If incumbent Berkeley Councilmember Kriss Worthington loses this election, I’ll have to finally conclude that Telegraph Avenue deserves what it gets. Candidates have been running against Telegraph Avenue for thirty years, and it still makes no sense to do so.

The Telegraph Avenue Merchants’ Association president Al Geyer, proprietor of the Annapurna head shop which has been there since the glorious year of 1969, originally invited me to join a panel of media interlocutors in questioning the candidates for the District 7 council seat last Friday night at the very genteel Berkeley City Club.

Side note to the young and innocent: a head shop sells drug paraphernalia, not usually the drugs themselves. Head shops first become popular in the heyday of the counter-culture, and still exist primarily to serve the needs of the trailing edge of that graying social phenom-

I should confess right here that I’m not now and have never been an active member of the counterculture. Raising three kids, helping to earn the family living and doing serious politics during its heyday didn’t leave me much time for doing drugs in the sixties and seventies.

But I’ve been hanging out on and around Telegraph from time to time since 1959, when the cafe of choice was Piccolo and Pauline Kael (years before she became a famous New Yorker critic) was writing elegant movie squibs for the Studio-Guild (two screens, four different classics a day, smoking only in the balcony) and sweeping the street in front of the theater after hours. In those days, the drugs of choice, if you weren’t a jazz musician, were tobacco, caffeine and cheap red wine.

At first I agreed to participate as a questioner, having played the same role four years earlier with some comfort. But as the date approached, I realized that I could not in good faith represent myself as an apolitical innocent bystander, since I’d long since endorsed Kriss, who’s been doing a terrific job for many years. I suggested competent reporters from the Daily Cal (Stephanie Baer) and the Bay Area News Group (Doug Oakley). They were invited, accepted, and were joined by Judith Scherr of the East Bay Express (which has already endorsed George Beier and Cecelia Rosales, the two candidates also endorsed by Mayor Tom Bates and his entourage.) I gratefully withdrew.

But I went to the meeting as a spectator, and I almost wish I hadn’t. The Planet reporter who was supposed to cover it had a last minute conflict, so I took notes and paid attention, thinking I might do a news brief myself if anything interesting happened.

As the lights dimmed, I counted only 12 people in the audience in the cavernous ballroom, though a few stragglers arrived later. It soon became clear that they were opposing claquers, certainly not undecided voters hoping for enlightenment. The Worthington fans seemed slightly more numerous, or at least more vigorous in their applause as the contenders took the stage, perhaps because they were younger.

The reporters did a good job with their questions. The candidates did a terrible job with their answers, or at least the challengers did. The very lowest point in the whole debacle was when Scherr asked them whether they supported Community Choice Aggregation, the proposal for cities to group together to become energy vendors in competition with PG&E.

Poor “Ces” (she likes to be called by her nickname) Rosales had the first turn, and the only way to describe the look on her face was “deer in headlights”. It was painfully clear that she had no idea what CCA is, but instead of asking, she made the mistake of trying to waffle. She said that she’d ask other people what they thought—this was her stock answer to a number of reporters’ question. Someone should have advised the woman not to run until she’d watched a few council meetings at least.

Following her, Beier didn’t do much better with the question, though he put up a bolder front. And then, of course, Kriss Worthington took the floor and explained it all, clearly and succinctly.

Beier’s standard technique reminds one of classic candidates for junior high student body president: long on rah-rah, short on facts. In many of his answers, he called out the first names of members of the Merchants’ Association who were clumped together in a row toward the front: “Mark, Carol, Doris, Greg...” as if to say, I’m one of you, I feel your pain.

Doris is Doris Moscowitz, an apple-cheeked smiley-face who inherited Moe’s Books from her irascible father Moe. She’s seen fit to endorse Beier because she thinks Worthington hasn’t done enough
for her lately. I called the store one morning to confirm the rumor that she'd made this foolish choice, and the person who answered the phone said it was so, because "there are drug dealers around here now".

Really? What a surprise!

As it happens, we started our software company in the late seventies and early eighties on Telegraph, in the upstairs of the building that is now Rasputin's, and there were drug dealers there then too. Not only that, there were ugly hostile young folks sitting on the sidewalks with their ugly dogs-then people called them "white punks on dope"-and even some homeless guys, mostly alcoholic Vietnam veterans of various races and ethnicities. And it hasn't changed much in the thirty years since.

If anything, it might be a bit better. District 8 Council Candidate Stewart Jones was in junior high or perhaps elementary school in those days, and used to sneak down to Telegraph sometimes. He says he thinks things are a good bit calmer now than what he remembers from those days, and I agree.

Then as now some of the merchants whined, whined, whined. They expected the city government to solve the perennial problems of the Avenue, but had few good ideas about how that might be done.

Beier's current attempt to suck up to them is particularly curious since he proudly claims the support of the do-nothing council majority. He uses rhetoric like "I'm for radical, radical change...the status quo has got to go!" and yet he's the candidate of the status quo. He even shares a campaign office with Gordon Wozniak, who's been on the council for something like 8 years. If Bates, Wozniak, Capitelli and Maio can't fix Telegraph with their 7-2 majority, why on earth should they be expected to do so if Beier wins and they have an 8-1 advantage? It's not Kriss who's preventing action, it's Beier's buddies who are already in office.

Baer asked another good question which produced some fireworks. She'd previously written a story quoting Beier as saying that two fellow councilmembers had told him that they voted against saving Willard Pool because they didn't like Worthington, and she asked him who they were. He dodged, refusing to reveal their names.

Then it was Kriss's turn to comment, and he suggested that said anonymous councilmembers had behaved unethically by ignoring what was best for the city because of a personal grudge. From that moment on Beier, either ignorantly or deliberately, tried to spin the discussion into a claim that Kriss had called him unethical, though Kriss emphatically corrected him. Not pretty.

Beier also came up with the worst idea of the evening, one that he later repeated proudly on the LeConte Chat listserv. In his perception crime in Berkeley is on the rise, though it's actually gone down in the last few years. His solution, as recapped online:

"I think the City should consider a temporary sitting and lying ordinance on some blocks of Telegraph. Then we'll review the situation after 6 months and take it from there."

Worthington's reaction: that would amount to an incitement to riot, just like the ill-conceived volleyball court U.C. dropped into People's Park a few years ago with bad results. And the residents immediately outside the designated area would surely complain that all the problems were being pushed into their yards.

Kriss pointed that doing provocative things like this makes no sense-what is needed instead, he said, is community policing, with at least one cop visible on the problem blocks at all times.

There's little point in continuing this sorry narrative indefinitely. It went from bad to worse. Someone was videoing the whole event, and if you get a chance you should take a look at it if you vote in District 7. Maybe it will turn up on YouTube.

And another someone should tell the merchants that Telegraph is no worse than the equivalent neighborhood near the University of Quebec where we stayed when we visited Montreal recently-in fact, it's a good bit tamer. Both areas have the same seedy mix of retailers who cater to disgruntled youth: tattoo parlors, leather stores, record stores and yes, head shops like Annapurna. And some of the customers there behave badly, just as they do in Berkeley.

A friend of mine, a classic aging hippie, recently mentioned that she'd gone down on the Avenue for the first time in a long while-to buy a water pipe at Annapurna. She said the folks at Annapurna were complaining about the people on the street, especially about drug dealers. Well, you know what? It goes with the territory if what you're selling is paraphernalia.

About the only good idea Beier came up with was that maybe there should be a quota on some of these establishments: he specified tattoo parlors in particular. If the city really wanted to change the mix on Teley, that might just do the trick.

After the show, we needed to get a bite to eat before getting out of town. We remembered Bongo Burger, where we'd had many a quick supper when we were working hard at our Telegraph Avenue business. Inside all was calm, well lit and cheerful, even on a Friday night, and the Persianburgers were still good.

We recognized the proprietor from meetings we'd attended when we were members of the Telegraph Merchants' Association 30 years ago. A Persian-American with what seemed like socialist leanings, he had been one of the few voices to speak up for humane ways of dealing with the homeless and vagrant problems on the Avenue, while other merchants were lobbying for locking the bastards up. His business seemed to be still thriving, though many of the hardliners had gone under. There's a lesson in here somewhere.

But there's still too much real crime in Berkeley. Of late Telegraph has been invaded by itinerant young white brawlers who spout racist and homophobic drivel and sometimes get into nasty fights. Today (Tuesday) as this was being written two Berkeley-raised young black men were gunned down by two younger victims of the same violent culture, if witnesses' descriptions are correct.

Kriss Worthington says that he's authored the great majority of anti-crime legislation since he's been on the council, and that he's been able to persuade his normally antagonistic colleagues to vote for 98% of his ordinances. His community policing solution seems to be one which could work both on Telegraph and in the killing zone which has arisen near Sacramento and Ashby. If he's replaced on the city council by an inexperienced person who is likely to go along to get along with the council majority, we'll all be just that much further away from real remedies for our very real problems.

Editor's Back Fence

Berkeley Daily Planet
Election Recommendations
Fri Oct 22 15:59:00 -0700 2010

Okay, folks, it's crunch time. Those of you who are sure of what you're doing might already have voted, along with a lot of others who just like to get it out of the way. But for anyone who's still agonizing about how to vote, Hurry Up, Please-It's Time.

To help you out, here's what we think.

Ballot Measures State Propositions
These come first, because they're the hardest
to figure out.

We’ve decided just to rely on our friend Oakland attorney Stu Flashman, who spends a lot of time on this. His abridged recommendations are below, with our comments if any added in square brackets:

**Proposition 19 - Marijuana Legalization - YES.** Prohibition didn’t work in the 1920s and 1930s. Marijuana prohibition hasn’t worked either. All it’s done is provide extra income to drug dealers and made it easier for people to transition from MJ to harder drugs. I think we’d do far better to legalize, regulate, and tax MJ. That’s not to say that I think MJ is a great thing. I know some people who went overboard on MJ and got really messed up; but nothing like what happens with hard drugs, and not as badly as some people I’ve known have gotten messed up on alcohol or cigarettes.

**Prop. 20 - Congressional Redistricting Commission - NO...** While in principle having congressional redistricting done by an impartial redistricting commission would be a big improvement, we haven’t even seen whether it’ll succeed for the state legislature. Let’s give the new system a chance to work and see how it does before we jump in with both feet. [and some think it isn’t even working for the legislature.]

**Prop. 21 - State Parks Vehicle License Fee - YES....** this measure matches new income to an existing need. It seems particularly fitting to use the vehicle license fee, because most people access state parks with their car, and the fee will be tied to allowing free park admission for California registered vehicles. [And they’re shutting the parks down because of lack of funds!]

**Prop. 22 - Local Funds Protection -NO.** While redevelopment agencies can do some good - Emeryville’s agency being a notable example - they also can do a lot of mischief, and Emeryville has provided just as good examples of that too. They also take money away from other local agencies, so when they complain about a state takeaway, it’s the pot calling the kettle black.

**Prop. 23 - Global Warming Suspension - NO.** If we could actually suspend global warming by a ballot measure, I’d be 100% for it, but this measure is to suspend AB 32, the California legislature’s recently-enacted measure to try to reduce CO2 emissions and limit global warming impacts. This measure is funded almost entirely by out of state big oil and big coal interests, who want to keep fiddling while the whole world burns (or at least gets way too hot). If this measure passes, it’ll tell the whole world that Californians can’t see beyond the nose on their face.

**Prop. 24 - Repeal of Corporate Tax Breaks - YES.** So, part of the 2008-2009 budget “deal” that the legislature passed was a set of corporate tax breaks that were supposed to stimulate the economy. ... If I was going to stimulate California’s economy, I’d do it by keeping teachers, firemen, police, and other public employees from getting laid off. That means giving government enough money to keep running. You don’t do that by handing out corporate tax breaks to your friends at the expense of state revenue.

**Prop. 25 - Majority Vote on State Budget -YES.** Speaking of extortion and the state budget, the reason a Republican minority is able to exercise disproportionate control is largely because passing a budget requires a 2/3 vote in both houses.

**Prop. 26 - 2/3 vote for all fees -NO.** This is another one of those deceptive special interest sponsored ballot measures, like Prop.23 on this ballot and PG&E’s measure on the June ballot. This one’s sponsored primarily by the tobacco and alcoholic beverage industries, who don’t like having fees placed on their products to help pay for the health damage they cause. This measure would also protect polluters from fees intended to clean up the damage they cause.

**Prop. 27 - Send Redistricting Back to the Legislature -NO. So, How much confidence do you have in California’s legislature?** If you’re like most Californians (including me), the answer is, “Not much!” This measure would kill the California Citizens’ Redistricting Commission before it even gets fully formed. All the money spent thus far on getting it set up would be wasted, and instead we’d hand the control back to the legislature so they can re-gerrymander the districts and continue to get themselves re-elected.

**Local Measures**

**Measure R (Berkeley): NO. This is an “advisory measure”, not the “downtown plan” it’s often claimed to be. It would give the Mayor and the City Council, which he’s trying to purge of all opponents, a blank check for developing downtown to provide maximum profits for his builder buddies.** Although some civic groups like the Sierra Club were outraged at endorsing it, the campaign is being financed by Chicago developer Sam Zell’s Equitable Residential corporation, which is well on its way to buying up all of downtown Berkeley. Poison pill provisions make it easier to demolish old buildings, too.

**Measure T (Berkeley): NO.** Informed critics say it’s an okay idea, but very sloppily drafted. It should go back to the drawing board to be re-written. **Measure S** is okay.

**Measure H (Berkeley Unified School District): YES. It’s a maintenance tax, and it’s needed.**

**Measure I (BUSD): A qualified YES.** If you vote for it, keep an eye on how it’s spent. Since it’s mostly for construction bonds, a reader’s report that the building industry has supplied the main financial backing so far is cause for concern. Nevertheless, voting down bond issues in the current economic climate is a poor way to show concern.

**Candidates**

Since the Republican Party, or what’s left of it, seems to have been completely transformed, just in time for Halloween, by the Invasion of the Body Snatchers, you have no choice but to hold your nose and pull the Democratic lever. Or, since California doesn’t offer the straight ticket voting option, just color in the little ovals next to:

**National**

**Senate: Barbara Boxer.** The pride of Brooklyn—she’s always done a good job for us Californians. Carly Fiorina, among other things, almost destroyed Hewlett Packard, firing a lot of key employees before she was fired herself.

**State**

**Governor: Jerry Brown.** We never thought the time would come when Jerry Brown would look good to us, but next to Meg Whitman, he does. She’s a perfect parody of the clueless corporate executive, and while he’s Jesuitical, that does mean smart, which is good, given what we have to figure out in the next four years.

**Attorney General: Kamala Harris.** Bright, simpatico and she’s from Berkeley.

**Controller: John Chiang.**

**Insurance Commissioner: Dave Jones.**

**Lieutenant Governor: San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.** A low-key job for a guy with one big moment which we’re proud of, the gay marriage event. If he gets this seat, he’s out of San Francisco, and that leaves an opening as Mayor of SF for Aaron Peskin, who went to Berkeley High, so it’s all good.

**Secretary of State: Debra Bowen.** She got voting machines under some sort of control, no mean feat.

**State Superintendent of Schools: Larry Aceves**

**Treasurer: Bill Lockyer**
Local Superior Court Judge: Victoria Kola-kowski.

Berkeley City Council District 1: Incumbent Linda Maio is mesmerized by the Mayor to the point where she seems to fear independent action. Problems with Pacific Steel Casting, which is flacked by the PR firm run by Bates’ former aids, persist, and she does nothing to solve them. Jasper Kingeter is a lively young man, and Merrille Mitchell keeps her eye on the ball when all about her have lost their heads. Since it’s Instant Runoff Voting this time, Kingeter should be #1 and Mitchell #2, but vice-versa wouldn’t be bad. Just don’t choose anyone as #3.

Berkeley City Council District 4: Jesse Arreguin has again and again proved his leadership skills and sound judgment, even though he’s only been on the City Council for 2 years as the late lamented Dona Spring’s designated successor. The rest seem to be naive, shills for the building industry, eccentrics, or all of the above.

Berkeley City Council District 7: Kriss Worthington continues to do a stellar job. Two mediocre candidates oppose him, one backed by hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign financing and personal money, and both fronting for the Mayor, who wants all votes on the Berkeley City Council to be 9-0. That’s not even healthy.

Berkeley City Council District 8: It’s time for UC retiree to retire from the City Council as well. Either of his two opponents would do a better job for residents. Stewart Emmington Jones grew up in Berkeley and knows it problems very well. Jacquelyn McCormick has extensive management experience. Jones #1, McCormick #2, but again, the reverse would also work.

Berkeley School Board (You can vote for 3.) Priscilla Myrick has an unusual grasp of numbers, a skill often lacking in elected officeholders, so we’re endorsing her. She’s suspicious of Measure I, but if it passes, as it seems likely to do, she’ll keep an eye on how it’s spent. Incumbent Karen Hemphill deserves to continue the projects she’s gotten well underway. Leah Wilson has some impressive backing. But most of the rest seem fine too.

Rent Board (Tenants’ Slate) Stephens, Blake, Webster, Harr, Townley, Dodsworth.

VOTE NOW on Measure R Sam Zell Cartoon Contest Entries! All Entries Now Posted with Printable Version

Check out these cartoons, and then send your email vote for the best one to election@berkeleydailyplanet.com. Voting will be open through election day, November 2, and the winner will be announced on November 3.

Now Read This: A Selection of Links of Interest to Berkeley and Environs

Ladies and Gentlemen, sharpen your pencils. The second report on who’s paying for Yes on Measure R has been filed. No, it’s not the Sierra Club. Here’s a couple of easy ones: PG&E is in for $5,000, Patrick Kennedy for $1,000. Who can identify the rest? The first completed game card wins a free subscription to the Berkeley Daily Planet.

In other news, the odious Dan Spitzer attacked J-Street at Berkeley JCC. Why are we not surprised?

Here’s a pretty funny Jerry Brown campaign video (yes, we’ve endorsed him.)

News

Alameda District Attorney Charges a Second Man in Berkeley Homicide

Mon Nov 01 15:33:00 -0700 2010

Berkeley police announced this afternoon that another person has been charged in the
October 26 shooting of Gary Ferguson, Jr. on Sacramento Street. The Alameda County District Attorney charged Coleon Lee Carroll, 20 years old, with murder and attempted murder last Friday, October 29. Carroll had been arrested in Antioch on October 27 on an unrelated warrant by Berkeley and Oakland police officers.

Carroll is currently being held at Santa Rita Jail (Alameda County Jail) with an upcoming court date of 11/10/2010.

Kriss Helped Save Our Telegraph Ave. Business!

Marcy Simon and Iraj Misaghi, Owners, Ashby Flowers on Telegraph Avenue(Reader Commentary) Mon Nov 01 09:42:00 -0700 2010

We’re writing to let you know that District 7 Councilmember Kriss Worthington is our hero! Early last year, he helped us save our family business, Ashby Flowers, on the corner of Telegraph and Ashby, which has been serving the Berkeley area for over fifty years (we’ve owned it since 1995).

Our landlord, the corporate offices of Whole Foods Market, had informed us that they weren’t going to be renewing our lease when it expired. After months of negotiations, and support from many of our neighbors, including the Halcyon Neighborhood Association, the regional offices of Whole Foods still wouldn’t budge.

That’s when Kriss lent a hand. With his community organizing experience and political savvy, he helped us come up with a winning strategy to save our store. Halcyon neighborhood leaders wrote a commentary that appeared in the Berkeley Daily Planet. Neighbors from all over signed our petition. We organized a rally to be held at the regional headquarters in Emeryville attended by many of our friends and supporters.

Once Kriss got involved, he both gave us excellent advice and we started getting real media attention. Kriss was interviewed by Phil Matier of the San Francisco Chronicle’s Matier & Ross and KCBS News and shown carrying a sign hand-decorated with flowers, which he’d made himself. Other papers picked up on the story. When Whole Foods Market started getting bad press and realized we had political support, they did an about-face and agreed to renew our lease! We’re happy to still be here serving the community, and we look forward to many more good years to come. We remain eternally grateful to Kriss for the time, heart, hard work, and good sense he shared with us.

Although we’ve owned a Telegraph Avenue business for years, and have many friends and relatives who also own small businesses on Telegraph - many of whom have needed to call on Kriss for help over the years, which he always provides with full dedication and creative problem-solving - we live in Albany, not Berkeley, so we can’t vote for him ourselves! We hope Berkeley voters will keep our story in mind when casting your ballots. You’re so lucky to have someone of Kriss’s caliber working for you and fighting so hard for the small businesses that make Berkeley so special. Please vote Kriss #1! He’ll always be #1 in our hearts.

Growth at What Cost?

by Councilmember Jesse Arreguin Sun Oct 31 12:44:00 -0700 2010

One of the key issues in this election has been what kind of growth we want Downtown. As the neighborhood that includes Downtown, Council District 4 will be the most affected by that growth.

My main opponent, Jim Novosel, argues that I haven’t been a team player. He knows the real story. Here it is:

Novosel is one of six (out of nine) Planning Commissioners who earn their living in major construction (he’s an architect and developer). He sat on the 2-year-long Downtown Area Planning Advisory Commission, charged by the Council with the task of coming up with a blueprint for Downtown’s future. I sat on DAPAC too.

Novosel and I both worked hard on that committee. I worked to make sure that new construction mitigated environmental impacts and provided real community benefits: affordable housing, open space and green building requirements. In the end, DAPAC came to a compromise, accepted by 17 of the 21 members, the biggest elements of which were two large hotels that would clearly benefit the Downtown economy, and a substantial increase in building heights in the central Downtown area. I and the other environmentalists signed on to the compromise because it contained safeguards to protect the environment and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Then the plan went to the Planning Commission, which, under Novosel’s guidance, threw out the green building requirements and community benefits and greatly expanded development in the residential areas around the Downtown. The two hotels became four 18-story condos or office buildings. But most importantly, the Planning Commission added Section 8.3, which reads: “When establishing provisions for new fees and financing strategies, consider how fees and exactions may discourage development, so as to make these provisions consistent with the intent of this Plan.”

