of S.F., 2940 16th Street, Rm 200-3, San Francisco, CA 94103. Every little bit helps and little bits add up big. Thanks!**

### **More SFMTA Shenanigans**

By Deetje Boler

A large public relations poster has appeared at the corner of Van Ness & Eddy near the 31-Balboa bus stop. It is by SFMTA to brag about the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, which so far has closed off all left-turn lanes on Van Ness Avenue, leaving only two lanes each way for traffic which includes Highway 101 traffic through the City as well as local traffic, including Muni buses of course.

The poster informs us that the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit project is contracted to Walsh Construction and is to last till Nov. 2019. It describes the project glowingly in a few vague bullet-point sentences and then goes on to give a lot of contact information which we are passing on here in hopes that you will join the fray and ask them about such things as their plan to remove hundreds of trees (*really?*) in order to put boarding islands in the middle of the street -- thus causing all bus riders to cross traffic to get on and off the bus. Where's the Mayor's program for pedestrian safety in this plan?

Here are the contact numbers given on the poster: 1) [vannessbrt@sfmta.com](mailto:vannessbrt@sfmta.com); 2) (415) 646-2310; 3) [www.sfmta.com/vanness](http://www.sfmta.com/vanness); 4) Community drop-in hours: Tuesday 2-4, Friday 10-12 (not holidays) at office at 180 Redwood St., Ste. 300, S.F. 94102.

Be prepared for SFMTA's bewildering bureaucracy, but please let us know anything you find out, details about the project, names of responsive representatives you reach, any upcoming meetings, etc., Leave us a message at Gray Panthers office: (415) 552-8800 and we'll call you back. "Let your fingers do the walking" -- and your tongue do the talking and take part as a citizen watch-dog.

### **Women Authors to Talk Peace & Justice**

The local branches of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) are sponsoring a series of four Sunday afternoon conversations with local women authors on the theme of peace and justice. They will speak about their lives, their writing, and their activism.

Aya de Leon will lead off the series on Sunday, March 19 in San Francisco at the Eric Quesada Center at 518 Valencia St. in conversation with Kate Raphael, author and producer of Women's Magazine on KPFA. Novelist, poet and spoken word artist Aya de Leon directs the Poetry for the People program at UC Berkeley and recently published her debut feminist heist novel, *Uptown Thief*, with more novels to come in 2017 and 2018. She also writes children's books, including a black girl spy novel called *Going Dark*.

Other authors in the series are Susan Griffin, May 21 (Ed Roberts Campus, Berkeley at Ashby BART station), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, July 16 (Eric Quesada Center), and Maxine Hong Kingston September 17 (Ed Roberts Campus). All these interview-style talks take place from 3 to 5 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month and will include time for Q and A. They are all free with light refreshments.

### **Paul Robeson Songbook**

The Paul Robeson Songbook is coming along nicely and should be ready for printing soon.

As you may recall from former articles here or announcements at meetings, the songbook will consist of words and music of a variety of songs from Paul Robeson's extensive repertoire and concert tours all over the world: Negro spirituals, folk and labor songs, and ethnic songs from around the world. He believed in the power of music to unite people in their love of equality, justice, and human rights -- and workers' rights in particular. And so do we.

If you would like to contribute something to cover paper and printing costs, please send your contribution to the Gray Panthers, noting "Paul Robeson Songbook". As you may be aware, our coffers are low, so whatever you might be able to contribute to carry off this timely and worthy project will be more than welcome!

## Recycling Is Passé

By Denise D'Anne

The idea that recycling is the solution to our increasing material waste is absurd. Recycling is not the answer but puts off the problem.

Where is all this unusable material to go? What is the cost of trying to reconstitute the material, and shipping it? Which poor country gets to sort through our garbage for financial benefit and who benefits?

Recycling increases the power and the pocket books of the manufacturers of packaging material (i.e. plastic bottles, etc.). Recycling encourage the packaging manufactures to come up with more ingenious methods to get the public to figure out how to dispose of their products, most of which does not get recycled anyway but tossed. One example: Senior lunch centers used to provide milk in cardboard cartons that were compostable. Now these centers are provided with plastic bottles that, of course, require recycling or tossing.

I'll bet most of us reading this article can actually remember when plastic was not yet invented so reusable containers were used. People brought their own dishes and utensils to parties and picnics. If we are to save our planet from a sea of detritus we need to rethink how we use and dispose of material and avoid at all cost the material that requires recycling.



Nilofar Radgoudari (center) announces that her father (Menti Radgoudari, a green card holder) is released after being detained at SFO for five hours on January 28. Photo, Desiree Rios, El Techolote.

## Solidarity with Immigrants at SFO

By Michael Lyon

The last weekend of January saw a huge, spontaneous outpouring of anti-racist solidarity with Muslims, refugees, and immigrants at SFO and many other airports across the nation.