That is, any of the rules that might interfere with a developer’s profit can be discarded without consequence or mitigation.

This provision was so outrageous that 9,200 Berkeley citizens forced a vote on this plan with a referendum. But the Council majority didn’t think their plan could stand public scrutiny. They repealed it, resetting the future of Downtown back to zero.

I offered them a compromise: restore the affordable housing, labor, environment, and neighborhood protections, limit the height of taller buildings to 10 stories, and get rid of section 8.3. Instead, they put Measure R on the ballot.

There are only two parts of Measure R with legal force: the expansion of downtown’s boundaries to include surrounding residential areas, and a revision to seriously weaken the landmarks process. Measure R is NOT a plan. Despite the overblown language in the ballot question, these are the only two certain effects of Measure R.

How did the developer-oriented Council majority get the Sierra Club to sign onto Measure R? The Council promised, behind closed doors, that the Sierra Club will have a seat at the table when a new plan is developed.

Maybe they will get their deal and maybe they won’t. As for me, I’m not willing to rely on decisions based on unwritten promises. But the Sierra Club knows who the environmentalist is in this race, and they have endorsed me over Novosel. Just because they signed onto this controversial proposal does not mean that they are going to endorse someone working to undermine the critical environmental requirements and community benefits that they fought so hard for.

Novosel wants this to be an election about consensus building, and I accept that. Now you have to decide what kind of consensus you want, and who gets to be part of it. I’ve tried to build consensus among ALL those affected by downtown development. Novosel wants to build consensus between the Council majority and his developer clients. It would be a real travesty for District 4 to be represented by someone who has time and time again voted against its interests. I believe that District 4 needs a representative who is independent and will put the needs of residents over corporate interests.
and developers. Every day, I do my best to live up to Dona Spring’s legacy. I am asking District 4 residents to return me to the City Council so that I can continue my work to improve our Downtown and stand up for our neighborhood.

Jesse Arreguin is the incumbent Berkeley City Councilmember representing District 4 (Downtown and Central Berkeley) and is running for re-election in Tuesday’s election.

Berkeley Shooting Victim in Surgery

By SaulSugarman/DanMcMenamin (BCN)
San Oct 31 10:25:00 -0700 2010

A male victim in his teens suffered life-threatening injuries Saturday in a shooting that police say was not a random act of violence, a police spokeswoman said.

The shooting was reported at 3:26 p.m. Saturday in the 1500 block of Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley police Sgt. Mary Kusmiss said.

Officers responded and found the victim in an apartment, Kusmiss said. He was taken to a local hospital with life-threatening injuries, she said.

The man was still alive and in surgery at a local hospital as of about 10 p.m. Saturday, Kusmiss said.

Further updates on his condition have not yet become available. Investigators have been looking for another possible crime scene connected to the shooting besides the apartment, Kusmiss said. No arrests have been made and Berkeley police say that no suspect information has yet become available.

Another Shooting in South Berkeley

By Dan McMenamin (BCN)and Planet
Sat Oct 30 16:32:00 -0700 2010

A teenager suffered life-threatening injuries in a shooting this afternoon at an apartment complex in south Berkeley, a police spokeswoman said.

The shooting was reported at 3:26 p.m. in the 1500 block of Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley police Sgt. Mary Kusmiss said.

Officers responded and found the victim in an apartment, Kusmiss said. He was taken to a local hospital with life-threatening injuries, she said.

Investigators were looking this afternoon for another possible crime scene connected to the shooting besides the apartment, Kusmiss said.

No arrests have been made and no suspect information was available as of 4 p.m. today, she said.

Later Sgt. Kusmiss said that the shooting was not random, but police released no further information.

A report on a theBerkeleyside blog said that neighbors and family members said the victim was a teenager and that he had been shot by a friend who is a Berkeley High student, possibly by accident, but police did not confirm this account.

[Per request of the proprietors, the name of the blog has been added above.]

An Open Letter to the Community On Measure U from California Native Plant Society

Sat Oct 30 10:39:00 -0700 2010

The most critical East Bay election this year is Richmond’s city race where voters will decide whom to elect for city council and mayor and whether to support Measure U, the Richmond Citizen’s Advisory vote to approve a casino at Point Molate. There are few local races that will have broader implications for the future of Richmond, our East Bay shoreline and the greater bayshore environment.

And yet, the silence on Measure U from major Bay Area environmental organizations is deafening. No spirited debate among the leading environmental organizations, no call to action to vote down the casino except from the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. These are strange times indeed. What cast such a pall over a critically important public discussion and the public service that it provides citizens?

The unhappy truth behind this situation is the application of a powerful weapon—the threat of a poison pill. Since we first learned of the proposed settlement between Upstream Development and Citizens for Eastshore State Park and SPRAWLDEF more than a year ago, we have been told that the agreement and its benefits will dissolve if any major environmental organization contests the Environmental Impact Report. Our unequivocal response has been that we would not agree to give up our legal rights. Since we have never seen the settlement agreement, we cannot know whether the poison pill is real or merely a threat. But the developer promise of big money that could go away if somebody else ruins the deal (big carrot, bigger stick) has had a chilling impact on public discourse. Who wants to be perceived as the spoiler?

From our perspective, it’s one thing to sue and negotiate your own settlement, and to that extent we believe that the negotiators operated in good faith. It is quite another to agree to a condition that would attempt to impose a private settlement upon an entire community without public debate, particularly when the terms include approving a publicly unpopular mega-development. Apparently the cynical ploy worked. Visit the website of nearly any major Bay Area environmental organization or read their ballot recommendations and you won’t find mention of Richmond’s Measure U. In some cases you’ll find statements of support for the settlement agreement from different organizations with sentences composed of the exact same text. Environmental groups prejudged the outcome, and rather than waiting to hear the will of the Richmond voters, these organizations have gotten out front with a pro-casino message.

We believe that it is in the public interest to understand what effect the poison pill claim has on the public process. It brings us no great pleasure to notice how powerfully it silenced an entire community whose reputation is built on transparency. And, yes, we remain adamantly opposed to the casino and to anything other than sustainable development at Point Molate. The irony is that the prospects have never been better for defeating the casino and clearing the path for sound planning to protect Point Molate and the San Pablo Peninsula. Polls show Measure U going down to defeat.

Perhaps the best news of all is that strong vibrant grassroots groups such as the Citizens for a Sustainable Point Molate and the Richmond Progressive Alliance have organized out of the understanding that they cannot look to the environmental community to oppose the casino, and they have found the resolve to carry the fight forward on their own terms. We plan to give them all the support we can. We urge Richmond residents to vote No on Measure U. Our non-profit status bars us from endorsing candidates, but we urge those who oppose the casino to learn which candidates share their views and get out and vote. The Richmond Progressive Alliance (www.richmondprogressivealliance.net/) has election signs and materials. Contact them at their office at 317 11th Street, Richmond, 510-412-2260.

Sincerely,
Delia Taylor, President
Laura Baker, Conservation Committee Chair, (510) 684 - 4572
Lech Naumovich, Conservation Analyst,  
(510) 734 - 0335  
East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society

**Sign Snipers Have a New Trick**

It seems likely that an amusing story written by a neighbor of mine on the Berkeley-side blog about who’s winning the battle for District 8 lawn signs has annoyed someone. Today a sticker saying “NIMBY ROBOT SAYS” was slapped across the “Stewart Jones for District 8 Councilman” sign in front of my house on Ashby. This is possibly the same person responsible for a bit of sophomoric video humor now circulating on the internet featuring a robot with an inexplicable British accent and poor-quality text-to-speech pronunciation rules. Might also be the same thugs who are stealing all the “No on R” signs from people’s yards.

--Becky O’Malley

**Elmwood 7-11 Robbed in Berkeley Early Thursday**

*By Bay City News*
*Thu Oct 28 17:14:00 -0700 2010*

Police are investigating a robbery that occurred early this morning at a Berkeley convenience store, a Berkeley police watch commander said.

Two armed men entered a 7-Eleven at 2887 College Ave. a few minutes before 5 a.m. and robbed the store, the watch commander said.

Officers believe the suspects may have targeted the store previously.

The suspects fled, and witnesses were unable to provide police with a vehicle description.

**Re-Elect Albany Environmentalists**

*By Robert Lieber, Albany City Councilmember*
*Fri Oct 29 14:08:00 -0700 2010*

This election in the City of Albany during these challenging economic times is really about effective governing. That point is obscured by what amounts to a grudge match by the pro-waterfront mall faction (candidates Papalia and O’Keefe) that lost the election last time around to the environmentalists (current incumbents Atkinson and Wile).

We need a council that works with the business community to attract business and to retain the business we have. The current Council is doing that. There is always more to do, but we need to recognize what is successful.

- We need to
  - maintain property values
  - retain and attract business
  - avoid city layoffs and maintain city functions at the most efficient levels possible
  - protect core functions such as police and fire and our 3 minute response time

The two incumbents, Marge Atkinson and Joanne Wile, have been working hard to achieve all these things and doing a good job at it. They deserve re-election especially as they began as the shoreline protection candidates and have developed into well rounded government officials with a solid grasp of the issues.

We also need to heal the community regarding the waterfront and to recognize that there are times we can move forward and there are times to shelter in place. During these hard economic times we have to accept that grand schemes and unrealistic progress are off the table and protecting our resources and assets are the wise course. The incumbents Atkinson and Wile get this and have adopted a healing approach.

The Waterfront It is hard to understand what the fuss is in this election without understanding the fight to protect the Albany waterfront. One of the significant things done by this City Council in the past four years has been the Voices to Vision process. In Voices to Vision, the community came together in a city sponsored, comprehensive and interactive study of the waterfront to make its vision for the future of the Albany Waterfront known.

The community spoke clearly - it wants open space. Approximately 75% of the community wanted open space and wanted about 75% of the land area left for open space.

Only the small die-hard pro-mall faction disputes this (including Papalia and O’Keefe). But the results of Voices to Vision mirror all the polling that was done in the past ten years the community wants an open waterfront, not the build-out the pro-developers seek. To anyone following the waterfront controversy, the results were not at all surprising.

Voices to Vision was called for in response to the repeated denial, in face of all evidence, by the pro-developers that the community overwhelmingly supported mostly open space And this is not the spaces between the mall buildings the pro-developers try to sell as open space. Voices to Vision called for participation from the entire community and took the participants through hands on exercises in creating a vision for the waterfront. Almost nobody preferred the track to remain. Participants expressed preferences regarding numerous options for the waterfront, eventually providing an overall vision for the area now occupied by the racetrack (the state park designated areas, including the Bulb, were already settled and not included.) And there are volumes of data in the study to show various configurations to accomplish this vision.

For now it makes sense for the track to run as a track lacking any other viable use for the facility but as horse racing continues to decline in popularity and in relative revenues to the City, even the track owners and operators acknowledge that the track ultimately will cease to operate.

That should quiet the issue for Albany but the small band of pro-developers some of whom continue to “misremember” the facts. This is understandable as this is election season. But there are a few facts that should be remembered. Magna and Caruso spent more than three to four million dollars in trying to push through their shoreline mall development, even hiring some of the most high priced fancy political operatives and consultants to produce the votes they wanted. They were stopped by dedicated local environmentalists who were outspent about a hundred to one and who told them from the beginning that Albany wanted open space and parkland on its waterfront.

The environmentalists were just plain Albany citizens, local Sierra Club members, Citizens for the Albany Shoreline mem-
bers, local Golden Gate Audubon Society members and all their friends, neighbors and supporters. Despite big outside developer money the issue was clear and the support of the community was also clear. The developer eventually gave up and went back to L. A. after wasting millions.

But the local pro-developers “misremember” all this and state that the Sierra Club members and their friends were outsiders - simply untrue. I am honored to be a Sierra Club member and am pleased that so many of my Albany friends and neighbors are either actual members or are sympathetic to the goals of the Sierra Club and even more pleased that the vast majority of Albany voters are environmentalist who saw through the false claims and promises of the developers.

Another recent misrepresentation by the pro-developers should be corrected: they falsely claim that the widely popular Albany Shoreline Protection Initiative was unconstitutional.

This initiative was so popular that it was qualified for the ballot in short order with a petition signed by about 25% of Albany voters.

The pro-developers immediately sued to block the voters from having a say. They were terrified to have the matter put before the Albany voters so they filed suit, paid for by the racetrack. What happened was that the court determined that there was a technical flaw in publishing this ballot measure - a flaw shared by many other City of Albany ballot measures which were also published in the West County Times. Despite the fact that the newspaper was widely circulated in Albany, it failed to qualify as a newspaper of general circulation as it was not printed in Alameda County. But this was a ballot measure that would have given Albany voters a chance to voice their position on the waterfront and this is exactly why the pro-developers fought to keep off the ballot.

The waterfront battle is over for the moment unless these two pro-development candidates (Papalia and O’Keefe) get elected. They will, without a doubt, seek more waterfront development schemes and will start the waterfront war again and tear the city apart again.

The pro-development faction does not seem to listen. They claim that their dreams of development were thwarted and they actually believe that the voters of Albany want to fill the waterfront with concrete. They are like the climate change deniers, or the people who deny that Obama was born in Hawaii. Facts are not important, their goals are what is important. And they have a grudge match on their minds. They lost to the ragtag environmentalists and they are out to get even. The pro-developers want control of the Albany City Council so they can return to the days of courting developers and locking out the environmental voices that have protected the waterfront. That was what spurred the environmentalists to get more involved in the city council in the recent elections.

Join me in supporting Marge Atkinson and Joanne Wile as does the Albany Teachers Association, the Sierra Club, Alameda Democratic Party, National Woman’s Caucus, State Senator Loni Hancock, Assembly member Nancy Skinner, Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, EBMUD Boardmember Andy Katz and former Mayor Robert Cheasty.

Re-Elect Marge Atkinson and Joanne Wile to the Albany City Council.

Bayside Man Arrested in Berkeley Murder

From Sgt. Mary Kusmiss
Thu Oct 28 17:14:00 -0700 2010

Two days after a shooting left one man dead and another seriously wounded, City of Berkeley Police Department (BPD) Homicide Detectives are announcing an arrest in the case.

BPD Detectives arrested Brandon Wallace, 21 of Bay Point. The Alameda County District Attorney (DA) has charged Wallace for the murder of Gary Ferguson Jr., and the attempted murder of another man.

No other suspect or suspects have been charged with these crimes.

On Tuesday morning, October 27, 2010 at approximately 8:43 a.m. City of Berkeley Police Department (BPD) patrol officers responded to 911 calls from community members who reported hearing gunshots and saw “a man down” in the 2900 block of Sacramento Street.

Officers found two men lying on the sidewalk just south of 2914 Sacramento Street. Both men had been shot. Berkeley Fire Department (BFD) paramedics transported the two victims to a local Trauma Center where later Ferguson died.

The second victim suffered serious wounds but is surviving. BPD is still urging anyone who may know anything about this homicide to call the BPD Homicide Detail at (510) 981-5741 or the 24 hour BPD non emergency number of (510) 981-5900 and mention the crime. If a community member wishes to remain anonymous, he/she is encouraged to call the Bay Area Crimes Stoppers (BACS) at (800)-222-TIPS (8477).

Any information may be critical to furthering the case. Even the smallest or seemingly insignificant detail can be the key to supporting the efforts of detectives.

More Election Letters

Measure R Will Make Pollution Worse in Berkeley

Mayor Tom Bates’ sits on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District - and BAAQMD notwithstanding, most Berkeley residents aren’t aware of the horrific pollution levels of the air they and their children breathe. Folks don’t realize that even up in the hills, our air quality is some of the worst in the nation. To quote an article in the SF Chron from Dec. 16, 2008, “three Berkeley schools [are] in the top 1 percent among the nation’s most at-risk sites for exposure to toxic air emissions.” Folks who live in the hills often don’t think massive development impacts them unless it cuts into their bay views, but they just aren’t seeing (or breathing) the big picture. Tom Bates Downtown Plan (Measure R) is an open door to more traffic, more congestion, more pollution and more pulmonary disease. The current Downtown plan is not good, but Measure R will make the situation much, much worse. All the green-backwash that Helen Burke’s Sierra Club is pumping out like so much toxic air is just going to change the reality that this measure opens the door to more than a million square feet of additional intensive, downtown skyscraper development, and essentially no new tax revenues, just more municipal expenses. Follow the money, Measure R is not funded by your neighbors, it’s basically all funded by developers and their enablers, most of whom don’t live in Berkeley.

Fred Dodsworth

Council Begins Discussion of Budget Woes, Raises Parking Ticket Fines to Compensate

By Charlotte Perry-Houts
Thu Oct 28 10:11:00 -0700 2010

The Berkeley City Council heard from the heads of all of the city’s public service departments during Tuesday evening’s work session on the citywide work plan. Heads of the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront,
Police, Fire, Health Services, Public works, and other departments came forward and gave brief presentations regarding their department’s significance, needs, and what they are doing to increase efficiency amidst budget difficulties. This was the first in a series of work sessions to occur in the next six months in the process of coming up with a budget for Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013. In the interest of time, the council struggled to hold their questions throughout this work session, but they will have the chance to give feedback on the work plan in December.

Dealing with dwindling funding for staff and resources, all of the departments highlighted their attempts to reduce costs while maintaining public services. While departments are still looking at expanding and making improvements in their field, many specialized programs are faced with threats of loss of funding. The funding for Heart 2 Heart, a program that works within low-income communities affected by heart disease to help people make healthy choices, is ending on June 30, 2011. The funding comes from Kaiser Permanente, which is looking at cutting back on community projects.

Bob Hicks, director of the Finance Department, discussed ways that the City can improve collection on taxes and increase recurring revenue to ease budget problems. Overall, Berkeley seems to be faring somewhat better than many other American cities in terms of public services, partly because Berkeley residents have a higher-than-average level of income. Still, hiring freezes and furloughs have been put in place, and although no layoffs have occurred yet, some are scheduled for March and April.

After a ten-minute break, the Council reconvened for the regular meeting. Among the ceremonial matters was the recognition of the Rotary Club for World Polio Day, as well as the declaration of October 26, 2010 to be Salma Arastu Day. Salma Arastu is a local folk artist, miniature artist, and Arabic calligrapher.

Councilmember Worthington advertised the upcoming memorial service for Pat Cody, local feminist, health activist, book store owner, author, and more. The service is going to be held this Saturday at 2:00 pm at the First Congregational Church of Berkeley at 2345 Channing Way.

Public commentators included Mary Ann Thomas of World Can’t Wait, a man with a green mustache speaking in opposition to Measure R, and Donald Dean Carlson, a developer who wants to set up a bank for the city of Berkeley. A Beverages and More employee attended the meeting to speak to an item supporting just treatment of BevMo employees, who are trying to negotiate the restoration of work hours and benefits with their employer. There will be a rally this Friday in Jack London Square at 5:00 in support of BevMo workers.

One item that was briefly addressed during the meeting was Councilmember Worthington’s recommendation to send a letter to McDonald’s urging it to require that its suppliers use a less violent method of slaughtering chickens. The item was sent to the Humane Commission for review and recommendation of additional action. Councilmember Capitelli, noting that the letter would probably go straight into someone’s recycling bin, suggested that the Council also urge residents to boycott McDonald’s.

The Council unanimously passed Worthington’s recommendation to send a letter in support of Asahbir Basi. Basi is a practicing Sikh who wears a turban, and the victim of a hate crime on September 11, 2010 where the word “terrorist” was scrawled across the door to his home. The letter to Mr. Basi notes several other hate crimes that have occurred in Berkeley in recent years.

Councilmember Capitelli recommended that an information report on the decline in taxable retail sales be moved to Consent Calendar, and an hour’s worth of unplanned discussion ensued. A report from the Office of Economic Development addressed the problem of Berkeley’s loss of sales tax revenue to regional competition and Internet shopping. Berkeley attracts shoppers to its specialty grocery stores and restaurants, but loses out when it comes to products like electronics and large appliances, for which people most often go to Emeryville or Oakland. The lack of sales tax on Internet retail has caused a lot of online shopping to take the place of local, taxable shopping. The City saw a decline of $1.2 million in sales tax during the last four quarters.

Another problem highlighted was the effort to fill vacant storefronts and the problem of the expensive, difficult permit process that businesses must go through to open shop. An example was cited where a woman who wanted to open an ice cream shop on Solano Avenue had to pay $9,200 to get a permit quickly enough to start her business by the time she started making lease payments. The difficult permit process is a product of the City’s attempt to regulate the business environment. As Councilmember Anderson put it, “it looks like there’s common sense and rationality on the one side and regimentation on the other side.”

Councilmember Worthington noted that the permit process had been improved for the Telegraph and downtown areas, and that those areas were doing comparatively well.

After agreeing that this issue was going to be revisited during the quarterly Economic Development work session in December, the council moved on to the recommendation to increase parking citation fees by five dollars. An increase in such fines, several councilmembers pointed out, disproportionately becomes a burden on lower-income people who have difficulties registering their vehicles because of outstanding fines. The hike is a response to the State taking an extra three dollars from each parking citation issued. Mayor Bates complained that the implementation of this extra fee is a result of the State’s Republican fiscal policy that passes the taxing on to the Cities. “The right wing Republicans say we’re not going to vote for any taxes, they did, they passed it on and gave it to us, we’re the villains, they are not.” Councilmember Wozniak pointed out that the State’s policy of passing the costs on to the Cities may be an ongoing trend, and that the City should protest the policy in some way. Mayor Bates (who is married to State Senator Loni Hancock) agreed, saying, “I’m going to go home and take a sign and walk around my house.”

Eventually, the council voted in support of a three-dollar fine increase to compensate for the money being taken by the state. Mayor Bates and Councilmember Wozniak were the only votes against the increase.

Murder on Sacramento Street in Berkeley

By Thomas Lord
Tue Oct 26 09:27:00 -0700 2010

Murder on Sacramento Street in Berkeley

Thomas Lord
Sacramento Stree is cordoned off as police search for shooters who killed at least one person and wounded another and bystanders
Shortly before 9 AM a rapid volley of shots rang out on Sacramento Street near Russell. Eyewitnesses report seeing two shooters appear from behind an alley, brandishing guns. A crowd scattered as the shooting took place. Witnesses described the shooters as young black males, possibly teenagers, wearing black hoodies. Police now confirm that one victim—identified by a neighbor as Gary Ferguson—has died. Late this afternoon the word on the street was that the second victim, identified only as “Larry”, had also died in the hospital, but Berkeley police have not confirmed this rumor.

Both had sustained severe injuries and were evacuated to hospitals. The victims described as one youth and one adult, are well known to many in the neighborhood, although their names have not yet been released by police.

Neighbors, who asked that their names be withheld, told the Planet that the victims’ first names were Larry and Gary, and that they think Gary Ferguson Jr. is the dead man’s name. They say that his father, Gary Ferguson Sr., formerly operated the S.T.E.P. S. drug treatment program. Twitter posts intercepted by this reporter said that “Larry” worked as a barber at Johnson’s Barber Shop in the block where the shooting took place.

The shooters were observed fleeing the scene on foot. An extensive police search of the surrounding area was underway until mid-afternoon. Neighbors reported seeing at least 15 police cars and say that police officers armed with rifles were searching for the shooters.

Sgt. Mary Kusmiss of the Berkeley Police Department spoke with the Daily Planet early this afternoon confirming that one of the two victims died of his wounds at the hospital.

Late this afternoon Sgt. Kusmiss released this statement:

“As of 4:20 p.m., City of Berkeley Police Department (BPD) Homicide detectives are continuing their investigation of a double shooting that happened this morning at approximately 8:43 a.m. BPD Officers who responded to 911 calls regarding gunfire found two adult men lying on the sidewalk just south of 2914 Sacramento Street. Both men had been shot. Detectives do not believe that this is a random shooting. “

“Berkeley Fire Department (BFD) paramedics transported the victim to a local trauma center where one later died as a result of his wounds. The second victim underwent surgery and is considered stable. “

“BPD is not sharing the identities of the victims out of respect for all family members and friends who live near or far who need to be notified. BPD honors this process. In addition, BPD waits for verification of a homicide victim’s identity until it is confirmed by fingerprints taken during the Alameda County Coroner’s autopsy process. “

“BPD is urging anyone who may know anything about this homicide to call the BPD Homicide detail at (510) 981-5741 or the 24 hour BPD non-emergency number of (510) 981-5900. If a community member wishes to remain anonymous, he/she is encouraged to call the Bay Area Crimes Stoppers (BACS) at (800)-222-TIPS (8477). Any information may be critical to solving this crime. Sometimes the smallest or seemingly insignificant detail can be the key to arresting the suspect or suspects. “

“This is the fifth homicide of the year. No other homicides have occurred on Sacramento Street this year. “

On the scene police placed out approximately 50 shell markers. The exact number of rounds fired has not yet been released but appears to be substantial.

Police have confirmed that there were two suspects on the scene but cannot confirm whether both or just one fired. The suspects fled first south on Sacramento, and then west, through a neighboring laundromat.

One neighbor who saw the shooters as they ran away told the Planet that “people in this neighborhood are tired of putting up with hoodlums and drug dealers.”

More Developers Finance the Yes on R Campaign

By Daniella Thompson
Mon Oct 25 14:53:00 -0700 2010

The second filing by the Yes on Measure R campaign of California Form 460, Monetary Contributions Received, reveals that between Oct. 1 and Oct. 16, 2010, the campaign received $21,950, bringing the total contributed so far to $54,400.

It will come as no surprise to anyone that a good many of the contributors are the familiar developers whose names are perpetually linked with controversial land-use projects in Berkeley.

Tied in first place, having contributed $5,000 each, are Pacific Gas & Electric and the Northern California Carpenters Regional Council PAC. The carpenters recognize an opportunity for more jobs in the promise of accelerated development offered by Measure R. As for PG&E, $5,000 is peanuts compared to the $46.1 million the utility spent on vainly trying to pass the anti-green Proposition 16 in June.

In second place, with $2,000 each, are First Shattuck, LLC and Constitution Square, LLC. First Shattuck owns and manages the 13-story Great Western Building—known since 1997 as the Power Bar Building—and soon to be known as the Chase Building—in the heart of downtown Berkeley. Between 2001 and 2009, First Shattuck earned $917,347 in Federal contracts through lease or rental of office facilities.

Constitution Square, LLC of San Rafael is just another name for Wareham Development, a major commercial developer and landlord in West Berkeley. The name comes from the Constitution Square Building at 2168 Shattuck Avenue, which Wareham developed in 1983 and sold in 2004 to Seagate Properties, also of San Rafael.

Seagate Properties, which gave $1,000, owns and manages five properties in central Berkeley, including the Wells Fargo Building, the aforementioned Constitution Square, 1950 and 2030-40 Addison Street, the Promenade at 39th Street University Avenue. Seagate was the initial developer of the 9-story Arpeggio at 2055 Center Street, which it sold in 2005 to SNK Realty Group of Phoenix, Arizona.

Four other contributors came into play with $1,000 each. Developer Patrick Kennedy sold his seven apartment buildings to Sam Zell’s Equity Residential, but he continues to develop properties in Berkeley and owns the landmark Ennor’s Restaurant.
Berkeley Campus Peeper
Suspect Arrested

By Saul Sugarman (BCN)
Thu Oct 21 22:50:00 -0700 2010

A man suspected of taking pictures of women at a University of California at Berkeley locker room was arrested this afternoon.

Police arrested Berkeley resident Gregorio Hernandez, 29, for disorderly conduct after he allegedly snuck into a women’s locker room at UC Berkeley on two separate occasions, campus police Lt. Alex Yao said.

Hernandez, who is not affiliated with the university, is accused of entering the locker room at the campus Recreational Sports Facility in the afternoon and evening of Oct. 4 and Oct. 6, police said.

On Oct. 4, a custodian allegedly saw Hernandez in the facility at about 4:30 p.m. with a towel wrapped around his head and chin, Yao said.

Then on Oct. 6, at about 9:20 p.m., Hernandez was reportedly seen again, this time leaving the facility wearing a black wig.

Police said Hernandez was seen using a cell phone to take pictures of women in the locker room during one of the incidents. He fled both times after staff confronted him.

There have been no other reports of unauthorized entry to the facility’s locker room this month, Yao said.

“PALOOZA!” at People’s Park
More of a Bombalooza

By Ted Friedman
Wed Oct 27 00:07:00 -0700 2010

As a trial balloon to increase student use of people’s Park, the ASUC threw what they called a “PALOOZA” before the Arizona State vs. Cal. football game Saturday morning, but it came off as more of a bomb-alooza.

For you etymologists: palooza may come from a 30’s Three Stooges short. The stooges probably used the original form, lalapalooza.

There were no etymologists among the handful of students who showed and no one had a clue about the meaning of palooza. But the definition, “an exaggerated event,” works like a charm.

The associated students who attended were hopeful that their palooza would start a healing of the bad feelings between students and the park, a hop skip and a jump from their dorms.

ASUC members who attended were not discouraged by drizzly weather and the marked absence of their fellow students.

To a soothing reggae beat from student performers, event sponsors handed out more than 200 Top Dogs. The buns were limp.

The mandatory inflated jumpaseum failed to get a tingle.

Politicians, Teley businessmen, a few university officials, and one reporter almost outnumbered students.

More time and effort may be needed to convince students to put People’s Park on their schedules for football weekends. Another such event is scheduled for November.

Officials and kibitzers alike are hoping such events will change the park’s image, if not use, and restore peace and profit to Tele-

Building (formerly the Act 1 and 2 cinemas) at 2130 Center Street.

Townsend 1, LLC of San Francisco is a private company categorized under Private Elementary and Secondary Schools. However, when this reporter phoned their office, the recorded greeting identified the business as Townsend Properties.

Doug Herst, who also contributed $1,000, is a lighting industry veteran. His family founded Peerless Lighting in 1892, and Herst managed the company from 1965 until his retirement in 2006. Upon his retirement, Herst turned his attention to property development in Berkeley. Currently he is chairman and CEO of Herst Ventures, Inc., and working with Darrell de Tienne on a planned work-live development called Peerless Greens. Like a number of other Yes on R contributors, Herst is a generous donor to the Berkeley Repertory Theatre-the Rep’s 2009 annual report places him in the Presidents category ($3,000-$5,999).

The cypher among the $1,000 contributors is Fair-Hill Enterprises, Inc., of Danville. This company is run by its president, James A. Hill, out of his home in the Diablo Highlands subdivision. It was incorporated in May 2009 and was preceded by Fair-Hill Enterprises, LLC, formed in January 1997 and converted out.

Five entities contributed $500 each. Rue-Ell Enterprises, Inc., is familiar to most Southside and Northside dwellers as the owner of rental properties, commercial arcades, and food courts. Hotel Shattuck is owned and operated by BPR Properties of Palo Alto. A few years ago, before the economic bubble burst, BPR proposed to build a 16- or 19-story tower in the hotel’s rear. Measure R would help make that dream a reality.

1950 MLK LLC is another name for Hudson McDonald, developers of the 148-unit New Californian apartment complex, popularly known as the Trader Joe’s Building. A fourth contributor who gave $500, Fat/Work Development, is a real-estate development limited partnership headed by Michael Goldin, an architect, furniture designer, and landlord to various commercial tenants in West Berkeley.

The fifth entity who gave $500 to Yes on R is Berkeley Foundation for the Arts, a non-profit associated with the ACCI Gallery at 1652 Shattuck Avenue. Interestingly, only this past June, councilmember Jesse Arreguin, a leader of the No on R campaign, relinquished $750 from his council office budget to be granted to Berkeley Foundation for the Arts to fund the design and execution of a large-scale mural on the south-facing wall of 1690 Shattuck Avenue.

Greenbelt Alliance contributed $250 to Yes on R, having apparently fallen for its “green” promise.

David Fleishhacker of San Francisco gave $100. A career educator and author, he is president of the Fleishhacker Foundation and a member of the Berkeley Rep board of trustees. The Rep’s 2009 annual report places him in the Associate Producer donor category ($6,000-$11,000).

Closing the current Yes on R contributors’ list with $75 is architect and sometime developer David Trachtenberg, whose practice seems to have evolved toward the type of commercial construction that would benefit if Measure R wins in November.

On the expenditure side, the Yes on R campaign reports having paid $1,500 to the Sierra Club’s San Francisco Bay Chapter for [campaign] literature; $20,922.30 to the campaign firm Terris Barnes Walters for literature (the trifold mailer designed to look as if it had come from the Sierra Club); and $755, also for literature, to Californians Vote Green, of Los Angeles.

Why would the Yes on R campaign pay $755 to Californians Vote Green? Because CVG is a sleazy political promoter who will back anyone who pays. In June, CVG supported PG&E’s Proposition 16 mailer for November just landed in Berkeley mailboxes, and naturally it includes the endorsement Yes on Measure R*. In the bottom margin, the following legend was added in mousetype: “Appearance is paid for and authorized by each candidate and ballot measure which is designated by an *.”
graph Ave, merchants who have complained (in print) of increased violence outside their stores.

If the Teley businessmen had named the Saturday event, they might have called it, “Change the Vibe, Avoid the Crime.”

Two U.C. policemen attended PALOOZA!, just to ensure town and gown made nice. And they did. Inclement weather and ennui among the usual provocateurs may have had much to do with the peaceful result of the event.

Or was it the tryptophan in the free Top Dogs? (One to a customer).

ASUC funding of the event was part of the university’s alcohol abatement efforts, according to an ASUC representative. The event was billed as alcohol free. The Top Dogs were courtesy of the student dorms office.

Can a PALOOZA, three stooge-like or not, save South Side? It’s too soon to tell.

Not to push the John Lennon angle, but the PALOOZA! may have been the beginning of a chance for peace, if not love, in the park.

Ted Friedman has lived a half-block from People’s Park for thirty years. Top Dog is a hop-skip-and-a-jump away.

Life’s a Gamble!

By Dorothy Snodgrass (First Person)
Wed Oct 27 09:49:00 -0700 2010

It promised to be a perfect weekend getaway, the Emeryville Senior Center overnight trip to Clear Lake this past Saturday and Sunday. Having heard so much about Clear Lake, I happily signed up for the trip and was probably the first one to board the Center’s mini van, “Go Van Go.” However, looking over the itinerary prepared by our host/drivers, Joe and Joanne Melancon, I must confess my heart sank when I discovered that we would be stopping at four casinos! If I had only read the announcement of the trip more thoroughly, I might have surmised that this was a tour for gamblers. “Robinson’s Rancheria Casino” was surely a tip-off; did I think this was an ice cream parlor?

Not to worry. Determined that this would be a pleasant weekend, despite the torrential rain that plagued us for the entire two days (not a light rain, nor drizzle, but a deluge of biblical proportions) we took off at 9 a.m. Saturday morning, arriving in Calistoga at 11:30, where we visited a Farmers Market, walking around in pouring rain through stalls of fruit, vegetables and pumpkins -- hundreds of pumpkins.

Getting back on the bus we headed north for Clear Lake. I was assured the Lake was out there, but the windows of our van were so steamed up I couldn’t see a thing.

So much for Clear Lake. Thus began our tour of casinos, the first being Twin Pines, where we spent three hours. As someone who detests casinos with a passion, ranking them second only to a Snake Pit, I fell into a state of acute depression. Glancing around at the cavernous room, where grim-faced patrons sat glued to slot machines, I understood why I dislike casinos. There’s obviously no joy there, just dozens and dozens of hapless people gambling away their social security checks, convinced they’re going to hit a thousand dollar jack pot.

What a welcome relief it was to check into our comfortable Super 8 motel that evening, unpack and watch the news on a giant TV. Ah, but then at 6:30 we got back on the van, heading for Robinson’s Rancheria where we spent another three hours. Now I ask you, what does one do in a casino when they have no interest in playing the machines? They head for the Restaurant and indulge in a sinful buffet dinner, going back for seconds two or three times. With another hour hanging heavy on their hands, they go to the Bar and have a Starbucks’ Blueberry Mocha, speculating on what delights awaits us the next morning.

Sunday morning, after a complimentary breakfast at the motel, we have an all too-brief tour of Konocki Indian Village. We then wind up, where else, at another casino, the Konoci Vista Casino, again for three miserable hours. Oh, but this time I used my head; settling into a comfortable booth in the Steak House Grill, over a stack of pancakes I penned this fascinating account of my weekend ordeal.

To be perfectly honest, I must confess there were a few bright moments on the trip, such as the visit to Tulip Hill and the elegant Cagao Del Lago Winery, where we were treated with generous samples of wine and the opportunity to shop in their upscale gift shop and explore the beautiful Court Yard -- in pouring rain.

At 3 p.m., Sunday afternoon, to everyone’s relief, we boarded the bus for the last time, heading back to the Center. We all agreed that despite the miserable weather and long, long hours in casinos, it had been a very pleasant trip, in good company -- thanks to the capable services of Joe and Joanne Melancon and their assistant driver, Cecilia Hudson.

Permit me to say, however, that I will never, ever go to another casino!

Election Section

Election Coverage to Date

Below voters can find a list with links of everything that’s previously appeared in our “Election Section”, in reverse chronological order.

Re-Elect Karen Hemphill for School Board 2010

By Karen Hemphill
Thursday October 21, 2010

As current School Board President, what distinguishes me from the other candidates is that I have proven leadership in what it takes to advance student achievement in these difficult economic times. During my tenure and leadership, through careful fiscal oversight and fostering of creative partnerships with the City and other public as well as non-profit agencies (and with the continued support of our community school taxes), the School District has maintained a balanced budget every year for the past four years, while retaining small class sizes; art and music programs; and student support services. Most importantly, with the adoption of the first District-wide student achievement plan (which I championed and led in developing) overall academic achievement has risen, while the District has started to make real progress on the achievement gap that has historically existed among racial groups in our schools. With the decision not to seek re-election of two long-term Board members (Shirley Issel and Nancy Riddle, who both endorse my re-election, as well as do continuing Board members Beatriz Levy-Cutler and John Selwusky), my experience and proven leadership in conducting an open and transparent budget process and advancing data-based, systematic academic growth strategies will be particularly important in continuing the good work, we as a Board have accomplished in the past few years. -more-

The Willard/Bateman Election Forum and the Unanswered Questions

By Judith Epstein
Wednesday October 20, 2010

I’m sure that many of us who attended the Willard/Bateman election forum hoped for informative and lively debates. In some
cases, we were not disappointed. But in addition to the speakers and the audience, there was another notable presence in the room: the Willard Courtesy Policy. When invoked, this policy silenced debate and left some of us to go home with our questions unanswered. -more-

Contributions to the Yes on H and I Campaign (Commentary)
By Albert Sukoff
Wednesday October 20, 2010
The information comes from the City Clerk’s office. I have sorted it as it now appears. Many of the filings did not identify the contributor as to occupation but I went on line and found most of them and placed them in the appropriate category. Over 86% of the funds for H and I come from potential beneficiaries (no...not the kids). -more-

Why It Is Important To Vote NO on Measures H and I (Commentary)
By Peter Schorer
Saturday October 16, 2010
In these two Measures, the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) is asking taxpayers to let it borrow a total of $260 million for various projects, only some of which are actually concerned with education. But let me state at the outset that the total that taxpayers will wind up paying if the Measures pass is not $260 million but over $610 million when the cost of debt service (interest, etc.) is taken into account. (See the BUSD’s “Plan for School Maintenance and Reconstruction in the Coming Decade” (the so-called “Blue Book”).) That’s more than half a billion dollars. -more-

Press Release: Shirley Dean Endorses Jones, McCormick--not Wozniak
From the Berkeley Democratic Club
Sunday October 17, 2010
The Berkeley Democratic Club today indicated that it made an incorrect statement indicating that former Mayor Shirley Dean had endorsed incumbent Councilmember Gordon Wozniak for City Council District 8. Ms. Dean has not endorsed Mr. Wozniak and has, in fact, endorsed his two opponents. -more-

It’s Really a Billion Dollars: $100,000 per Student for Capital Improvements (Commentary)
By Albert Sukoff
Wednesday October 20, 2010
If you have been driving around Berkeley this election season, you could not help but notice the preponderance of signs on both private and public property which support rather than oppose Measures H and I. That is because the relatively few people who have managed a modicum of time and energy to fight these measures do not have even a small part of the resources available to those in support. Those promoting H and I have been given over $100,000 from various unions, architectural design and engineering firms and building contractors, all of which stand to benefit from the passage of these measures. The proponents have all the signs they need and paid help to put them up (and to sabotage the few signs posted in opposition). What they do not have is a much of a case for passage of these measures. -more-

Three State Propositions That Aren’t Getting Enough Attention
By Paul Hogarth (from Beyond.Chron.com)
Wednesday October 20, 2010
With the November election less than two weeks away, the media buzz is all about Jerry Brown and Meg Whitman. At the grass-roots level, activists have been organizing for Proposition 19 (marijuana) - and environmentalists have focused on defeating Prop 23. But the three propositions that arguably have the greatest impact on California’s future - Propositions 24, 25 and 26 - are barely getting any attention at all. The state budget may be a boring subject, but Sacramento will remain a dysfunctional cesspool that generations of elected officials cannot fix until we make structural changes. Getting rid of the two-thirds budget rule by passing Proposition 25 is a critical first step, and passing Prop 24 will undo some of the most recent damage that is driving the state to bankruptcy. But even passing Props 24 and 25 is not enough, because Proposition 26 threatens to make a terrible situation worse - by extending two-thirds to all fee hikes. In fact, Prop 26 could make the passage of Prop 25 and the defeat of Prop 23 virtually meaningless. -more-

Election Letters
Friday October 15, 2010
Measure R Will Not Prevent Sprawl; Where There’s Smoke, There’s Fire; Yes on Measure I; District 4 Funding; Worthington, not Beier; Yes on Measure H; Against Sierra Club’s Endorsement of Measure R; Supporting H & I; Republicans and Women; No on 26, Polluter Protection; Voting for Beier -more-

A Reluctant Vote for Measure I and Other Endorsements
By Becky O’Malley
Tuesday October 19, 2010
Someone at some civic event last week asked me if I’m voting for Measures H & I, the tax and bond measures designed to support the Berkeley public schools. The question was phrased in the form of an incorrect premise, “I know the Planet doesn’t make endorsements, but...” -more-

Who Paid for “the Sierra Club’s” Yes on R mailer? (News Analysis)
By Daniella Thompson
Tuesday October 12, 2010
If you’re a Berkeley voter, you’ll have received the colorful mailer from the Yes on Measure R campaign conspicuously designed to look as if it had come from the Sierra Club. Like Measure R itself, the mailer harps on the word “green” numerous times. Of course, there is nothing in the ballot language that guarantees any green (or even rosy) outcome for downtown Berkeley.

What we have here is a case of flagrant greenwashing, financed by developers. -more-

The Will of the People: Measure R is Debated (Sort of) Yet Again
By Christopher Adams
Wednesday October 13, 2010
Is the air too “dramatic” in the block of Addison which houses the city’s self-described “arts district,” is there something that fuzzes minds and prevents rational discourse? In January I went to a panel discussion about downtown development in the Aurora Theatre where not one of the panelists mentioned most of the activities which draw people downtown (like retail or restaurants or libraries or gyms). This Tuesday I went to a panel discussion in the same venue about Measure R, characterized by drama, if drama means “artifice,” “fictionalizing,” and “upstaging,” but mostly not including discussion of Measure R. Maybe the Chamber of Commerce, which had organized the panel, wanted it that way, but I went wanting to learn more, and I left as flummoxed as I had been in January. -more-

League of Women Voters Hosts Lively Measure R Forum
By Steven Finacom
Tuesday October 12, 2010
A forum on Measure R, the controversial
downtown high-rise development proposal on Berkeley’s November ballot, provoked a sharp exchange of views last Tuesday.