I was at Sunday's SFO action, and it's still hard to contain one's emotions at remembering so many hundreds packed into the International terminal, with such feelings of outrage, solidarity, and love. You could hardly talk to someone next to you, the chanting was so loud, and it never stopped. When one died down, another immediately took its place; people just couldn't stop. There were far too many people for one single demonstration, so there were three side-by-side demonstrations, covering at least two-thirds of International Terminal.

These demonstrations were, of course, in resistance to Trump's executive orders banning entrance of refugees and citizens of seven Muslim-majority Mid-East countries, even those holding valid US visas and green cards. Because many hundreds on incoming flights were being sent back or kept in detention, demonstrators targeted security operations in the airports and in some cases, including SFO, were successful in shutting security down temporarily.

Relatives and friends got on the microphone and talked about how their loved ones, now detained by security, had worked and raised families in this country for decades with green cards, and now weren't even allowed lawyers. One Iranian couple, in their 80s, were detained for over 30 hours. There were thunderous roars from us whenever a detainee was let go; eventually all were released.

The SFO actions were unforgettable, but huge work needs to be done to resist the Trump agenda, particularly in Bay Area immigrant communities. Please sign up at Bay Resistance (the new name for the Rapid Response Network) to receive email or text message alerts of future events and actions.

### To Sign up for Notices of Actions Opposing the Trump Agenda

Go to [http://bit.ly/Bay\\_Resistance\\_Update](http://bit.ly/Bay_Resistance_Update) for email and/or text-message notices on actions on immigrant rights, Black organizing, Muslim Communities, Labor, Gender Justice, LGBTQ, Environment/Climate, and Healthcare.



## Library Again Threatening Privacy

By Peter Warfield

"Spying? At the library?!" That was the headline of the *San Francisco Bay Guardian's* editorial after we alerted that newspaper of San Francisco Public Library's intention to install Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags into library books throughout the City's library system for use to check books in and out.

That was more than 10 years ago. Library Users Association, which I head, was opposed then and - working with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) -- we were successful in stopping it.

Although the Library Commission unfortunately voted unanimously two years in a row to implement this privacy-threatening technology, joint efforts by these groups and other citizens and civic groups managed to get the Board of Supervisors to refuse to fund implementation. Now Library head Luis Herrera says he wants to try to do it again -- so we are opposing it once again.

The San Francisco Examiner ran a story December 20, 2016, "San Francisco Public Library Revives Plan to Install Microchips in Books." The story quoted the ACLU, still stalwart in its opposition to the Library's claims of adequate privacy, as follows: "...[T]he ACLU-Northern California continues to oppose the technology and urged The City to reject the effort. ... 'RFID has profound implications for civil liberties in San Francisco, including for immigrants' rights. It's more important than ever that San Francisco safeguard privacy, free speech, and civil liberties for all,' Nicole Ozer, technology and civil liberties policy director of the ACLU of California, said in the statement."

The privacy threats are numerous. Anyone with access to the technology, including portable readers, could read the unique numbers of the books at a distance through clothing, bags, and the like. The technology can allow what books a person is carrying to be revealed, resulting in loss of privacy as to the books borrowed and -- importantly -- where the book borrower *goes* with the books.

*Additionally, our research has found that almost every benefit of RFID claimed by the Library is*

*exaggerated -- or worse.*

Library Users Association invites all those concerned with maintaining the confidentiality of library patron records to join with us in a campaign to help stop the Library from getting this privacy-invasive, expensive, and in many ways dysfunctional technology funded.

Please contact us at [libraryusers2004@yahoo.com](mailto:libraryusers2004@yahoo.com) or leave a message with Gray Panthers at (415) 552-8800.

## The Stand-off at Standing Rock

By Deetje Boler

YES! Magazine ran an excellent article concerning significance and historical roots of the stand-off at Standing Rock, North Dakota, opposing the Dakota Access Pipe Line. There have been 700 arrests since the beginning of the gathering to protect the water, which is threatened by the Army Corps of Engineers' project to extend the pipeline, that carries especially dirty tar sands oil, under the river on the Sioux Tribe's land. Hundreds of other tribes from not only the United States but also from around the world have joined them over the past months as water defenders. "You can't drink oil!"

At present, the issue is in the courts as the leaders are continuing to insist on peaceful protection of the water, despite the violent treatment they have received and the severe sentences so far imposed for "disorderly conduct." A variety of charges are still pending against many still in detention, including the very serious charge of inciting to riot, against Native leader Iron-eyes, who will be pleading not guilty. Support of all kinds, including material, is sought. More particulars available from *National Native News* 2/3/17.

## Solidarity with Immigrants, SFO, Jan. 28



## **Muni Route-Change Alert**

by Deetje Boler

As reported in a recent newsletter, a temporary stay was ordered by the SFMTA Board of Directors of the SFMTA planners' proposal to eliminate the northbound 19-Polk bus stops near the Main Library, Orpheum Theater, Civic Center Plaza, City Hall, etc. The Chair of the Board ordered a reconsideration of this route change and for the planners to report back to the Board in three months.