More than 50 people attended the event that was held in the Berkeley City College building on Center Street and was sponsored by the League of Women Voters. -more-

“Gerrymandering”: The Movie, the Proposition, the Conflict of Interest
By Gar Smith
Tuesday October 12, 2010
“You don’t pick your representatives; your representatives pick you.”- A popular definition of the “gerrymandering” process -more-

An Open Letter to Professor Robert Reich Regarding Berkeley Measure R
By Susan Cerny
Friday October 08, 2010
Dear Professor Reich,
On September 30, 2010 I wrote you regarding your endorsement of Measure R and my observation that your endorsement conflicted with statements you make on public radio and on your blog site. (The letter is included below) -more-

Support Education and Accountability—Yes on H...No on I
By Priscilla Myrick
Wednesday October 13, 2010
Measure H is a parcel tax that will provide approximately $5 million per year for 10 years (from 2013 to 2023) at a total cost of $50 million. The revenues from the parcel tax will be used to maintain school facilities.

Measure I authorizes the District to issue $210 million in school construction bonds that will be used to construct classrooms and renovate district facilities over the next ten years. However, the cost to repay the bonds (principal and interest) will be $611 million over 50 years through 2060. -more-

From Lisa Manning, Chair, Berkeley Cultural Trust Marketing Director, Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse
Friday October 15, 2010
Berkeley Cultural Trust (BCT) hosts a Berkeley City Council candidates forum, moderated by the League of Women Voters, from noon-1:30 pm October 20, 2010 at the Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 2020 Addison Street, Berkeley CA 94704. The forum is open and free to the public. -more-

Berkeley Measure R: 2 Cons and a Pro
By B. Soffer
Saturday October 09, 2010
[EDITOR’S NOTE: The Bay Area News Group (San Jose Mercury, Oakland Tribune, Contra Costa Times, Berkeley Voice and more) has come out against Berkeley’s proposed Measure R.
Here’s a link to their editorial: Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates wrote an op-ed in response supporting Measure R.
Now B. Soffer of the Green Party has sent us his rebuttal, reprinted below:] -more-

Measure R: Claims and Facts
By John English Tuesday October 12, 2010
Measure R is a deceptive attempt to slip through some highly controversial specifics by linking them to a parade of nice-sounding vague generalities and an alleged “green vision for the Downtown.” Don’t be fooled by proponents’ greenwashing rhetoric. Read the fine print. -more-

Marijuana Measure T is not the Solution
By Shirley Dean, Former Mayor, City of Berkeley and Sophie Hahn, Community and School Leader
Wednesday October 13, 2010
This week we got our first look at the “Yes on T” flyer currently being distributed. We support the efforts of those Berkeley advocates for medical marijuana who have acted responsibly to help people find their way through the complex legal and practical problems that the chaos of State law around this issue has created. However, the assertions in the flyer urging a “yes” vote on Berkeley Measure T are so misleading that we feel compelled to reply. -more-

Privatizing VA Medical Care: Another Tea Party attack against blacks, Latinos and poor whites
By Jean Damu
Wednesday October 13, 2010
The Republican Party and the Tea Party Express are on a roll, if the pundits and pollsters are to be believed. They say the opportunity will exist after the mid-term elections for them to be in a position to undo some of the positive legislation passed by Democratically controlled congresses. At the top of their hit list—undo the healthcare reforms and privatize social security, as well as the VA hospitals. -more-

Sierra Club Local Endorsements = Machines, NOT Green
By Merrilee Mitchell
Wednesday October 13, 2010
The Sierra Club, terrific on national issues like BP, has a Berkeley based local Chapter that seems to have eclipsed our own UC - BP horror story without a peep. UC-BP plans massive Research and Development (R and D) in biofuels here, and they are planning for Berkeley to become the world capitol for this research. -more-

George Beier in His Own Words: A Cautionary Tale for Neighborhoods
By Judith Epstein
Wednesday October 13, 2010
The first time I met George Beier, he was charming, friendly, and he told me exactly what I wanted to hear. I just wasn’t the truth. Beier is a self-described “neighborhood activist,” but when Elmwood residents and merchants needed a champion, he took the side of the developer who would have destroyed our neighborhood. -more-

New: “Sierra Club” Yes on R mailer financed by Sam Zell
By Daniella Thompson
Thursday October 07, 2010
If you’re a Berkeley voter, you’ll have received the colorful mailer from the Yes on Measure R campaign conspicuously designed to look as if it had come from the Sierra Club.

Like Measure R itself, the mailer harps on the word “green” numerous times. Of course, there is nothing in the ballot language that guarantees any green (or even rosy) outcome for downtown Berkeley.

What we have here is a case of flagrant greenwashing, financed by developers. -more-

How I’m Voting on the State Propositions
By Stu Flashman Monday October 04, 2010
[Editor’s Note: Stu Flashman is a Rockridge-based environmental attorney and an avid follower of local and state politics. He’s a normal East Bay progressive, but just to keep you confused, here’s also a link to the web site of a Los Angeles progressive organization, which differs with Stu on some propositions.]

My sample ballot came today, which says to me it’s time for me to share my opinions on the ballot measures and candidates. It is, as it usually is in a statewide November
Updated: The Berkeley Democratic Club’s Endorsement Meeting (Opinion)

By Abigail Surasky
Monday October 04, 2010
[Editor’s Note: A reader saw my plea for a report of what happened at the endorsement meeting of the Berkeley Democratic Club (formerly known as The Moderates) and she volunteered this report of what she saw. We asked her if she is supporting any candidate or issue. “Sure,” she said, “I’m endorsing Jesse Arreguin (because of his presentation on Measure R, which I previously knew nothing about); Measures H&I; and for School Board I’m endorsing Julie Holcomb and Leah Wilson.” She seems to have done her best to be fair to all however.]

City Council Highlights

As a whole, the city council candidates were a colorful crew, reflecting a healthy diversity of opinions and styles (though disappointingly not race) that make Berkeley what it is.

Why I Support Julie Holcomb for Berkeley School Board

By David Manson
Tuesday October 05, 2010
I have worked on the “front lines” of youth and community development work in Berkeley ever since I moved here in 1991. During my time with the South Berkeley YMCA, Berkeley Youth Alternatives, and Berkeley Boosters Police Activities League, I have worked with some of Berkeley’s most at-risk youth in programs designed to support their success in our public schools and help move them to higher education and to become successful, contributing members of our community.

BAHA Election Information Available Online: BAHA endorsement: Vote No on Measure R

Tuesday October 05, 2010

BCA Endorsements

From Dave Blake
Tuesday September 28, 2010

Berkeley: Council 1: NO ENDORSEMENT
Council 4: Jesse Arreguin
Council 7: Kriss Worthington
Council 8: Stewart Jones
School Board: Hemphill, Holcomb, Wilson

Le Conte Neighborhood Views District 7 Berkeley Council Candidates

By Steven Finacom
Tuesday September 28, 2010

The three candidates for Berkeley’s District Seven Council seat currently held by Kriss Worthington presented themselves to the Le Conte neighborhood at a candidate’s forum sponsored by the Le Conte Neighborhood Association on the evening of Thursday, September 16, 2010.

Press Release: BAHA Election Information Available Online

Tuesday September 28, 2010

In an effort to provide election information concerning preservation issues to its members and the voting public, the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA) has published the following three items on its website.

Candidates’ responses to BAHA questionnaire

Press Release: Priscilla Myrick announces candidacy for Berkeley, CA School Board

Director

Tuesday September 28, 2010

Public education advocate and veteran chief financial officer Priscilla Myrick has launched her second run for a slot on the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) board in the November 2nd election.

Pacific Steel Castings (PSC): Politicians Protecting Polluters

By Merrillie Mitchell
Tuesday September 21, 2010

Community members have real health concerns re pollution from Pacific Steel Castings company located at 2nd and Gilman. Here are a few of the problem chemicals.

Election Letters

View from a Downtown Apartment, Sierra Club Responds to Critics

View from a Downtown Apartment

The other evening my 21 month old great-granddaughter Maeve came to dinner with her parents. As she gazed out the window of my downtown Berkeley apartment, she said “Look, look, moon up in the sky”. At first I was enchanted to think she was already contemplating the universe and then it struck me that, if we don’t vote responsibly against Measure R, soon there will be no view of the moon to fill her with wonder.

Bonnie Hughes
Downtown Shattuck Avenue Resident

An Open Letter to Victoria Peirotes
Re: An Open Letter Responding to a Solicitation from the Sierra Club East Bay Chapter

Thank you for your past support of the Sierra Club. We feel it is important to respond to your concerns as outlined in your “open letter” in the Daily Planet, as they have been echoed by other Berkeley residents and Sierra Club members.

First, we did not take any money in return for endorsing Measure R. We made our decision independently, after discussion amongst the elected leadership of the Northern Alameda County Group (all unpaid volunteers.) We are supporting Measure R for environmental policy reasons only. Measure R is a vision for downtown Berkeley that includes much of what the Sierra Club has for years been advocating for in the Downtown Area Planning (DAP) process, specifically:

A plan for a vibrant pedestrian plaza along Center Street between Oxford and Shattuck, with Center closed to automotive traffic except for emergencies and for deliveries at certain times of the day (the “Walter Hood proposal” for Center Street - adopted by City Council independently of Measure R). Establishment of a transportation fund to provide enhanced transit services and an open-space fund. An affordable-housing requirement (as much as 20% on-site for some buildings). The requirement of “LEED Gold” designation in new buildings among the highest environmental building standards-including such features as passive solar, recycling of storm water, energy efficiency, and green roofs. “Unbundled” parking and housing which requires that residential units and parking spaces be rented out...
separately, so that residents are not required to pay for parking, and parkers will pay their share of costs. The principle of condition-
ing any new density in the downtown on the provi-

Hing all this included in Measure R represents 

A hard-won victories for the Sierra Club and 

us allies supporting a greener downtown plan. 

While we still see room for improve-

ment in the Measure, the many years of 

discussion, modifications, and input have 

brought significant and positive results.

Regarding density, which is admittedly a 

controversial issue, the Sierra Club has ad-

vocated throughout the downtown planning 

process for moderate increases in density, as 

long as the increases are specifically tied to 

provision of substantial environmental and 

transit amenities. We believe that the ballot 

measure provides this linkage. We also see 

clear link between a moderate increase in 

density and reducing climate-change-caus-

ing emissions, primarily from automobiles, 

as people will not be forced to commute into 

Berkeley from far-away places on a daily 

basis for work or study, if they live down-

town.

On balance, the Club believes that the positive accomplishments that it has pushed for and achieved make Measure R worthy of 
support. Moreover, we will continue to push for stronger wording in the next phase as the 
city develops zoning-amendment language.

Kent Lewandowski
Chair, Northern Alameda County Group
Sierra Club, S.F. Bay Chapter
* * *

In-Fill Housing and Measure R

In the two and half years I served on 

Berkeley’s Zoning Adjustments Board 

(1998-2000), we approved projects with 

many hundreds of new units downtown, 

most of which have since been built. So 

the idea that in-fill housing is somehow not 

happening under current standards is simply untrue.

And if Council had adopted either the 

DAPAC plan for downtown (which reflected 

hundreds of hours of community process 

and genuine compromises) or the plan 

Councilmember Arreguin later proposed, 

there would also be additional in-fill hous-

ing, but it would come with enforceable 

requirements for community benefits, such 

as an Open Space Fund, affordable housing, 

fair wages, and green building standards and 

amenities, nor the “wish list” of Measure 

R’s “plan to have a plan,” and it would come 

without gutting protections for landmarks.

The truth is we could already have had a 

greener downtown plan resulting in greater 
density with community benefits and without compromising quality of life in nearby neighborhoods) if the Council majority 

hadn’t opted instead to place Measure R on 

the ballot. Since UC has in theory agreed to 

abide by the standards of whatever plan is 

adopted, it’s quite possible that the increased 

height limits and weakening of landmarks 

protections proposed by R will simply 

serve to give the University the green light 
to build higher office buildings downtown, 

which can hardly be considered green!

Anyone contemplating voting for Measure 

R needs to understand that it contains poison 

pills (requirements gutting the landmarks 

preservation ordinance downtown and in-

creasing heights) that tie the Council’s hands 

on the very aspects that are so controversial 
in our community. All these poison pills will 
do is guarantee another citizen referendum 
of whatever plan this “plan to have a plan” 

results in, thereby delaying the adoption of a 

real green plan and subverting attempts to 
bring the community together, quite possibly 

for years. Anyone who thinks passing Mea-

sure R will somehow put a quick end to the 
to-date lengthy process to come up with a 
green downtown plan isn’t paying attention!

It’s too bad that the Sierra Club didn’t 
have the information on the big developer 
dollars pouring into the Yes on R campaign 

before they took their position. No on R! 

Enough of greenwashing!

Nancy Carleton
Former Chair, ZAB
* * *

Another Reason Why You Should Vote 

NO on Measures H and I

There is now convincing evidence that the proponents of Measures H and I are removing 

No-on-H-and-I signs. This is a tactic 

that was employed in the 2008 campaign for 

Measure LL, when signs and banners oppos-

ing the Measure were removed. (The Mea-

sure would have gutted Berkeley’s Land-

mark Preservation Ordinance and thus given 

developers additional freedom to do as they 

pleased in this city.) But Measure LL was 

defeated, and so perhaps the use of the same 

shameful tactics by proponents of Measures 

H and I is a sign that these Measures, too, 

will be defeated. Let us hope so.

Just in case you haven’t been following the 
battle over these Measures: opponents 

feel that both Measures are vaguely-worded 

and amount to a blank check for the School 

District to once again do as it pleases with 
taxpayer money. Consider that there are no 

project-by-project estimates for most of the 

wonderful-sounding projects listed in Mea-

sure I. And yet the District somehow knows 

that the total cost of these projects will be $210 million! (Plus several hundred million in interest payments.) 

Perhaps stealing the opposition’s signs 

is only inevitable in a campaign aimed at 

getting taxpayers to support such financial 

chicanery.

Peter Schorer
* * *

Yes on 24

On November 2nd, we have a chance to 
do what so many of us have been dreaming about. Follow the money, we’ve been told... well, that’s what Proposition 24, the Tax 

Fairness Act is about. Though its opponents 

try to present it as a bad deal for small busi-

ness and employees, in fact, it has nothing 

to do with small businesses. The loopholes 

this prop is attempting to repeal address 

only big business. This is an opportunity 

to get the top 2% to begin to pay their fair 

share. We’re turning into cattle, going along 

with the deception and battle plans of the 

corporations that control the airwaves and 

most of our politicians. It’s increasingly dif-

icult to read between the lines - and that’s 

exactly what they want. Don’t fall for it, Yes 

on Prop 24.

Lisa Goodman
* * *

Keep Berkeley Schools Beautiful!

Some of us remember what it was like in 

the 1990’s, before we had a parcel tax for school maintenance here in Berkeley. There were too few people and almost no supplies to keep up with the demands of maintaining 100 school buildings and extensive grounds. Thanks to generous support of our taxpay-

ers, we were able to pass a maintenance parcel tax nearly 10 years ago, which we hope to renew this fall.

The current state of Berkeley School facilities is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our community to put schools first. Berkeley offers bright and functional school buildings, sports fields and playgrounds. Your parcel tax dollars have paid for landscaping, playground equipment, shade and blind replacements, upgrades to security, heating and lighting systems, stage curtains, sound systems, floor resurfacing and window repairs, to name just a few of the hundreds of projects we’ve completed in the last decade. As a five-year member of the citizen’s oversight committee for this parcel tax, I have been impressed with the efforts of the district maintenance department to work cooperatively and transparently with school staff, parents and community mem-

-16-
bers to keep our campuses in good working order.

In light of all the progress we have made in making our school facilities great, let’s not turn our backs on our schools now. I hope you will join me in voting “Yes!” on Measures H & I for Berkeley Schools.

catherine lazio
busd parent and taxpayer
chair, fsmon

* * *

the real sam zell? (zell kvell)

you’ve been hoodwinked. sam zell is AGAINST Measure R. he’s following his own money, and doesn’t want a whole lot of competition for his housing units. of course not -- he wants to make sure he has a shot at getting all his properties producing the maximum possible income. but if he gave money to the no on r campaign, they’d be vilified, just like what’s happening to supporters of measure r. so, clever billionaire that he is, he gave to the supporters, and you see the result!

poor editor, you wasted good money for a cartoon that’s just what he wants. you probably aren’t in bed with sam, but I’ll bet there’s some footsie going on under the table, right? mim hawley

stop mayor bates’ wrecking crew!

by fred dodsworth (reader commentary)
mon oct 25 17:25:00 -0700 2010

measure r is a trojan horse that will bring many, many more enormous skyscrapers to downtown berkeley. it is the nature of development to always push the boundaries. every building allowed is far more valuable when it’s much larger.

there is no carbon neutral option when buildings are torn down and replaced. even the most aggressive leed standards don’t compensate for carbonload dumped into the environment by these destructive practices. carbon neutral development is creative reuse, not search and destroy development.

tom bates and the clown circus that calls itself livable berkeley are developer apologists who would happily bulldoze the entire downtown and replace it with canyons of steel for a few more shekels in their own pockets. mark rhoades, the former berkeley associate planning director and his wife are livable berkeley and he personally is now attempting to profit from his former position with the city by playing on the alliances he still has within that corrupt department.

tom bates and mark rhoades are pushing a green-washed developer scam that will destroy downtown berkeley and severely damage the rest of our community. the bates machine is trying to bulldoze the community into changing the very character of our lovely city and manhattanize (bates term) our small town into the sort of bleak skyscraper wasteland seen in downtown oakland.

already uc is adding a million square feet of building and the national lab is adding another million square feet of building and we can’t do anything about that but we can stop r. the yes on r folks are claiming their new monstrosities will be green but even a leed platinum building will net far more carbon waste over the lifespan of the building than creative reuse of our existing (vacant) retail stock.

don’t let “chairman tom” bates choke a million more feet of non-retail construction into our downtown.

stop mayor bates’ wrecking crew.

vote no on r

vote jasper kingeter for district 1
vote for jesse arreguin for district 4
vote kriss worthington for district 7 and vote stewart jones for district 8 and vote no on r.

for rent board vote for the incredible lisa stevens of spiral gardens, my son asa dodsworth, the very committed jesse townley, dave blake, katherine harr, and pam webster. stevens, townley, harr, webster & blake are incumbents ...

regarding school board, i voted for karen hemphill, leah wilson, and julie holcomb, all endorsed by the green party of alameda county. the berkeley federation of teachers endorsed karen hemphill, leah wilson and josh daniels. (http://www.berkeleyfederationofteachers.org/campaigns/election-2010/home.chtml)

i met josh, a local lad and a lawyer, and i came away very, very skeptical. he feigned ignorance about measure r and he’s been endorsed by gordon wozniak, the most conservative member of the city council and a major financial supporter of yes on r, which will destroy berkeley as we know it. that was enough for me not to vote for josh.

vote no on r!! save berkeley from tom bates’ wrecking crew!!

<http://ethicalberkeley.blogspot.com>
a “plan for a vibrant pedestrian plaza along Center Street...” and not even mention Center Street Plaza? It cannot, so the first justification is pure nonsense and there goes a non-existent hard-won victory.

* Claim: Establishment of a transportation fund to provide enhanced transit services and an open-space fund.

Analysis: Any even cursory reading of the wording of the language in Measure R on the transportation and the open space fund shows it is clearly “feel good” language without substance. The parking fund is clearly and only linked to the reduction of parking requirements, parking requirements which the Club opposes. For example, on parking Measure R reads:

h) Parking requirement may be reduced by paying into a Transportation Management Demand Fund to provide enhanced transit services and an open-space fund.

In a sad but interesting way, the original Sierra Club e-mail by Helen Burke mentioned above, after citing these pseudo parking and open-space funds as reasons for the endorsement of Measure R, then really discounts the Measure R version of a transportation fund and an open space fund and admits that the Sierra Club endorsed Measure R knowing that it was inadequate:

The current version of the plan offers payments into the transportation fund as an alternative to a minimum-parking requirement, and the open-space fee would be an alternative to providing open space on-site. These fees should be required of all developers. The transportation fee is designed to provide alternatives to driving, and the parking requirement works at cross purposes to it. Developer-provided open space is often not accessible to the general public.

* Claim: An affordable-housing requirement (as much as 20% on-site for some buildings).

Analysis: There is, unfortunately, nothing in Measure R which requires affordable housing in the downtown. This is a sad misunderstanding by the Club and a sloppy misstatement—itis must be remembered that Measure R purports to have two “pathways,” a green pathway and seemingly a non-green pathway, and in this non-plan only the so-called “green pathway” has any mention of affordable housing, however inadequate that mention is. It reads:

Provide 20% affordable rental housing onsite or in a building located in the Downtown Area, or paying a fee to the Housing Trust Fund.

First, if the developer does not go with the so-called green pathway, no affordable housing. There is thus no “affordable housing requirement.” Second, if the developer does go with the so-called green pathway, note that there is no affordable housing “requirement” even “in some buildings” as the Club so strangely states. Instead, an in-lieu fee can be paid and again given this Council’s ambivalence on affordable housing and its developer-oriented policies, the fee in no way will reflect the amount in the recent nexus study and will be minimal.

* Claim: The requirement of “LEED Gold” designation in new buildings among the highest environmental building standards— including such features as passive solar, recycling of storm water, energy efficiency, and green roofs.

Analysis: Yes, there is in the Measure R “advisory” language, the statement that LEED Gold be met. The problem is first, that any knowledgeable person knows that LEED Gold can be gamed in getting to the required 60 points. There are points given for being downtown, there are points given for being near transit etc. The claim by the Club that there are any specific requirements included in Measure R as to “passive solar, recycling of stormwater, energy efficiency, and green roofs,” either is deliberately misleading or shows a complete lack of understanding of the LEED Gold 60 point system. These items are not required in reaching the LEED Gold 60 points and Measure R does not in any way require them.

And further, every previous plan, DAPAC, even the Planning Commission plan, and the 2009 City Council plan, contained LEED Gold. So much for hard-won victories to justify endorsement of Measure R.

* Claim: “Unbundled” parking and housing which requires that residential units and parking spaces be rented out separately, so that residents are not required to pay for parking, and parkers will pay their share of costs.

Analysis: This “unbundling” issue has been unanimously supported in every Downtown Plan in the past 5 years (DAPAC, the Planning Commission, the Council 2009 version) - the notion that unbundling was “a hard-won victory for the Club” is nonsense and obviously, not a reason that the Club endorsed Measure R, but again, an excuse.

* Claim: The principle of conditioning any new density in the downtown on the provision of environmental amenities.

And

* Claim: Regarding density, which is admittedly a controversial issue, the Sierra Club has advocated throughout the downtown planning process for moderate increases in density, as long as the increases are specifically tied to provision of substantial environmental and transit amenities. We believe that the ballot measure provides this linkage.

Analysis: The Council has not accepted any such principle or linkage in Measure R. The new high density in the 17 story, 180 foot towers is not conditioned on “substantial environmental amenities” - these amenities were in the DAPAC Plan but are not in Measure R. The Measure R additional “conditions” for Green Pathway buildings over 75 feet rather strangely deal only with prevailing wages and apprenticeship programs! Please try and read Measure R!

* Claim: On balance, the Club believes that the positive accomplishments that it has pushed for and achieved make Measure R worthy of support. Moreover, we will continue to push for stronger wording in the next phase as the city develops zoning amendment language.

Analysis: It feels almost cruel to ask what is meant by “on balance?” What is being balanced? The Club has “achieved” nothing. Sadly, there is no clue given by the Club as to the negative things in Measure R - one thinks of 180 foot, 17 story high-rise towers and the gutting of historical protection procedures in the Downtown-- which are not even mentioned by the Club. There is no balance.

We Can’t Afford to Lose Kriss on Council!

By Nancy Carleton (Reader Commentary)
Tue Oct 26 23:51:00 -0700 2010

“Don’t it always seem to go that you don’t know what you’ve got ’til it’s gone?” asks the Joni Mitchell song. In my neighborhood we did the song in reverse and unpaved a parking lot to recreate a bit of paradise in the form of Halcyon Commons. I hope my neighbors will heed the song’s message as they cast their ballots.

I’ve lived in Berkeley since starting UC Berkeley in 1978. As one of the co-founders of Halcyon Neighborhood Association (HNA) in 1992, I attended dozens of meetings to shepherd our new park through a myriad of commissions and the City Council. As Co-Chair of HNA for 18 years and past member of two City commissions, I can testify that there’s never been a harder working or more effective councilmember than Kriss Worthington.
One of the most cynical attempts to deflect attention from Kriss’s accomplishments has been opponent George Beier’s focus on crime and Telegraph. As someone who’s been working for two decades on crime watch in South Berkeley right on the border with North Oakland, I both take crime very seriously and am realistic enough to know that no one person and no one councilmember can wave a wand and make it all better. Cynical forces, whether campaigns or the conservative Chamber of Commerce, try to play on our fears. Yet the main thing I’ve learned from years working on public safety is that a partnership approach can make a difference, and things can improve. In fact, both property crime and violent crime are down in Berkeley, and occupancy rates are up on Telegraph, but you wouldn’t know it from Kriss’s opponents’ expensive campaign mailers.

Interesting how these issues are trotted out every election season, and yet somehow no one seems to recognize that trashing South Berkeley and Telegraph to win votes discourages people from coming here to shop! Shirley Dean did it, and once again Beier is joining her.

Of course, any crime is horrible for its victims and raises fears in the rest of us. What we need from our councilmember, however, isn’t a superhero, but someone willing to be a full partner in our efforts. We already have that in Kriss, who has helped form multiple neighborhood-watch groups and has shown up whenever we’ve asked for help fighting crime. The reality is that Kriss has passed more items on public safety than any other councilmember! Kriss even helped resolve a death threat related to drug dealing that I received in my capacity as co-founder of our night-time safety walks. We couldn’t have a councilmember more committed to public safety!

It’s also worth noting that Kriss, in a down economy, has helped many small businesses on Telegraph renegotiate leases so they can afford to stay open. In my own neighborhood, Kriss played a pivotal role in saving beloved Ashby Flowers when a big corporation tried to evict them. Four years ago, Pat Cody, Co-Founder of Cody’s Books, pointed out the absurdity of Beier’s attempts to blame Kriss for Cody’s closing; I’m counting on my neighbors seeing through this year’s absurdities about Telegraph and crime. This doesn’t mean we don’t still have work to do - of course we do! - but Kriss has proven he’s the one best suited to lead us forward.

Kriss’s record in passing City Council items (with a 98% success rate) is so impressive that one of his opponents - Beier again - has sent at least several of my neighbors to Kriss’s City website to look at the list with the suggestion that since Kriss is passing so many items, he’s clearly neglecting neighborhood and constituent concerns! What could Beier do but try to turn Kriss’s accomplishments into negatives?

This cynical spin couldn’t be further from the truth. You see, in addition to passing groundbreaking progressive legislation - including the Equal Benefits Ordinance, Zero Waste Ordinance, and Living Wage Ordinance, which have served as models for other cities - Kriss’s office has a stellar reputation for constituent services.

I haven’t even gotten to the dozens of neighbors I know who’ve received direct support from Kriss in resolving issues large and small - from noise to debris to rats to parking. Life in a dense urban area can be messy, and the forces of entropy are great. But even neighbors from other districts call Kriss’s office for help with their problems, because he’s known for getting things done!

In addition, throughout his time on Council Kriss has made sure that our District 7 neighborhoods, from Northside to Le Conte, Willard, Bateman, and Halcyon, have been getting our fair share of City resources for street repaving, storm drain upgrades, and pothole filling. He’s shown up in the middle of the night to help place sandbags on Deakin back when storm drains were flooding, and then made sure that affected blocks got moved ahead on the City’s schedule so it wouldn’t happen again.

The real question at the heart of this campaign - why wouldn’t we return to office a councilmember who’s doing such excellent work? - remains unanswered.

I’m a proud supporter of Kriss’s reelection and volunteer as his treasurer because we can’t afford to lose the most effective and hardest working councilmember I’ve witnessed during my thirty-two years in Berkeley - one who is also a progressive leader who has passed legislation that has been a model for cities nationwide. In Kriss, we have a representative who’s both excellent at the nuts and bolts of constituent services while also passing more items that magnify Berkeley’s positive impact in the world than any other councilmember.

Don’t wait until he’s gone to realize what we’ve got! Visit KrissWorthington.com to find out what you can do to keep Kriss on City Council!

Nancy Carleton is Co-Chair of Halcyon Neighborhood Association (which doesn’t make endorsements), former Chair of the Zoning Adjustments Board, former Vice Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission, and Co-Founder and Past President of Berkeley Partners for Parks. She has been recognized by the Commission on the Status of Women as an Outstanding Woman of Berkeley for her neighborhood activism, and she also volunteers as treasurer for Kriss Worthington for City Council 2010.

Re-Elect Karen Hemphill for School Board

By Karen Hemphill
Thu Oct 21 22:53:00 -0700 2010

As current School Board President, what distinguishes me from the other candidates is that I have proven leadership in what it takes to advance student achievement in these difficult economic times. During my tenure and leadership, through careful fiscal oversight and fostering of creative partnerships with the City and other public as well as non-profit agencies (and with the continued support of our community school taxes), the School District has maintained a balanced budget every year for the past four years, while retaining small class sizes; art and music programs; and student support services.

Most importantly, with the adoption of the first District-wide student achievement plan (which I championed and led in developing) overall academic achievement has risen, while the District has started to make real progress on the achievement gap that has historically existed among racial groups in our schools. With the decision not to seek re-election of two long-term Board members (Shirley Issel and Nancy Riddle, who both endorse my re-election, as well as do continuing Board members Beatriz Levy-Cutler and John Selawsky), my experience and proven leadership in conducting an open and transparent budget process and advancing data-based, systematic academic growth strategies will be particularly important in continuing the good work, we as a Board have accomplished in the past few years.

And, we have accomplished a lot - just this past year, fifteen of our schools met or exceeded growth targets on the State’s Academic Performance Index (API) scores - which uses a multiple ways of measuring academic achievement. Nine out of eleven of our elementary schools now surpass the statewide goal of scoring at least 800/1000 on the API, with Rosa Parks being just three points away from this goal after jumping a remarkable 60+ points this past year. In
the past two years, Jefferson and Oxford elementary schools have been designated California Distinguished Schools, and Malcolm X and Washington elementary have been designated Title I Achievement Schools, a recognition for achieving exemplary academic excellence in schools with significant numbers of lower-income students.

Our middle schools have also shown amazing academic growth this past year as well, with both King and Longfellow now surpassing the statewide 800+ API goal and Willard being just twelve points away, after jumping more than 40+ points, two years in a row. After adopting a middle school math improvement strategy, Algebra I test scores have increased 50% this past year - with 100% of our 8th graders now enrolled in Algebra I (statewide only 50% of middle school students take Algebra). And, just this past month, Longfellow was visited by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan as a model of achieving math excellence in a school with a diverse student body (Longfellow has the highest math scores of any Berkeley middle school and African American students are achieving above statewide averages for ALL students in math). With this success, our middle schools are now offering Geometry (previously just offered at the high school) for our highest achieving 8th graders.

As Board President, I was on the selection committee for Berkeley High’s new principal, a principal who will be an educational leader, focusing upon basics, such as teacher training and accountability, while bringing together the various student, teacher, and parent groups to focus on common interests of advancing academic excellence for all. I have championed raising the bar on educational opportunity at our high schools, through supporting the establishment of International Baccalaureate, Mandarin Chinese, and Green Academy Programs at Berkeley High (where my son is a sophomore) as well as supporting the first college preparatory program at BTech, our continuing high school. And, I have led efforts to partner with our City, university and community college, non-profit, and other community groups to increase resources for academic and social support services to bolster student achievement.

If re-elected, my first priority will be to foster a collegial relationship on the new Board, that will incorporate the ideas and energy of the newly elected while building upon the experience of continuing Board members, so we can continue the remarkable overall student achievement progress that has been achieved over the past four years - while facing some of the most difficult economic times ever. My second priority will be to make sure that we have an open and transparent budget process, based upon data and evaluation so we can focus our increasing scarce resources on what is core to our students’ continued academic growth. I also plan to continue leading efforts to partner with the City and other agencies to maximize our academic and student support service resources - especially to continue early and consistent intervention for struggling elementary school students and to support the new, this year, program to address truancy, alcohol and drug issues at our high schools. My last priority in the next few years is to work with our community college; non-profit organizations; and our local information, media, bio-tech, and green private industries, as well as our trade unions to build upon the groundwork laid by our Green Academy, Biotech Academy, internship, and other high school programs to develop a strong career-technical program - to inspire and give real-life experience to our students to continue after high school to become our next innovators, entrepreneurs, artisans and technicians - as a pathway to a fulfilled career.

My widespread endorsements symbolize my commitment and leadership in bringing together our entire community to support our children’s academic and personal success. I have been endorsed by the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, the Alameda County Central Labor Council, the Alameda County Democratic Party, several regional Democratic Clubs, the entire current Berkeley School Board, State Senator Loni Hancock, State Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, the Mayor and the entire City Council as well as numerous individuals, including, but not limited to, past School Board member Miriam Rokeach; Dan Lindheim, co-chair of the school parcel tax oversight committee; Judy Appel, Executive Director of the Our Family Coalition; Pastor Emeritus George Crespin; Mark Van Krieken, Berkeley High School PTSA co-president, Margit Roos-Collins, Santiago Casal, Michael Miller, Liz Fuentes, and Irma Parker.

Letter of Support and Candidate Information for George Perezvelez

By Thomas Francis (Reader Commentary) Mon Oct 25 12:18:00 -0700 2010

I’d like to share with Berkeley Daily Planet readers information regarding George Perezvelez’s candidacy for the City of Berkeley’s Rent Stabilization Board (including why I encourage them to support George).

Background

George was born in 1964 in Puerto Rico. He served in the U.S. Navy and is a veteran of the first Gulf War. Following his military service, he lived in South Carolina and then Atlanta, where he met his partner (me) approximately 18 years ago. They have lived in Berkeley since the early 2000s. George earns his living as a restaurant general manager.

George spends much of his free time on community matters and civil rights issues, and further finds such commitments extremely gratifying. For the past three years he has served the City as an appointed member of the Police Review Commission (he is the current chair), and as a member of the Commission on Labor. He is on several subcommittees of said commissions as well. Further, he has served on community panels. For example, this year he was part of the panel entrusted with interviewing and giving recommendations to the City Manager in regards to the election of the City’s new Chief of Police.

Since his college days, he has been involved in issues dealing with civil, minority, disability rights and outreach (participating as a member in Act Up, The Civil Rights Project and Project Open Hand (Dining Out for Life in Atlanta, GA and in San Francisco, CA), and several other political and non-profit organizations). Further, he maintains memberships in various organizations / groups (e.g., the ACLU, Sierra Club, The Stonewall Democrats, Latino Justice Pride, Human Rights Campaign, Alliance for Justice, Out4immigration.org and The National Council of La Raza).

George P’ Plans and Priorities Should he be Elected

Community Outreach and Education: As a Hispanic and LGBT activist, George recognizes that there is a need for the Rent Board to develop an outreach program that speaks to the needs and interests of our City’s minority community. His plan is to work to identify how best to reach those groups, and once best methods are identified, will commit to holding regular meetings with said groups (one idea he’s discussed is to develop/organize a Minority Community Liaison Group (MCLG) which would meet on a regular basis and discuss
minority tenant needs and interests.

George will ask key Rent Board staff to help on the outreach effort, requesting that they be present during events (prepared to respond to technical / staff assistance requests, provide follow-up contact information, etc.). For example, George envisions the Rent Board in partnership with the MCLG could hold seminars on earthquake preparedness for apartment dwellers/tenants. They could conduct educational seminars for new residents regarding what services (and commissions) are available within the City.

George views more can be done to craft easy to read / follow brochures regarding our housing (and rental) rules and regulations. He will work to encourage that any documents prepared be translated into multiple languages (Spanish, Chinese, etc.). More personally, as someone who speaks fluent Spanish, he can assist in translations as needed.

Seismic Retrofitting:
Our rental inventory is comprised of many buildings that would be seriously damaged if not totally destroyed when (not if) in an earthquake. George will work to encourage the expansion of programs and incentives for apartment owners to address retrofit needs. Further, he’ll partner with our Council to develop new programs and incentives. First we need a clear understanding of which units present the most threat (and hence we must work with our City inspectors to review the inventory to help make that assessment).

George believes that we as a community must recognize that some landlords, particularly those that own 2-4 units, may not be able to afford the cost to retrofit without assistance. The financial hardship of retrofitting could be diminished by possible tax breaks, no-fee permitting under special circumstances, grants and low-interest loans.

Viable and affordable low income housing initiatives:
Our economy is hurting, and some of our renters are either directly impacted (by loss of their jobs / income) or caught in the middle (when, for example, the owner of an apartment building and/or unit is foreclosed upon). Within the Rent Board’s power, George wants to make sure that there are services available to help renters, particularly minority and low-income tenants (i.e., to provide relocation assistance, to establish guidance documents / procedures for Board staff to provide to tenants as well as landlords - giving listings of who to contact / what services are available / what financial assistance may be possible / etc. A community reference guide for those facing difficulties (tenants as well as landlords), in his view, would be a useful source of information.

Coordination with the City Council:
Although there is a mechanism by which the Rent Board and our City Council have to work together (the 4 x 4 Committee), in recent years they rarely have met (no meetings in 2010, two in 2009, and then one needs to search back to 2006). George understands that it would benefit our community to have our key elected get together and more importantly work together - not just a couple times a year but instead on a regular basis. He is committed to re-invigorating the 4 x 4.

Other key considerations regarding Mr. Perezvelez’s candidacy (including his Pledge):
In order to set a personal example, should he be elected, George is committing (pledging) to donate his entire City salary each year, as would be received for his service on the Rent Board, to programs that benefit one or more of the following: Support of low-income housing initiatives; Programs that benefit the homeless; Programs that support victims of domestic violence / offer shelters; and/or Non-Profit housing advocacy organizations. He’d work with the community (perhaps via the MCLG, should it be necessary) to help address those contribution decisions.

Closings
I much appreciate this opportunity to share with the Berkeley Daily Planet readers details surrounding Mr. Perezvelez’s candidacy.
Sincerely,
Thomas B. Francis
Berkeley Resident

Student Co-op Sponsors District 8 Forum Next Wednesday
From the Berkeley Student Cooperative Fri Oct 22 12:52:00 -0700 2010
The Berkeley Student Cooperative (BSC) is hosting a second City Council Candidates Forum — this time for Berkeley’s 8th district race — at Andres Castro Arms, 2310 Prospect St., on October 27 at 7:00 p.m. The event is open to the public.

The BSC 8th District City Council Candi dates Forum will feature incumbent Gordon Wozniak, along with challengers Stewart Jones and Jacquelyn McCormick. The District 8 Forum comes on the heels of a successful event for the 7th District candidates, hosted by the BSC’s Cloyne Court.

“Our goal is to educate students and other District 8 residents about their choices in this race,” said Alex Ghenis, Vice President of External Affairs and Castro resident.
“District 8 has a unique makeup of students and long-term community members, and students often don’t get a voice. We encourage everybody — from members of the Greek community, students in houses and apartments, and long-term city residents — to come find out what these candidates are about so they can make the best decision on November 2.”

The venue for the event, Andres Castro Arms, is home to 56 students. The house was originally designed by Julia Morgan in the 1900s, was a sorority in the 1930s, and was purchased by the BSC in the 1950s. House members cook their own meals, have cleaning shifts, and form a strong community.

The mission of the Berkeley Student Cooperative is to provide low-cost, quality student housing to its 1,275 members. The BSC operates 20 student-run, housing cooperatives in the neighborhoods that surround the UC Berkeley campus. Seven of the organization’s 20 properties are located in the 8th District.

Vote No on Measure F, the Unfair Fee for Vehicles
By Merrilie Mitchell (Reader Commentary) Mon Oct 25 20:20:00 -0700 2010
This vehicle tax never dies and can transform in amount and purpose without voter approval.
It can be used for BRT, and that was stated on Senator Loni Hancock’s website when she created the enabling legislation for Measure F.
F can pass with just 50% + 1 vote! So spread the word. Liberal Berkeley is known for passing this type of “greenwashed measure” in such high numbers that it carries our county! Shame on those who vote slate cards that say Green or some environmental or Democratic organization.
Measure F fails the truth test because it claims to be for local, but can be used for regional buses: BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)
which REPLACES local buses. BRT hurts those who depend on the local buses—se- 
siors, disabled, and students. 

I believe Measure F was created to help finance BRT, and I attended the subcom-
mittee meetings at Congestion Management Agency. I learned that the initial 11 million 
dollars can be received 5 years in advance, then matched with other transit funds to 
become over $110 million. And I heard one 
of our elected officials tell the group that he would get them the Sierra Club endorse-
ment.

I’ll explain more about BRT here because it’s an acronym used to confuse but it’s criti-
cally important to know. 

BRT would be a boondoggle without benefit for our city. It is clearly part of the 
latest University expansion strategy which includes a 100 foot tall, block-long UC/BP 
Helios Project on Hearst Street. Helios Labs are for classified research in GMO biofuels. 
The project may be expected to release ra-
dioactive, nanoscale and hazardous material and should not be headed Downtown.

So Vote No on R, Mayor Bates’ big 
Downtown expansion plan which would accommodate Helios and other UC re-
search labs and offices Downtown. 
And also huge MUP (Master Use Permit) 
zoning has just sailed through the Planning Commission to allow more giant UC/BP 
research labs to be located all along the Bay in West Berkeley M zone! BRT is involved 
in the West Berkeley planning too. 

BRT uses big, dangerous, Van Hool buses, removes parking, skips local stops, 
and is a redevelopment strategy devastat-
ing to small local businesses. Redeveloped projects become too big and expensive for 
small business to buy or rent, so often only chain stores can afford to locate there... 

Though our elected officials haven’t 
told us the news, BRT bus stops can 
become “transit villages” with higher 
density zoning half mile around. (Former 
Assemblyman Tom Bates created the leg-
islation.) If you plot the 1/2 mile stops and 
rezonings you see the entire Flatlands and 
foothills of Berkeley could easily be rezoned 
and transformed with BRT. And we would 
lose the local buses we need! 

Measure F could have been used for 
Ecopass (deep discount bus pass like UC 
students and city employees have) so 
everyone might hop on and off local buses 
for local trips. That could actually improve 
congestion and air quality, help people, and 
save our still green city.

**BUSD is High on HI bond money and Moral Hazard**

*By Justin Lee (Reader Commentary)*

*Tue Oct 26 22:50:00 -0700 2010*

The BUSD could certainly use some 
tax money to rehabilitate facilities, but the Measure I bond initiative is yet another 
foray of the City of Berkeley and BUSD into 
exceptional bond debt and overspending for 
ever bolt, bag of cement and piece of lumber 
spent. It is amazingly poorly designed 
request for a huge sum of money with little 
definition of the projects. 
To quote: 

“Install, construct, renovate or rehabilitate site improvements, including pedestrian 
paths, sidewalks and walkways, exterior shade canopies and rain structures, outside 
gathering and eating areas, lawns, quads and courtyards, benches; landscape improve-
ments... 

“Renovate, replace or construct physical 
education playgrounds and athletic fields and associated facilities, includ-
ing all-weather tracks, natural or artificial 
turf fields, courts and stadiums, lighting, 
bleachers and rest rooms. Provide storage 
for physical education, athletic and grounds 
maintenance equipment.” I would like to 
point out that the Berkeley High Track sur-
face and field is relatively new turf with the 
latest materials—so that portion of the claim 
is not accurate.