Well, the three months are up; there has been no communication between the Library representatives or any of the objecting parties and the MTA/Muni planners. The next Board meeting is on Tuesday, February 21, at 1:00 in City Hall; however, it is not yet on the agenda, according to the Secretary of the Board and as they have until three days before the meeting to announce the final agenda, we must assume that the item will come up or risk its slipping sneakily by interested parties' objections.

As these objections significantly include the strong opposition by the staff of the Library all the way up to and in the hands of the Chief of the Main Library, Tom Horton, but no conferences between any of the parties have taken place, we have reason to smell a fish or two. There is the very good possibility that SFMTA planners want to and could slip this route-change through if we don't keep a careful eye on this monster agency.

Therefore we now need to follow up with our opposition to this service cut that so severely interferes with Civic Center access to all south of Market residents and causes all patrons going north towards or to Aquatic Park to have to walk several blocks, losing the present safe and nearby bus stop on Larkin Street right in front of the Library entrance as well as the stop on Market & 8th in front of the Orpheum Theater.

Take back your government! The SFMTA is such an enormous behemoth with so many different functions that it is very difficult to monitor to correctly serve the needs of the public, especially of

Muni riders. We've got to break it up, long range, but for now we should at least learn the identities of the members of the Board of Directors in order to connect with them. And you might consider attending meetings of the SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Meanwhile, all concerned parties are urged to write to the Board c/o Rachel Hayden, Public Information Officer, at [muniforward@sfmta.com](mailto:muniforward@sfmta.com), or call 311 and ask them to let her know that you prefer no changes to the 19 Polk route, that you consider the stop near the Library necessary and desirable, and ask to be informed of any meetings at which the matter may be scheduled for consideration. If she obliges, it might have only a 3-day advance notice. You could also try to contact the Chair of the Board, as it was he who ordered the reconsideration. This might be achieved by phoning Roberta Boomer, Secretary of the Board of Directors at (415) 701-4505 or emailing her at [Roberta.Boomer@SFMTA.com](mailto:Roberta.Boomer@SFMTA.com), asking her to inform the Chair of your desire that the route be maintained as is. Good luck!

## **A Little Black History**

“There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights, and not colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before. So I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring; because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again.”

This was spoken by Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), freed slave, active in women's rights movement in the late-1860's, at a meeting of the American Equal Rights Association. It was she whose “Ain't I a Woman” speech you've probably heard or read. These are both to be found in [A People's History of the United States](#), by Howard Zinn.

Also, for some fresh history, [Democracy Now's](#) February 3d program features Frederick Douglass' great-great-grandson (who is also Booker T. Washington's great-grandson! Who'd have thought?) who divulges much interesting information about his famous ancestor, Frederick Douglass, whose spirit, at least, lives on! Next year will be the bicentennial of his birth.

## Gray Panthers of SF

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economic security  
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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*

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## More Actions and Events

(Complete on-line Calendar at [http://bit.ly/gpsf\\_cal](http://bit.ly/gpsf_cal) )

**Wed, Feb 15, 1 PM, Senior & Disability Action's Housing Collaborative Meeting:** 4th Floor, 1360 Mission, near 10th St. Demand housing for all.

**Wed, Feb 15, 6 PM, SF Living Wage Coalition Meeting:** Rm 301, 2940 16th St, at Capp, 1 block from 16th St. BART

**Fri, Feb 17, Noon, No Borders, No Walls, Cancel NAFTA, Solidarity with Mexican Workers.** 7th/Mission

**Mon, Feb 20, Noon, SF United Against Trump's Not-My-President's Day March.** Assemble at Justin Herman Plaza, foot of Market St.

**Tues, Feb 21, 11:30AM, Demonstration and march against Alameda County Sheriff's co-operation with ICE to deport immigrants.** Frank Ogawa Plaza, Oakland (12th St BART)

**Tues, Feb 21, 1 PM, Gray Panthers Meeting. Dr. Ray Tomkins on Lennar and Navy efforts to hide radiation and toxicity at Lennar's new housing and office development. (See p. 1.)**

**Sat, Feb 25, 10 AM, OWL-SF Meeting: Meet Our Allies.** 1125 Fillmore (Northern Police Station)

**Thurs, Mar 9, 10 AM, Senior Disability Action Meeting,** Unitarian Center, 1187 Franklin. **1 PM, CARA-SF Meeting,** ILWU Hall, across Franklin from church.

**Sun, March 19, 3-5 PM, Novelist, Poet and Spoken Word Artist Aya de Leon On Peace and Justice,** talking with KPFA's Kate Raphael. 518 Valencia (at 16th St.)