Not only is the wording vague, but I am 
just going to assume that (as usual) the sys-
tem will float bonds at every general budget 
problem that turns the corner. Despite the 
claims that there will be an oversight com-
mittee, watch for the BUSD to spin the Dark 
Arts and stack the committee with self-inter-
ested parties with a variety of “talents.” Not 
surprising, the donations to Measure I are 
a host of self-serving unions, developers, con-
struction monoliths, consultants and finance 
banksters and total over $100,000. 
The Oakland Tribune calculates the $210 
million dollar bond to exceed $610+ million 
at the end of the loan. As a comparison, 
Giants Field(AT&T) cost around 310 mil-
dion dollars. At $610 million over a period 
of 10-30 (with a maximum life of loan that 
can legally stretch past the 30 years into 40 
which of course I can guarantee.) 

That means that 400 million dollars of the 
total loan+interest is going to entities like 
Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan for their annual 
XMas bonuses. Getting the names of the 
bond underwriting company is near impos-
sible, so let’s pick on the obvious.

The baseline issue for all government 
entities is cowardice and the inability to ask 
for people’s real money with real budgets 
and needs. In a historic recession such as the 
last 4 years, belt tightening for private and 
public sectors is essential for the economy to 
recover from excessive debt creation. If the 
BUSD needs the money for “real” projects, 
the scope needs to be accurate and inflict as 
little damage on the taxpayer as possible. 
GENERAL OPERATION MONEY must be 
requested as a tax(such as H) and not rolled 
into a large facilities burrito and hidden from 
the public. 

Contrary to popular economic belief, 
fighting debt deflation with more brain-dead 
credit and debt is a sure way for the City of Berkeley to lower it’s credit rating and 
cannibalize other civic projects. Just imagine 
what Berkeley Iceland could do with some 
of that interest money, or any of our parks. 

The BUSD Measure I is sloppy, morale 
hazard, overreaching and disrespectful of 
money and those who have to pay for the 
next 30-40 years of can kicking. It is also 
disrespectful of the City’s other departments 
as the sticker shock and lack of evident 
 improvement in the schools will make all 
voters reticent to continue down the bond 
issuance path.

**Sign Stealing Time (Song)**

*By Carol Denney*

*Tue Oct 26 23:02:00 -0700 2010*

it’s sign stealing time here in Berkeley 
they’re tearing up signs night and day 
they’ll yank up your yard sign in seconds 
it’s best to have nothing to say 
for the rest of the year it’s graffiti 
to have any opinion at all 
but election time hear the phone ringing 
and it’s never a personal call 
celebrities suddenly write me 
my mail overflows to the floor 
and so many conflicting door hangers 
I can’t even open my door 
it’s sign stealing time here in Berkeley 
it’s a popular sport and it’s free 
free speech is respected in Berkeley 
as long as all parties agree

**Yes on Measure T**

*By Amanda Reiman MSW, PhD (Reader Commentary)*

*Wed Oct 27 09:37:00 -0700 2010*
Next week, voters in Berkeley will weigh in on two medical cannabis related measures, S and T. Measure S allows for an additional dispensary, 6 licensed cultivation sites, 200 square feet of grow space per patient in a residential area, and calls for the re-constitution of the Medical Cannabis Commission. As the Chairwoman of the Commission, I think it is helpful to understand the process by which Measure T came about. Two years ago, shortly after the formation of the Commission, it became obvious that there are far more stakeholders in this field than the dispensaries, who were the only stakeholders represented on the Commission under Measure JJ. An open discussion of cultivation standards and practices (cultivating in an appropriate area and providing safe medicine to patients, etc.) was hindered by the lack of recognition of those who are growing the medicine. Additionally, we discovered the large number of residential cultivation sites in Berkeley, some providing medicine to the resident only, and some providing medicine to several patients via a collective garden. The realization that the current policies really only addressed activities in and by dispensaries was the impetus for the Commission to begin work on legislation to recognize and regulate cultivation, ensure that the medical cannabis patient population was getting their needs met, and providing guidelines for those who wish to cultivate in their residence.

Not ready to commit without a more in depth examination and feedback from the public, the City Council formed a Sub-Committee to hear this feedback both from the medical cannabis industry and the surrounding communities, and had several meetings at the North Berkeley Senior Center. The Sub-Committee’s recommendations then came back to the City Council for further discussion. Finally, after two years of meetings and negotiations, public comment and expert testimony, Measure T was approved for the ballot. Having been a part of these negotiations from the beginning, I can relate the driving forces behind aspects of the measure:

1. Additional dispensary: During the hearings, a common theme was the influx of patients from surrounding areas who travel to Berkeley to get their medicine, and access issues for patients in some of Berkeley’s economically challenged communities. The hope is that the new dispensary will focus on meeting the needs of low income patients in Berkeley’s most vulnerable areas. To support this, the Commission is recommending to the City Council that provisions for low income patients count heavily in the application process.

2. Licensed cultivation: Although Berkeley is far ahead of other communities in terms of dispensing cannabis to patients, there has been little to no regulation or recognition of those who grow the medicine. There are no requirements for cultivators in terms of transparency or quality. At the same time, cultivators report that they would like the opportunity to come into the light and become a part of the regulatory process. Licensing cultivation allows better control over where the medicine is grown and how it is grown. The Commission is recommending to the City Council that cultivation applications require a sustainability plan and that applications with eco-friendly practices will be given preference.

3. 200 square feet for residential cultivation: This issue was a complicated one, driven by the discovery of just how many residents were cultivating at home, and concerns over unsafe cultivation practices in a neighborhood environment. We consulted several experts in the field of cannabis yields and measures, as well as data on the usage patterns of medical cannabis patients to determine a grow space adequate to meet the needs of the most vulnerable patients. Again, like with cultivation, acknowledging that patients are growing in their homes opens this practice up to regulation and education. Many of the problems coming from home cultivation are due to lack of information on safe techniques. Teaching patients how to grow safely and effectively in their homes is only possible when patients feel safe disclosing this practice. Fear of discovery leads to unsafe growing situations. The allowance of 200 sq. feet simply regulates a practice already occurring in the city of Berkeley, and allowed by state law.

4. Re-Constitution of the Commission: As Chairwoman of the Commission, I have had the honor of taking part in a historic partnership between the medical cannabis industry and local government. However, it became clear to me quite early on, that there are more voices needed at the table. Yes, I feel that the dispensaries should be represented, but so should the cultivators, the residential growers, the patients, and neighborhoods in which dispensaries are located. The current Commission has been called the “fox guarding the henhouse”. I would argue that it’s more like the hens guarding the henhouse, who have come to the realization that there are many animals on the farm that have a vested interest in the well-being of the hens.

Measure T was not dropped onto the ballot hastily. It is the result of years of meetings, testimony and negotiations. As with all legislation, it is, in the end, a compromise that will take effort to implement and will need consistent evaluation. However, given the benefits of the recognition and regulation of the many activities involved in the provision of medical cannabis, it is a step in the right direction.

Amanda Reiman is Director of Research, Berkeley Patients Group; Lecturer, School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley and Chairwoman, Berkeley Medical Cannabis Commission

Elect Keefe in Albany

By Dr. James D. Cleveland
Wed Oct 27 09:43:00 -0700 2010

Perhaps no one worked harder than I did to elect Atkinson and Wile in 2006. But their actions since then eroded the trust I once had. They joined with Bob Lieber to vote as a Bloc of 3 more than 90%+ percent of the time.

They repeatedly violate the most basic rule 84% of CA cities Albany’s size follow: to rotate the Mayor’s position. They rotate it only among Lieber’s Bloc.

I think it is critically important that we elect other candidates. Caryl O’Keefe is the only candidate that 18 past Mayors and School Board Presidents have endorsed. (Only two former mayors have endorsed Atkinson and Wile). My 2nd choice, Francesco Papalia will also put Albany interests first and vote independently on issues.

I’ve lived in Albany 43 years. It changed from ranking 4th among the 5 cities from Oakland to Richmond to become first in terms of school quality, personal safety, and quality of life. Do we want to risk Albany slipping back to become another Oakland, Berkeley, or Richmond by reelecting Joanne Wile and Marge Atkinson?

The Lieber Bloc’s actions threaten what we value in Albany. They don’t govern. They impose.

Most recently they imposed their own personal pay raise by retaining a 100% City-paid health care coverage that they took away from career City staff. They voted again as a bloc saying they did not get enough pay so you taxpayers should pay more for their health care. Albany’s charter governs Council pay. It does not compare Albany to other cities. The Bloc imposed its interests, not Albany’s interest.

Their arrogance shows they are not fiscally responsible. How can people with such contempt negotiate with the employees
who work for Albany in such economically difficult times? Lieber’s Bloc is totally contemptuous of the values of our first 98 years as a city. To defend their act, all 3 of Lieber’s Bloc said they do not consider themselves Albany employees. They said they do not work for the city. Instead they said they exempt themselves as the people’s representatives.

The Lieber Bloc controls a minimum 60% of appointments on 5 member City Committees. With larger committees they appoint a higher majority percentage.

Yet even with their committee majorities, 60 to 100 % majorities of different city Committees and 80% of past Albany mayors who still live in Albany all oppose the direction the Lieber’s Bloc of 3 is taking the city. Don’t forget in 2008 this same Bloc tried to create 16 year continuous Council terms for themselves with their Measure Y that Albany voters rejected. The Bloc forced Y onto the ballot when their own Charter Review committee majority would not support them.

Our predecessors made Albany the city it is today—not Lieber, not Atkinson, not Wile. Please choose Albany first. Elect Caryl O’Keefe, the candidate 18 of 20 past Mayors and School Board Presidents endorse. Please also support Francesco Papalia. I now have zero trust in the two I voted for in 2006.

Reader Opinion
Is Berkeley Off the Hook?

By Marvin X
Wed Oct 27 10:28:00 -0700 2010

In less than a week, several young black men have been arrested for major crimes and/or slain on the streets of Berkeley. While this is a regular occurrence in nearby Oakland and Richmond, Berkeley has apparently caught the virus of a rapidly deteriorating socio-economic order. Last week four young men we are familiar with were arrested for armed robbery. Since they had the bright idea to rob white people, their crimes will probably be enhanced, maybe even considered a hate crime. They were students of teachers at Berkeley Continuation High School or B-Tech and known by their teachers as very nice young men. The teachers even wrote positive comments about them in the San Francisco Chronicle after reading comments from whites describing them as black beasts who should be put under the jail.

For sure, the young men were desperate and committed acts of desperation in Berkeley, a town touted for the University of California, yet these days very few blacks are enrolled there, and other than athletes, most of the black students are females. We know the drill, the brothers go to jail, the sisters go to college, but Dr. Wade Nobles says college is prison for the sisters as well. Most of them will come out suffering the trauma of a white supremacy education or mis-education. They will be fortunate to find a mate from their ethnic group.

Berkeley is segregated with whites living in the hills and North American Africans in the flatland of South Berkeley, although gentrification is in motion to remove them entirely from the area--of course this is a nationwide trend. Socio-economics is wreaking havoc in the hood. On the news last night, we learned Gary Ferguson, Jr., a young man with a troubled life, was gunned down in broad daylight at Sacramento and Russel streets. Another brother was wounded but died later. Two suspects in hoodies fled on foot. Yes, we are the KKK these days, we wear the hoods.

We know the family of Gary Ferguson, Jr. His father, Gary Ferguson, Sr., was a drug addict who recovered to establish a center until recently when he relapsed and lost the multiple story house for recovery. We are also aware of the grandmother of the slain man. She was grieving over the criminal activities of her grandson. Now she must grieve at his transition.

At one point a nephew of mine was in a dispute with young Gary and I was approached to take him on a national book tour with me because his life was in danger. After some convincing, my nephew agreed to leave Berkeley for the first time in his 25 years; the first time he would fly on a plane. On tour, he accompanied me to Philly, New York, and to leave Berkeley for the first time in his 25 years; the first time he would fly on a plane. On tour, he accompanied me to Philly, New York, and Harlem and Boston before he returned. He had the time of his life and has enrolled at Contra Costa College in Richmond.

We are happy to help my nephew but it is no joy to see the destruction of Ferguson, his friends, and so many other young men who cannot figure a way out of this nothingness and dread.

Library Trustees Rubber-Stamp Costly New RFID System

By Gene Bernardi
Tue Oct 26 22:12:00 -0700 2010

Friday October 15, 2010, a few people received notice (just 3 days after receiving a notice that the Board of Trustees regular meeting of October 13th was cancelled) that BOLT would hold a special meeting Monday October 18, 2010 with the only Action Item: “A. Contract: BIBLIOTEC, Inc., Self-Check...” This is a contract to replace the five year old $2.5 million* Checkpoint Radio Frequency I.D. (RFID) system with a new RFID self-check system for $447,000 and growing.

Despite the last minute, short, weekend notice for a Monday night meeting at 6:30pm, eleven members of the public concerned with the RFID system showed up. Nine spoke, eight asking that the Trustees vote for a barcode check-out system and not an RFID system raising concerns with privacy invasion and radio frequency radiation health effects from the latter. The ninth person was satisfied that a new non-nuclear company would be replacing the 3M company with whom the Library has a maintenance contract through March, 2011 for upkeep of the proprietary Checkpoint RFID system still in place.

The Library Trustees were provided no other bid information from the competing vendors so that they could make a deliberative decision. Several members of the public beseeched the Trustees to request staff provide them at least the bid received from I.T.G. for a barcode self-checkout system. This information was not provided to the Trustees in their agenda packet.

It was obvious that staff (and perhaps behind the scenes powers that be) had no intention of giving enough information to the Trustees such that they could make comparisons between the companies bidding, or discuss the pros and cons of a barcode vs an RFID system, and have an in depth discussion and critical review of various options before making a decision.

Unfortunately, the Trustees were quite comfortable with the paucity of information provided them, and chose rather to congratulate the staff on their great job, and dismiss the concerns of the public by noticing that no Library employees had come to object to their boss’s, the Library Director’s, recommendation for a new RFID system. And so all four present, of the five member self-selected Board of Library Trustees voted for a new RFID system, with implementation to start in Central and the two branches to be demolished, the South, and West libraries.

Staff claimed you will now be able to check out an entire stack of books mixed with DVDs and CDs all at once, not wasting
Letters to the Editor

Visual Blight on Berkeley’s Solano Avenue

On a summer day evening 2007, I happened to be in the Berkeley City Hall for a Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB) hearing. A group of more than 30 angry south Berkeley residents protested in the chamber for the proposed Verizon & Nextel antennas permits at UC Storage Building. It was quite a sight! They claimed that City Of Berkeley unjustly discriminates against the relatively poorer area-South Berkeley, in terms of cell phone antennas distribution. As of summer 2007, there were about 15 antenna sites in S. Berkeley, while in North Berkeley; there was just one at 1760 Solano Ave.

I did not pay much attention and left the hearing earlier and thought “what a fuss they are making!” We all use cell phones and we all have cell phones.

On a January day 2009, when I caught T-Mobile installing a mega antenna immediately next to my house without permits, on the southwest corner of the Professional Building at 1760 Solano Ave, my thought on this has dramatically changed.

Upon many local citizens’ complaints, on March 5, 2009 City’s building inspector Mr. Brad Rudolph visited the site and issued a Notice of Violation and Stop Work Order for the ongoing un-permitted antenna installations at 1760 Solano Ave. As of today, the notice of violations is still not cleared.

Throughout 2009, I have contacted the only neighborhood association in the area a number of times. Thousand Oak Neighborhood Association (TONA) claims to represent 1800 households in the area along Berkeley’s Solano, and yet it has been exceptionally “quiet” on this issue. The call to its president Elizabeth Sklut was never returned and its vice president Zelda Bronstein stated in one meeting that Federal law prohibits local government from denying the permit on the health and environmental grounds.

The above photo was taken in front of the Peet’s coffee on Solano Ave. Looming above behind are about 20 unlawful cell phone antennas and its related equipments.

The Zoning Adjustment Board of the City will hold a public hearing on the matter, to decide if T-Mobile can legalize its unlawful facilities on the site. The hearing date is November 4 (Thursday) at 7:00 PM at Old City Hall.

Written comments, or request for Notice of Decision should be directed to the ZAB Secretary at: land Use Planning Division (Attn: Steven Buckley) 2120 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 OR at: zab@ci.berkeley.ca.us

Some may say that what a fuss I am making here. Two more wireless providers are applying to install 15 more antennas on top of this building, literally destroying Berkeley’s Solano Ave visually and ascetically!

The abuse of the rule of law must end on Solano. It is a Disgrace to the City and it is Shame to the City of Berkeley.

Yong Q. Liu

NPR Firing

Concerning the dismissal of Juan Williams by NPR, when he commented on being worried if he saw a person in “muslim garb” on his plane, why would any terrorist wear muslim garb on a plane?

Gerta Farber

Your Berkeley tax dollars at work

I was at Ohlone dog park this morning when sirens a-blazing, a motorcycle cop came from the west and roared up to the intersection of MLK and Hearst, which he proceeded to block traffic at. He was soon followed by a motorcade of 3-4 more motorcycle cops and 2-3 patrol cars all making noise and with flashing lights.

Well, I thought the President or somebody very important must be coming. But no, it was two charter buses that I assumed was the Arizona football team being treated like very important VIPs or something.

What a waste of tax money and police resources and yet another example of the over glorification of football at Cal.

Judi Sierra

Government is Indeed the Enemy

As George Washington warned us government is a dangerous servant and a fearful master. Throughout all of human history the state (government) has been the greatest violator of human rights. Government differs from all other institutions in human society in that its very essence is coercion, brute force. It arbitrarily assumes a monopoly of physical force over a given geographical area and collects it fees by force, taxation. Taxation is simply legalized theft. Any other group that tried to exist that way would properly be considered as criminal.

In the last century government killed well over 200 million people throughout the world and this figures EXCLUDES both world wars. Professor R.J. Rumnel of the University of Hawaii has documented this in several books.

The “welfare” state is simply a device whereby honest people are fleeced of their earnings to support politically connected others. In the USA the welfare-warfare state has been the dominant paradigm since 1939. The Republicans have now become the more rabid global interventionists while the Democrats increasingly fail to satisfy their hodge-podge of politically correct special interests committed to plundering each other.

The idea that government should control something as valuable as education or medicine or banking or housing or drugs or roads or reproduction rights or capital formation or a thousand other crucial things to our very lives is beyond absurd.

I’ve read Mr. Bruce Joffe’s statist-collectivist letters for years and I’ve noticed that he does well enough to live in Piedmont. What I did not know until now is that his livelihood was dependent on ever increasing government. Most of the bureaucracy in private business is the direct result of government regulations which mandate the hiring of incompetents and increase the cost of doing business. The rich already pay well over 40% of all taxes. If that continues there will be no rich and you know who will pick up the rest. The banks were never unsupervised, on the contrary they were given unlimited license by the Fed to print money out of thin air for the purposes of creating artificial po-
Columnists

Eclectic Rant: U.S. Apologizes for Abusive Guatemala Human Medical Experiments

By Ralph E. Stone
Tue Oct 26 22:47:00 -0700 2010

In an Oct. 1, statement, the U.S. government acknowledged that between 1946 and 1948, U.S. Public Health Service physicians deliberately infected at least 696 Guatemalans with syphilis and gonorrhea without their knowledge or consent to study the effect of venereal disease. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius formally apologized for the “abhorrent” and “clearly unethical” medical experiments. And on October 2, President Barack Obama apologized to his Guatemalan counterpart and vowed that all human medical studies conducted today will be held to exacting U.S. and international legal and ethical standards.

Earlier this year Wellesley College professor Susan Reverby came upon the unpublished study outlining the 1940s experiment led by controversial U.S. Public Health Service physician John C. Cutler. Cutler and his fellow researchers enrolled people in Guatemala, including mental patients, for the study, which aimed to find out if penicillin, a relatively new drug at the time, could be used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Evidently, the study participants never gave informed consent. Rather, many of the subjects were deceived about what was being done to them.

Initially, the researchers infected female commercial sex workers with gonorrhea or syphilis, and then allowed them to have unprotected sex with soldiers or prison inmates. When few of these men became infected, the researchers actually inoculated soldiers, prisoners, and mental hospital patients.

Thomas Parran, the U.S. surgeon general at the time, was aware of the experiment, as were many in the Guatemalan government. Also, the Pan American Health Organization, whose predecessor, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, received grant money from the National Institutes of Health for the study.

Cutler, the U.S. physician behind the Guatemala study, was also involved in the highly controversial Tuskegee Experiment conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service between 1932 and 1972, in which 400 African American men with late-stage syphilis were observed, given no remedial treatment for 40 years. For participating in the study, the men were given free medical exams, free meals, and free burial insurance. They were never told they had syphilis, nor were they ever treated for it.

Cutler was promoted to assistant surgeon general in 1958 and in 1967, he was appointed professor of international health at the University of Pittsburgh, where he also served as chairman of the department of health administration and acting dean of the Graduate School of Public Health in 1968–1969.

What other abusive U.S. conducted or funded studies will be revealed in the future?

At about the time Dr. Cutler’s experiments were being carried out, the U.S. government condemned the Nazi doctors who carried out the same sorts of experiments. Remember how outraged and shocked Americans were when the Nazi human medical experiments were revealed. The Nazis conducted human medical experiments on large numbers of prisoners in its concentration camps during World War II. Prisoners were coerced into participating: they did not willingly volunteer and there was never informed consent. Typically, the experiments resulted in death, disfigurement or permanent disability. What was done in Guatemala and Tuskegee in the name of public health was different only in degree, not in kind.

In the past, the U.S. conducted abusive human medical experiments and then criticized the Nazis for their similar experiments. Today, the U.S. tortures prisoners at Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib and has others do it by proxy under our rendition program and then criticizes other countries for their human rights abuses. Isn’t there a strong odor of mendacity in the air.

As Walt Kelly’s “Pogo” observed, “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

Dispatches From The Edge: Of Horns & Beaks and the Afghan War

By Conn Hallinan
Fri Oct 22 12:59:00 -0700 2010

“Troops were poised to retake the most nefarious area of all, the horn of Panjwai, an area 19 miles long and 6 miles wide where the Taliban had built up a redoubt of command posts, courts and mined areas over the last four years. Afghan and American troops mounted an airborne assault into
Dialed the calendar back to April 1970, and shift the scene from southern Afghanistan to South Vietnam. Then the all important piece of turf was the “Parrot’s Beak,” a slice of Cambodia jutting into Vietnam’s Kien Tuong Province, just 40 west of Saigon. The “Beak” was the supposed dwelling place of the elusive COSVN, the headquarters of the North Vietnamese army. Take the “Beak,” said the U.S. military, and we will break the back of the insurgency.

So, following the screening of the Movie “Patton,” President Richard Nixon sent tens of thousands of U.S. and South Vietnamese Army troops (ARVN) troops into Cambodia on April 30 to turn the tide of the war against the insurgents.

But COSVN wasn’t there, nor were any North Vietnamese troops. It seems that two weeks before the attack, COSVN sent out a memo detailing the U.S. operation and pulled everyone out. What the Parrot’s Beak operation did accomplish was to further weaken the Lon Nol dictatorship in Cambodia and pave the way for a Khmer Rouge victory. It also killed a lot of Cambodian peasants, who, of course, went into the U.S. “body count” of dead insurgents for the month.

Those North Vietnamese troops did not vanish, however, they just followed Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap’s dictum of “Disperse where the enemy is strong, concentrate where the enemy is weak.” They went somewhere else. Five years later the National Liberation Front and the North Vietnamese took Saigon.

Jump ahead 35 years to the current U.S. and NATO offensive going in Kandahar Province, southern Afghanistan.

“We now have the initiative. We have created momentum,” says British Maj. Gen. Nick Carter, commander of NATO forces in southern Afghanistan and in charge of the Kandahar operation. The police chief of the local district, Hajii Niaz Muhammad added, “We broke their [the Talibans] neck.”

But the fighting has been low key, and few weapons have been seized. A Taliban fighter told the Times, “We are not there anymore.”

Where did they go?

PUL-E-KHUMRI, Afghanistan-The Taliban’s influence in northern Afghanistan has expanded in recent months from a few hotspots to much of the region, as insurgents respond to the U.S.-led coalition’s surge in the south by seizing new ground in areas once considered secure.”-Wall Street Journ-

The Public Eye: Election 2010: Choosing the Abuser

By Bob Burnett
Fri Oct 22 11:54:00 -0700 2010

Every day, 10,000 US women are as-saulted by their husband or boyfriend. Most often they do not leave and the violence continues; psychologists call it battered women’s syndrome. On November 2nd, we’re likely to see the political counterpart, where American voters - despite a history of egregious Republican abuse - decide to give the Grand Old Party one more chance.

The American Psychological Association reports, “Nearly one in every three adult women experiences at least one physical assault by a partner during adulthood.” Roughly four million US women are assaulted each year. Often the assaults are repeated and follow a pattern: drinking or drug use; insults and criticism; physical violence; and apology. Most adults know someone trapped in an abusive relationship; a woman who despite the advice of her friends and family can’t find the wherewithal to leave the abuser.

A larger percentage of Americans have been the victims of abuse by the Republican Party. We’ve seen our neighborhoods destroyed, our air and water fouled, our jobs shipped overseas, our children denied health coverage and decent schools. We’ve watched the looting of America, seen the riches of our country diverted to the offshore bank accounts of the wealthy.

The GOP assaults follow a familiar pattern: manufactured resentment; insults and criticism; financial violence; and false remorse. The Republican violence typically begins with their propaganda machine spewing hate messages: “Democrats want to subvert America, turn it into a European-style socialist state.” “Obama isn’t a citizen - he’s a terrorist.” Next the GOP criticizes Democratic politicians, blaming them for Wall Street bailouts and “robbing our children’s future” by creating a massive Federal deficit. They cover their lack of concrete proposals with clever slogans: “Return government to the people;” “Put adults in charge.” But underneath the agitprop is financial violence: handouts to the wealthy.

The GOP assaults follow a familiar pattern: manufactured resentment; insults and criticism; financial violence; and false remorse. The Republican violence typically begins with their propaganda machine spewing hate messages: “Democrats want to subvert America, turn it into a European-style socialist state.” “Obama isn’t a citizen - he’s a terrorist.” Next the GOP criticizes Democratic politicians, blaming them for Wall Street bailouts and “robbing our children’s future” by creating a massive Federal deficit. They cover their lack of concrete proposals with clever slogans: “Return government to the people;” “Put adults in charge.” But underneath the agitprop is financial violence: handouts to the wealthy.

The GOP assaults follow a familiar pattern: manufactured resentment; insults and criticism; financial violence; and false remorse. The Republican violence typically begins with their propaganda machine spewing hate messages: “Democrats want to subvert America, turn it into a European-style socialist state.” “Obama isn’t a citizen - he’s a terrorist.” Next the GOP criticizes Democratic politicians, blaming them for Wall Street bailouts and “robbing our children’s future” by creating a massive Federal deficit. They cover their lack of concrete proposals with clever slogans: “Return government to the people;” “Put adults in charge.” But underneath the agitprop is financial violence: handouts to the wealthy.

The GOP assaults follow a familiar pattern: manufactured resentment; insults and criticism; financial violence; and false remorse. The Republican violence typically begins with their propaganda machine spewing hate messages: “Democrats want to subvert America, turn it into a European-style socialist state.” “Obama isn’t a citizen - he’s a terrorist.” Next the GOP criticizes Democratic politicians, blaming them for Wall Street bailouts and “robbing our children’s future” by creating a massive Federal deficit. They cover their lack of concrete proposals with clever slogans: “Return government to the people;” “Put adults in charge.” But underneath the agitprop is financial violence: handouts to the wealthy.

The GOP assaults follow a familiar pattern: manufactured resentment; insults and criticism; financial violence; and false remorse. The Republican violence typically begins with their propaganda machine spewing hate messages: “Democrats want to subvert America, turn it into a European-style socialist state.” “Obama isn’t a citizen - he’s a terrorist.” Next the GOP criticizes Democratic politicians, blaming them for Wall Street bailouts and “robbing our children’s future” by creating a massive Federal deficit. They cover their lack of concrete proposals with clever slogans: “Return government to the people;” “Put adults in charge.” But underneath the agitprop is financial violence: handouts to the wealthy.
Perhaps they believe they don’t deserve anything better than the dreadful Republican policies that have shifted America. Perhaps they believe that politicians like Bush, McCain, Palin, and Boehner are the best they can expect. Perhaps they’ve internalized the classic blues song: I’ve been down so long that down looks like up to me.

Perhaps mid-term voters are like the battered woman who justifies her decision to return to her abusive partner by saying: “He’s all I have and says he’s sorry. I’m going to give him one more chance.”

Bob Burnett is a Berkeley writer. He can be reached at bobburnett@comcast.net

Wild Neighbors: Honkers, Cacklers, and Taxonomists

By Joe Eaton
Mon Oct 25 16:17:00 -0700

We’re accustomed to seeing crows on the Derby Street athletic field, just hanging around waiting for the crowball game to start. In the last few months they’ve been joined by variable numbers of Canada geese. My assumption has been that the geese are part of the local resident population, maybe the ones that frequent Golden Gate Fields and the neighborhood of the Gill Tract.

Last week, driving by on the way to an appointment, Ron and I noticed another set of birds on the field; ducks, we thought. Returning a couple of hours later, I identified them as cackling geese. They were less than half the size of the standard Canadas with proportionately stubbier bills and shorter necks, and overall darker brown body plumage. Six of them were grazing in a tight cluster. One of the Canadas made what was clearly a threat display-head down, mouth open-at the smaller geese, but they were unperturbed.

The Canada (not “Canadian;” I’m not sure why that’s wrong, but it is) goose is a highly variable bird. Hunters have traditionally designated the larger goose with the resonant calls “honkers” and the smaller types with the higher-pitched voices “cacklers.” Ornithologists eventually recognized eleven subspecies of Canada goose, ranging from the near-swan-sized maxima to the mallard-sized minima, based on physical characteristics, range, and who interbred with whom. All nine were assigned common names, for convenience (some were protected by endangered species legislation) and more or less haphazardly. Minima became known as the cackling Canada goose, or just the cackling goose.

Then, maybe a decade ago, the geneticists got into the act. They determined that the big goose and the small goose formed separate evolutionary lineages that diverged at least a million years ago. The seven large races retained the old names: Canada goose, Branta canadensis. The four small varieties became, collectively, B. hutchinsii.

That created a problem, though: what to call the new taxonomic entity and its subspecies. The American Ornithologists’ Union went with “cackling goose” for the species as a whole. So now, in order to distinguish the smallest subspecies, minima, from the other three, you have to call it the cackling cackling goose. Come on, folks! I think we can do better than that. Why not name it after some notable ornithologist? Surely someone out there deserves a goose.

The geese on the Derby field were, in fact, minimas. In addition to being duck-sized and dark, they lacked the white neck-ring characteristic of the next-smallest subspecies, the Aleutian cackling goose (B. h. leucopareia). Minima, by whatever common name, used to be abundant in California in winter. For undetermined reasons, they’ve shifted their wintering range north to Washington State and Oregon.

You’re more likely to see Aleutians in the Delta and Central Valley, sometimes in considerable numbers. We’ve found them
with the sandhill cranes and tundra swans around Thornton. This subspecies is a heartening conservation success story. It was almost wiped out by Arctic and red foxes that had been introduced to its island nesting grounds, but bounced back after the predators were effectively controlled and was taken off the federal endangered species list in 2001. The population rose from a probable low of 790 in 1975 to 60,000 in 2005. In fact, the Aleutian’s recovery may be too much of a good thing, since it’s become something of a pasture pest in its Del Norte County staging area.

As for the other cacklers, Richardson’s cackling goose (B. h. hutchinsii), larger and paler than the Aleutian, winters mostly in the Southwest and along the Gulf Coast and is not a problem for California observers. The largest form, Taverner’s (B. h. taverneri), does occur in northern California. Taverner’s, is something of a birder’s nightmare, almost identical in size, shape, and plumage with the smallest form of Canada goose, the lesser Canada (B. c. parvipes). The two appear to overlap in winter at Tule and Klamath Lakes. David Sibley deals with the subtleties of field identification on his website (www.sibleyguides.com/2007/07/identification-of-cackling-and-canada- goose). Good luck, is all I can say.

The encounter with the cackling geese reminded me that it’s always a good idea to scan flocks of Canada geese for anomalies. Other species, including greater white-fronted and Ross’s geese, have been known to drop in on resident flocks: geese attract geese. Sometimes the visitors stay for years; Rich Stallcup knows a Ross’s goose that has been hanging around a Sonoma County farm pond for more than a decade. Unlike most other birds, geese are not hardwired to migrate; yearlings learn the route from their elders. They can also unlearn migration. Maybe they wake up on a California golf course some spring morning, remember the tundra-the foxes, the mosquitoes-and the guns of autumn, and think: “The hell with it, I’m staying here.”

First Person: Closed Dustin Hoffman Haunt on Teley Was a “Hippy Jewelry Store”

By Ted Friedman
Fri Oct 22 09:25:00 -0700 2010

We will always have our Sather Gate Jewelers, on Telegraph if only in the celebrated late sixties film, “The Graduate.”

Closed recently, the old store--founded 55 years ago--on Telegraph at Channing, lives forever on film.

Cause of demise, was a family illness, according to sources close to the owners.

Sather Gate is survived by such elder businesses as Blakes, 1940, the Med,’56, Moe’s,’56, the Print Mint,’65,Lhasa Karnak,’70, Bill’s Clothes,’61,Annapurna,’67, and Jim the Tailor, 62.

Now an empty shell, Sather Gate will always be the jewelry store where Benjamin buys that wedding ring for Elaine Robinson.

Former co-owner Betty Ann Aman (with her business partner Stephen E. Morine) presided over the historic store that was un-changed for half a century. Its wooden edged, thick glass display counters remained popular with the Graduates’ grandchildren.

If you looked real hard, under certain circumstances, you might see Benjamin and Elaine, now handsome elders, on a return visit to the origins of their marriage, if, indeed, they bothered to make it official (although after flouting the conventions of the church, why would they have bothered?)

Betty Ann was always ready to tell the story (with sparkle), of Mike Nichols and his crew as they established their beachhead on Telegraph--in their store.

The script confirms Betty’s story.

From the script: “EXT. BERKELEY Street - DAY Through the window of a hippy jewelry store we see a sales-woman modeling a ring for Ben. He nods; she takes it off, puts it in a box and gives it to him. He pays for it and exits PAST CAMERA, WHISTLING.”

It was a wedding ring. Was the sales woman Betty Ann?

According to Betty, the film company rented the entire store for a year while operating out of the back room of the jewelry store and a nearby apartment.

The Graduate was Nichol’s second film. It followed “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Wolf,” and was followed by “Catch 22.”Nichols was on a roll and Hoffman was propelled into international stardom.

According to Betty Ann, the whole crew soon departed for Los Angeles after whirling-dervish, pan-handling hippies overwhelmed them. But the entire crew left with crucial scenes of the Med.

Moe’s, the Print Mint, and a bus ride down Teley, “in the can.”

In one of those classic head-scratchers, the definitive American Film Institute catalogue of American Film, lists only Los Angeles as the location; but Wiki gets it right.

Stephen E. Morine, an antique watchmaker’s telescope mounted on his forehead, was an impressive feature at his watchman’s bench, eager to ply his craft in a Timex era.

Betty Ann presided patiently over the counters, which often displayed local, one of a kind jewelry, pendants, and ear rings.

She was quick with anecdote or observation on the Avenue scene.

Somehow, “they will be missed,” falls way short. As for “end of an era,” that also fails (trite, now that America has had decades to adjust to the loss of mom and pop businesses). We can only wish them well, thank them for their service to the community, and pledge to keep them in our hearts and minds.

Senior Power: I just discovered Grandparents Day...

By Helen Ripper Wheeler
Tue Oct 26 22:14:00 -0700 2010

It’s the first Sunday after Labor Day. West Virginia grandmother Marian McQuade campaigned for a national holiday to honor grandparents. President Jimmy Carter signed the proclamation, and the first Grandparents Day was observed on Sept. 9, 1979.

Susan Sontag (1933-2004), possibly a grandmother herself, got serious about grandparents when she pointed out that “Fewer and fewer Americans possess objects that have a patina, old furniture, grandparents, pots and pans -- the used things, warm with generations of human touch, essential to a human landscape…”

Political and social activist G. Norman Collie (1859-1942) didn’t hesitate to tell the world that “Grandchildren don’t make a man feel old; it’s the knowledge that he’s married to a grandmother.” Yuck.

The G word has commercial appeal. Sponsored links on the Internet rely on it. “Granny Pictures - free mature sex pics in hardcore mature porno…” Includes Old granny porn. Save on Grandys, Wind ‘em up line “em up and get ready for the Gran Prix & watch Racing Grandmies battle it out for the finish line at crippling speed,” blares the ageist vendor. “Fighting Grandads” too.

Elder porn is a fast-growing industry in Japan, the world’s second-largest pornography consumer after the U.S… Seventy-five year old Shigeo Tokuda -- father of two, grandfather of one -- stars in a series called Maniac Training of Lolitas. His role as a senior citizen who acts out with his daugh-
ter-in-law and nurses is famous. Prohibited Elderly Care Vol. 45 - is in production.

Tokuda originally got into porn as a sideline to his salaried travel agent job. He doesn’t have any problems with the physical demands of the job, says he stays in shape by hiking and climbing with his wife. He usually stars with actresses in their early 20’s but has occasionally acted with women closer to his own age, including 73-year-old Fujiko Ito. Tokuda believes there’s a market for his movies in part because of the disintegration of the Japanese family unit. He views his popularity as a symptom of a society that’s growing old fast and often alone.

Although Japan’s aging population exists in a culture that places emphasis on respect for the elderly, many Japanese seniors live in solitude, estranged from or ignored by their families. A recent government survey found that 24.4 per cent of men and 9.3 per cent of women over the age of 60 had no neighbors, friends or relatives they felt they could rely on in difficult times. (These data appear to be comparable to many Berkeley low-income senior housing tenants.)

Tokyo Koto Geriatric Medical Centre’s Dr. Aiba says part of the reason for the decline in senior citizens’ standard of living is their living longer. The average lifespan is 79.6 years for men and 86.4 for women, which places new burdens on a society where a declining number of working-age Japanese must fund rising health-care and pension costs.

xxxx

Grandparents and boomers are making other news - defending their rights as they see them and taking on nontraditional roles and responsibilities as custodians and caregivers of their grandchildren. The U.S. Census Bureau considers a baby boomer to be someone born during the demographic Post-World War II birth boom between 1946 and 1964.

Grandparents’ roles and rights have become contentious and controversial. Visitation, custody, honoring, legal standing and care-giving issues become even more complex when such factors as social class, ethnicity and race, proximity to grandchildren, and paternal and maternal grandparents are considered. A new line of grandfather research deals with their role during and after disruption of adult children’s marriages, focusing on grandmothers and on divorce. Given the rise in the divorce rate in recent years, this has had profound consequences on the grandparent role and has led to what has been called kinship reorganization.

Grandparents have found that they may have been unintended losers in custody battles. Lawyer in the Library (Berkeley Public and Alameda County libraries), free legal information from Nolo Press, and Legal Assistance for Seniors (464 7th Street, Oakland, CA 94607 www.lashiep.org) can be helpful as grandparents struggle to know about and get their rights. Listening to and reading grandparent Judge Judy Sheindlin (1942-) won’t hurt either.

Here are a few of the questions addressed at Nolo Press’ web site. Are grandparents entitled to visitation? What should I do if I want to limit my child’s visitation with grandparents? What should I do if my grandchild’s parent wants to limit my visitation? How do we deal with grandparents who limit visitation by lesbian mom? Learn how child visitation laws affect grandparents’, stepparents’, and caretakers’ visitation rights.

“Grandparents’ Rights...” by attorney Traci Truly is an example of the legal survival guide genre. Look for the latest edition. Truly provides forms and considers visitation, custody, adoption, parental preference, mediation, etc. as well as each state’s legal provisions.

Many writers and researchers perceive and report separation and divorce fallaciously in terms of two parents who are, and continue to be, concerned about their children’s welfare. Millions of grandparents, by being the primary caregivers for their grandchildren, are taking on the responsibility of raising two generations. The U.S. Census Bureau reports:

6.1 million grandparents share their homes with their grandchildren younger than 18. Of the grandparents who provide a basic need (e.g. food, shelter, clothing) 1.4 million are employed; 477,000 earn incomes below the poverty line, and 730,000 have a disability. The Supplementary Survey of the 2000 Census reports on “Grandparents with own grandchildren under age 18” by poverty status during the previous 12 months. 5.7 million children -- about 8 percent of all U.S. children -- live with a grandparent. 30% of children younger than 5 years of age with working mothers are cared for by a grandparent on a regular basis during their mother’s work hours. In 2000 a Supreme Court decision sharply curtailed grandparents’ rights to sue for visits with their grandchildren. It ruled that a broad visitation statute in Washington state, which allowed even non-relatives legal standing, violated the constitutional rights of parents. Since 2000, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Washington courts have held their respective state statutes unconstitutional.

It is possible for grandparents to obtain visitation rights in certain circumstances. Courts have recently sided with grandparents in cases involving the death or incarceration of a parent, for example, or with grandparents who have raised their grandchildren for a period of time only to be cut off suddenly from seeing them, or in cases in which grandchildren would be harmed by not seeing their grandparents. In some states, the laws say the court should decide based on what is in the best interest of the child. In other states, grandparents have to prove that the grandchild would be harmed if prevented from seeing the grandparents.

AARP’s grandparenting site at http://www.aarp.org/grandparents has information on caring for grandchildren, including those with special needs; spending time with them; and where to look for resources and assistance. Helpful links include:

AARP Grandparent Information Center
Foundation For Grandparenting: The Grandparent Foundation
Grandparents Association (UK)
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - U.S. Govt.
Grandparents Magazine - free
Kinship Care Resource Kit - Children’s Defense Fund
National Committee of Grandparents for Children’s Rights
State Fact Sheets for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children ... To access the Fact Sheet for a particular state, click on the state www.grandfactsheets.org/

Approximately 450,000 children under the age of 18 in Texas are being raised by their grandparents, ranking Texas second behind California in the number of grandparent-headed households. In 2000, 294,969 grandparents in California were responsible for raising their minor grandchildren, the highest number of such caregivers in the nation.

Until recently, grandparents raising children were an overlooked part of California’s caregiver population. Substance abuse, the rise in single parent households, HIV/AIDS, sharp increases in female incarceration, teen pregnancy, and policy changes favoring foster care placement of children with relatives over non-relatives are among the reasons for dramatic growth in grandparent care-giving.

Most of California’s custodial grandparents were married (75%), female (59%),
and employed (56%). About 22% lived in poverty. Nine counties, including Alameda, had more than 10,000 grandparent caregivers, most in urban areas.

xxxx

The Berkeley Daily Planet has reported on numerous Raging Grannies events. Raging Grannies activist groups concerned with peace and environmental causes started in Victoria, British Columbia circa 1986/87 and are now in many communities and nations. They are women old enough to be grandmothers, who dress up in clothes, especially hats, that mock stereotypes of older women, and sing songs at protests. They typically write the lyrics, putting their political messages to the tunes of well known songs. “The Raging Grannies: wild hats, cheeky songs, and witty actions for a better world” by Carole Roy (1954-) is in the Berkeley Public Library’s collection.

Books like Adair Lara’s “The granny diaries; an insider’s guide for new grandmothers” glut the market. [Chronicle Books, 2008] Lara reports that the average age at which women become grandmothers remains steady at 47. In the last century, the average life expectancy was 47. “Because grandmothers used to be old people, near the end of their shelf life, the stereotype is of a comforting human antique trailing a faint smell of lavender and strewn with cookie crumbs, grateful for any time or attention she gets. ...Grannies are all ages these days, ranging from thirties to nineties.”

xxxx

On Thursday, November 4, from 1:30-3 PM, the Alameda County Library Program for Older Adults’ Peggy Green will present “Living On A Fixed Income” at the Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave. No reservations required. Refreshments. www.aclibrary.org

Helen Rippier Wheeler can be reached at pen136@dslextreme.com

No email attachments; use “Senior Power” for subject.

Arts & Entertainment

Around & About: Performing Arts Picks for this week, Halloween, and beyond...

By Ken Bullock
Tue Oct 26 07:38:00 -0700 2010

Dazzling Divas

-Those Dazzling Divas are at it again! Pamela Connelly, Kathleen Moss and Eliza O’Malley, with Hadley McCarroll on piano, this time at that great old standby, Le Bateau Ivre, at featuring, for Halloween, the witches’ number, from Purcell’s Dido & Aeneas, as well as arias, duets and trios from “Puccini, Verdi, Bellini, Bizet, Delibes & more!” No cover. Wednesday October 27th 7-9pm, dinner seating from 5. 2629 Telegraph Ave (near Andronico’s)

-Ragged Wing Ensemble, Berkeley’s creative and plucky performance troupe, will present Persephone’s Roots, a free, site-specific Halloween seasonal show by Anna Shneiderman, outdoors in Codornices Park, across Euclid from the Rose Garden this week: 5:30 p.m., Wednesday the 27th through Sunday the 31st. Featuring performance installations in tunnels, meadows, streams and forest, culminating in a fire-based ritual, with music, giant puppets and spectacle. “Witness or participate!” Gather at the Rose garden end of the tunnel, near the tennis courts. AC Transit: bus #65 to Euclid & Eunice. Further info (and weather alerts) at: raggedwing.org or on Facebook.

-"Children of the night! Such music they make!" Dracula! The marvelous old burlesque horror potboiler, which saw Bela Lugosi originate the Count’s role on Broadway, then in Tod Browning’s early sound movie, is up for Halloween—-and after-staged by Center Rep (Michael Butler directing) at the Lesher Center in Walnut Creek, featuring Eugene Brancoveanu, the Romanian opera and musical theater star (Don Giovanni at Berkeley Opera) as the mesmerizing Count, and his local victims and antagonists, including Rob Sicular, Madeline H. D. Brown and Kate Jopson, with an updated look for the old but erotic screamer. Opening Tuesday the 26th at 7:30, with Tuesday through Sunday performances, evenings at 8, Sundays at 2:30, with some Saturday matinees, till November 20. 1601 Civic Center Drive, Walnut Creek. $36-$42. (925) 943-7469; centerrep.org

-Russian director Oleg Liptsin, who’s performed his stagings of Beckett’s Happy Days for Antares Ensemble at the City Club and Dostoyevsky’s Notes from Underground (A Propos of the Wet Snow) at the Willard Metal Shop Theater, is presenting a few performances of his unusual production of Chekhov, Three Sisters-Final Cut, playing the almost farcical first act right up against the fateful final act, with scenes and vignettes from what comes between on video at intermission. There’s also a creative use of video elements directly onstage. Liptsin’s the genuine article, one of famed director Anatoly Vasiliev’s associates, someone who can show us a truly different side to Chekhov’s theatrical greatness. The players are mostly students from Shelton Studios, with Matt Shelton countercast as the insulting Solony. 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, through November 17, at the Shelton Theater, 533 Sutter (between Powell & Mason), downtown San Francisco. $14-$28. 433-1226; sheltontheater.com

-Another Halloween special: Greek Shadow Theater, the 4th annual performance of Halloween, this Sunday at 7, by Leonidas Kassipides, Karaghiozis Saves the Economy. Karaghiozis is the traditional buffoon from Greek folklore; Kassipides is an accomplished shadowmaster, grandson of another, and colleague of Shadowlight Productions’ Reed. Hallidie Plaza, outside Powell Street BART Station, near Market & Powell/5th Street (and the Cable Car turnaround), San Francisco. shadowlight.org

-Gemma Whelan, long a local theater director (with Wilde Irish, among others) and teacher, now living in Portland, has been touring, reading from and signing her novel, Fiona: Stolen Child. Her last local reading will be Wednesday at 7, A Great Good Place for Books, 6120 Lasalle Drive, Montclair Village. Slante! 339-8210; ggpbook.com fionastolenchild.com

-32-
Eye from the Aisle: CCMT’s A CHORUS LINE Shines in Walnut Creek

By John A. McMullen II
Mon Oct 25 18:42:00 -0700 2010

Since we treat actors like living gods, it is no surprise that we want to be voyeurs on the backstage world of the stars. But A CHORUS LINE is about not the performers who get the star roles or the supporting roles; these performers are in the background, and it’s their job not to stand out. They dedicate their time and lives pursuing hit-and-miss success as “Broadway gypsies,” enduring crappy jobs in between, while confronting continual disappointment and tentative personal relationships due to being on the road. Dancers have a professional life-span just a tad longer than an NFL running back’s, so their hunger to make it has a clock ticking in the background.

The best vignette of this life must be, by its record of success, the musical A CHORUS LINE, now playing at Contra Costa Musical Theatre at the Lesher Center in Walnut Creek. With words by Ed Kleban and music by Marvin Hamlisch, who won the 1976 Tony for best score, and choreography by the famed Michael Bennett who died young—what’s not to like about a play that garnered nine Tonys and the Pulitzer Prize for drama?

Director/Choreographer Jennifer Perry and CCMT do a bang-up job of the production. From “I Can Do That” about a young man’s Billy Elliot–like attraction to his sister’s tap shoes and moves, to “At the Ballet” about a young girl’s escape from her riven home-life, to the now standard “What I Did For Love,” the show reflects the emotional highs and lows peculiar to a life in the theatre. The musical direction by Mark Hanson is impeccable.

The cast of 26—the director and his assistant, the 17 auditionees, and the 7 cut dancers—fill the curtained and mirrored stage with a panoply of outlandish characters who seem true-to-life for anyone who has spent time in and around the NYC theatre scene. At the beginning, the dancing was spotty with flubs and missteps, which, it becomes clear, were planned to show the arc of their progress which blossoms into a living organism of a corps dancing in utter unison.

Where did they get all this talent? Renee DeWeese shines as Cassie, the breakout star who is looking for her old job back. Nicole Helfner charms with a good-humored “Tit’s And Ass” about the professional advantage that a little plastic surgery can yield. Melinda Meeng has a terrific belt combined with a naturalness of character—one of the few things occasionally lacking in many of the cast. Joel Roster, who has become an authoritative and professional actor since his bit parts at Town Hall Theatre, rules the roost as the Director. Monologues by Alex Rodriguez and Tomas Theriot let us into the disquieting world of being a gay man who wants to dance whether from the ‘burbs or Spanish Harlem. The uncanny upper register of Albert Jones, as the only black man in the ensemble who survives the first cut, astonishes the listener. My favorite moment was the trio of Katie Pogue, Emily Garcia, and Catherine Williamson, who share the sanctuary of dance “At the Ballet.”

A CHORUS LINE was the first show to introduce a computer-controlled lighting system to the Broadway theatre, and now even small theatres have computer boards. The lighting of this production by Scott Denison is by turns spare and lavish according to mood, and when the ensemble serves up “One Singular Sensation,” they could easily be talking about the lighting and use of the equally spare and lavish sets by Kelly Tighe.

We should note that there has been controversy from charges of plagiarism surrounding this 35 year old work since most of the situations and some dialogue came from auditions and workshops with dancers who were not credited and rewarded little from the fourth longest running Broadway play ever (#1 Phantom, #2 Cats, #3 Les Mis).

Lesher Center for the Arts seems to be the place to go for musical theatre. This is as close to a professional show as you will get short of the Golden Gate or Orpheum. This critic has railed against the wave of the NO INTERMISSION plays, and this one runs two hours without an interval; but, truth be told, I was rapt from start to finish and didn’t really miss the opportunity to have that cherished intermission cocktail.

A CHORUS LINE presented by Contra Costa Musical Theatre plays Oct 22-Nov 20 at Lesher Center for the Arts, Hoffman Theatre, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek CA

Tickets: (925) 943-7469 or www.ccmt.org

Lyrics by Ed Kleban, music by Marvin Hamlisch, book by James Kirkwood Jr. and Nicholas Dante, direction and choreography by Jennifer Perry, musical direction by Mark Hanson, lighting by Scott Denison, set by Kelly Tighe, costumes by Michael Berg, sound by Lyle Barrere; stage management by Jason Jeffrey.

WITH: Ben Bogen, Tony Conaty, Maggie Connard, Renee DeWeese, Ariel Ford, Emily Garcia, Nicole Helfner, Melinda Meeng, Ryan Meulpolder, Marty Newton, Phoenix Normand, Chris Olson, Katie Pogue, Mario Rizzo, Alex Rodriguez, Joel Roster, Tomas Theriot, Catherine Williamson, and Deedra Wong. Cut Dancers: Jessica Boynton, Kelly Cooper, Lavale William, Jonathan Davis, Maddie Mendes, Gilbert Michael, Keegan Morris, Nikki Nickerson, Caitlin O’Leary, Sarah Schori, Suzie Shepard, Brian Sterling, and Alison Valentine.

John A. McMullen II, MFA, MA, is a member of the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle and the American Theatre Critics Association. Contact EyefromtheAisle@gmail.com Thanks to EJ Dunne for editing.

Around & About: Theater Reviews

By Ken Bullock
Tue Oct 26 17:22:00 -0700 2010

Central Works’ Penelope’s Odyssey: Actors Ensemble, The Winter’s Tale; Berkeley Rep/Tricycle Theatre (UK), The Great Game: Afghanistan.

Gary Graves’ new play, Penelope’s Odyssey, directed by John Patrick Moore, playing through November 21 at the Berkeley City Club, proves to be one of Central Works’
most challenging productions to date, a tri-umph of the company’s unique collaborative method, something they evolved together well before they became the resident troupe at the City Club—and they’re celebrating their 20th season next year.

Like a tightly meshed net, cast into the Mediterranean, the play brings the wily wanderer and shape-shifter Odysseus up onto the sands of Ithaca—the guileful, maybe mendacious opportunist of Greek Tragedy as much as Homer’s resourceful hero, with a hint of Samuel Beckett’s intellectual tramp to boot—in an equally crafty tour-de-force of acting by Terry Lamb. He meets his match in Jan Zvaíšler’s Penelope, a wary yet unwavering presence on the home front, sweeping through the palace in aquamarine gown and Jackie O. sunglasses, as well as his suspicious, stalwart son—or is Telemachus his son?—and Antinous, the playboy prince of the suitors descending on apparently widowed Penelope, played respectively by Leontyne Mbele-Mbong and Matt Lai, both with unusually nuanced performances.

Gary Graves—who seems to thrive, squeezing blood from a stone, new plays from shopworn classics: witness his version of Dostoyevsky’s Grand Inquisitor a few years back—clearly is playing off the kind of speculations about the pre-Olympian gods, about matriarchy overtaken by patriarchs, found in Robert Graves’ books, in Jane Harrison and the Cambridge Ritualists, and elsewhere. But Penelope’s Odyssey is no glib conceptualization of Homer after modern theory. It’s a kind of anachronistic backstory look at the human side of these figures out of epic legend, what they’ve become after the confusions of war, wandering, uncertainty—and the self-consciousness of their legendary status.

As usual, the company concentrates a lot of great stagecraft in the intimate environs of the City Club: Moore’s direction creatively uses every square inch, it seems; Graves doubles on light design, which is particularly effective dying out on the apparition of one character’s shade; Greg Scharpen, manning the booth, works wonders with sea and land sounds and music. Tammy Berlin’s costuming is just right, too, from Penelope’s gowns to Odysseus’ castaway hoodie, torn trousers and deckies, to Antinous’ motorcycle gear and red helmet, when he has to take a spin around Ithaca “to think things out,” after his brusque suitorly advances to Penelope haven’t borne fruit.

But particular to this show and the very best of the rest of Central Works’ repertoire over the years is an immediacy that mirrors their method for developing a new play. Afterwards, the participants all commented in conversation how important scenes were uncertain as to their manner of staging until days before opening, in a process that had lasted months. That combination of careful preparation and controlled improvisation in development gives a genuine theatricality to results like this—spontaneous, yet in command; emotionally and intellectually vulnerable, yet assertive—in contrast to much polished but finally vapid work onstage in bigger houses.

Right up to the final—and most stunning—scene, this backstory tale on an original classic remains unpredictably wayward, intriguingly theatrical.

Central Works is also one of the few theaters left who promote reasonable prices—a sliding scale of $25 down to $14 ($23 online) and several pay-what-you-will performances.

Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 pm; Sundays at 5, 2315 Durant; 558-1381; centralworks.org

*****

Actors Ensemble is staging that unusual piece of theater, Shakespeare’s late “Romance” (though it’s consistent with so much of Baroque theater, from England and elsewhere in Europe) The Winter’s Tale, directed by Jeremy Cole in a delightful, almost storybook version, with set by Norman De Veyra and lights by Bob Gudmundsson. The first half is drama, telling of the self-deception of the King of Sicilia over the relations between his queen and his old friend, the ruler of Bohemia. The second half is mostly farce and rustic comedy.

The first half—and a bit of the last—belong to the women, with Kerry Gudjohnsen, fine as the falsely accused Queen of Sicilia, and Holly Bradford as her loyal defender, both shining. The comedy in the second part shows slapstick-y humor by Rhio Ossola and Tavis Kammet as the Old and Young Shepherds and a spirited performance by Jaime Lee Currier as Autolycus, one of Shakespeare’s most unusual clowns, a kind of cozen, which the program modernizes nicely as “con-man.” Stanley Spenger and Richard Aiello play the kings, with Robert Cooper good as the loyal advisor to one who schleps with the other, when the first goes ballistic from jealousy. The cast includes Josie Alvarez, Jamie Atlas, Paul Dana, Madeline Hanson, Joseph Hirsch, Rachel Siegel, Ty Mark Williams, David Weiner—and that trouper, late of York, Norman MacLeod.

Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 (Thursday November 18 at 8), Live Oak Theater, 1301 Shattuck (at Berryman); $12-$15.
**Obituaries**

**Rosalie Ann Cassell, 1947-2010**

*Special to the Berkeley Daily Planet*

*Mon Oct 25 17:29:00 -0700 2010*

Artist Rosalie Ann Cassell, a longtime resident of Berkeley and teacher at Berkeley City College for 25 years, died on September 27 at age 63 after a brave battle with cancer, her partner John McCord at her side.

“The local art world has lost one of its loveliest lights,” said McCord, a musician who lived with Cassell during the last twelve years, one of the most productive periods in her long career as a painter.

“She was a dedicated and inspirational teacher who first and foremost was committed to her students and to their art education,” wrote BCC Vice-President Krista Johns. “She influenced many lives using creativity, imagination, and an unshakable devotion to artistic expression.”

Cassell also taught painting, drawing, color theory, and art appreciation for fifteen years at Los Medanos Community College in Pittsburg, where she ran the art gallery and displayed her work in the annual faculty show.

A memorial celebration will be held on Sunday November 14 from 1-4 PM at St. Alban’s Episcopal Church Parish Hall at 1501 Washington Avenue in Albany, near her Neilson Street home. An exhibit and sale of her paintings will be on display at Nielsen Arts, 1537 Solano Avenue in Berkeley, from November 6 through 19 with an opening reception on Saturday November 6 from 7 to 9 PM.

Cassell’s widely exhibited acrylic paintings fell into two rough categories: the purely abstract, often flowing and fractal-like forms that she termed “cellular abstraction” and figurative studies, usually nudes taken from studio models set within an abstract landscape, which she said represented “us and the cosmos.”

Having worked as an artists’ model herself, Cassell celebrated the human body in a color intense context that elicits multiple meanings and emotions.

Her signature style was forged in the crucible of the women’s movement of the 1970’s, when she collaborated with influential feminist artist and educator Diane Rusnak and others in collectives and salons that not only raised the consciousness but also freed the creative energies of women artists who had been taught traditional male dominated methods and modalities.

Rusnak, who remained a close friend, recalled Cassell’s contributions to the women’s art community in a graveside eulogy at Rolling Hills Cemetery on September 30th. “She introduced us to Emily Carr,” said Rusnak, remembering the Canadian painter and Cassell’s annual summer pilgrimages to Alert Bay in British Columbia, a source of inspiration for both artists.

Cassell was born in Brooklyn, New York on March 23, 1947 in a working-class Jewish family. Her father Frank was a foreman in a plumbing warehouse, and her mother Lillian, an immigrant from Lithuania, was a bookkeeper. Rosalie’s older brother Michael Benjamin, a photographer and Army veteran, who also lived in Berkeley, died in 2008.

Cassell attended PS 269, Walt Whitman Junior High where her high IQ placed her in the special progress program, and Erasmus Hall High School, where she flourished until graduation in 1963 at the age of 16. At nearby Brooklyn College, she held down a double major in art and education to qualify for a New York City teaching certificate. As an art student, her emphasis was sculpture and black and white photography.

After four and a half years of living at home and earning her Bachelor of Arts degree, she moved to an apartment in Greenwich Village and taught art in a high school.

Seeking broader horizons, Rosalie took off for Europe in the spring of 1969, traveling in Spain, France, Italy, and Germany, where she met Nick Pashley, a young Canadian writer, at the Lowenbrau brewery in Munich. Together they explored Yugoslavia, Greece and Crete. The couple lived in London and New York, where Rosalie studied Shoshu Buddhism. Although she eventually gave up Buddhist practice, she incorporated aspects of meditative spirituality within her work.

After the death of her father, Rosalie and Nick drove to the West Coast, and many adventures later, settled in the East Bay. In 1972, Pashley returned to Canada, remaining a friend over the years.

The early 1970’s were the hey-day of feminism in the East Bay. One day Rosalie responded to a poster inviting her to a women’s art gathering, and she joined a collective and a salon. Caught up in the creative ferment, Cassell pioneered women’s art courses in adult education and extension programs throughout the Bay Area.

These contacts led her to community college teaching, which became her passion and means of support, teaching for Vista, now Berkeley City College, and at Los Medanos. In 1983 she earned a Masters degree from JFK University, writing a thesis “Feminist Consciousness and the Making of Art.”

Over her long career, Cassell taught thousands of students and produced several hundred paintings, most of which remain uncollected. “There are three aspects to being an artist,” she once said, “Doing the work, paying the rent, and engaging in the business of art. I only had time for the first two.” In the upcoming show, art-lovers will have an opportunity to view a representative group of paintings by Rosalie Cassell, including some of her last works.

---Toni Mester

**Toni Mester has been a friend of Rosalie Cassell since 1971**
Contents
Becky O’Malley: They’re Running Against Teley--Again...
Berkeley Daily Planet Election Recommendations
VOTE NOW on Measure R Sam Zell Cartoon Contest Entries! All Entries Now Posted with Printable Version
Now Read This: A Selection of Links of Interest to Berkeley and Environ
Alameda District Attorney Charges a Second Man in Berkeley Homicide
Marcy Simon and Iraj Misaghi, Owners, Ashby Flowers on Telegraph Avenue(Reader Commentary):
  Kriss Helped Save Our Telegraph Ave. Business!
Councilmember Jesse Arreguin: Growth at What Cost?
SaulSugarman/Dan McMenamin (BCN): Berkeley Shooting Victim in Surgery
Dan McMenamin (BCN) and Planet: Another Shooting in South Berkeley
An Open Letter to the Community On Measure U from California Native Plant Society
Sign Snipers Have a New Trick
Bay City News: Elmwood 7-11 Robbed in Berkeley Early Thursday
Robert Lieber, Albany City Councilmember: Re-Elect Albany Environmentalists
From Sgt. Mary Kusmiss: Bayside Man Arrested in Berkeley Murder
More Election Letters
Charlotte Perry-Houts:
  Council Begins Discussion of Budget Woes, Raises Parking Ticket Fines to Compensate
Thomas Lord: Murder on Sacramento Street in Berkeley
Daniella Thompson: More Developers Finance the Yes on R Campaign
Saul Sugarman (BCN): Berkeley Campus Peeper Suspect Arrested
Ted Friedman: “PALOOZA!” at People’s Park More of a Bombalooza
Dorothy Snodgrass (First Person): Life’s a Gamble!
Election Coverage to Date
Election Letters
Fred Dodsworth (Reader Commentary): Stop Mayor Bates’ Wrecking Crew!
Gene Poschman (Reader Commentary): Re: An Open Letter to Victoria Peirotes from the Sierra Club
Nancy Carleton (Reader Commentary): We Can’t Afford to Lose Kriss on Council!
Karen Hemphill: Re-Elect Karen Hemphill for School Board
Thomas Francis (Reader Commentary): Letter of Support and Candidate Information for George Perezvelez
From the Berkeley Student Cooperative: Student Co-op Sponsors District 8 Forum Next Wednesday
Merrylie Mitchell (Reader Commentary): Vote No on Measure F, the Unfair Fee for Vehicles
Justin Lee (Reader Commentary): BUSD is High on HI bond money and Moral Hazard
Carol Denney: Sign Stealing Time (Song)
Amanda Reiman MSW, PhD (Reader Commentary): Yes on Measure T
Dr. James D. Cleveland: Elect Keefe in Albany
Marvin X: Is Berkeley Off the Hook?
Gene Bernardi: Library Trustees Rubber-Stamp Costly New RFID System
Letters to the Editor
Cartoon Page: Odd Bodkins, BOUNCE
Ralph E. Stone: Eclectic Rant: U.S. Apologizes for Abusive Guatemala Human Medical Experiments
Conn Hallinan: Dispatches From The Edge: Of Horns & Beaks and the Afghan War
Bob Burnett: The Public Eye: Election 2010: Choosing the Abuser
Joe Eaton: Wild Neighbors: Honkers, Cacklers, and Taxonomists
Ted Friedman: First Person: Closed Dustin Hoffman Haunt on Teley Was a “Hippy Jewelry Store”
Helen Rippier Wheeler: Senior Power: I just discovered Grandparents Day…
Ken Bullock: Around & About: Performing Arts Picks for this week, Halloween, and beyond…
John A. McMullen II: Eye from the Aisle: CCMT’s A CHORUS LINE shines in Walnut Creek
Ken Bullock: Around & About: Theater Reviews
Special to the Berkeley Daily Planet: Rosalie Ann Cassell, 1947-2010