

THD 2015 MEMBERSHIP MEETING & ELECTION REPORT

By Jen Haeusser
Chair, Social & Program Committee

THD kicked off its new year Thursday, April 23, with its membership meeting and election at the \$300 million renovated Exploratorium. This new location on Pier 15 is three times larger than the old museum and hosts spectacular views of San Francisco Bay, the city's skyline and the Bay Bridge. The Exploratorium's SeaGlass Restaurant, placed at the east end of the museum, was an ideal location for our event. This casual waterside venue showcased locally sourced

food that all could enjoy.

Many people mingled around the mouthwatering spread of appetizers, enjoying catching up with fellow neighbors. Then it was time to welcome newly elected board members - Joe Luttrell, Karen Cartales, Dan Lorimer, Melissa Mountain and Romalyn Schmaltz. Last but not least, Stan Hayes was elected president and Vedica Puri honored for her many years of service. Our well informed speaker, Harvey Smith, president of the National New Deal Preservation Association, shared the New Deal's lasting legacy on Telegraph Hill

and San Francisco's waterfront.

The grand finale for those in attendance was the option to tour the sparkling new Exploratorium at a discounted rate. A special thanks to Marilee Gaffney, who headed up the event, Jon Golinger, who found our speaker, and Tom Noyes, Vedica Puri and Mike Madrid for being on the planning committee. We look forward to another year of working together to celebrate, beautify, improve and protect this unique space where we all live.



(from top left, clockwise)
Harvey Smith speaking at the Exploratorium THD Annual Membership Meeting.

David Ruiz-Del Viso is enjoying the Exploratorium

Richard Slota ponders an exhibit

THD's Annual Membership Meeting at the Exploratorium

Left to right: Dan Lorimer, Markus Haeusser, Jen Haeusser, Jon Golinger

ALL FIVE PHOTOGRAPHS ABOVE BY JULIE JAYCOX



A MAN REMEMBERED

One year ago on July 29, 2014, Dear Mr. Kosovitz, known to many people in his wide community of friends, passed away at the grand age of 86. Much was written last year in *The Semaphore* about Herb. Two notable memorials were given at the Fior d' Italia, and another one at Cafe Sapore, one of his favorite cafes, where he often played Scrabble after he retired.

Herb was a superb and gifted architect, who left warm and visible legacies of architectural accomplishment. He was an artist, a forever mensch and a dedicated loyal member of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers and Friends of Washington Square. He worked hard to protect North Beach for its beauty and uniqueness, capturing the spirit of San Francisco. Beloved by many people, he contributed to all the lives he touched with a calm and forceful wisdom.



Herb Kosovitz, The Dapper Man

He was "Herbert Kosovitz," to most, "Herbert Dean" to his mother and "Herbie" to many of his friends and family. Herbie loved conversation, always asking a

million questions to find the truth. He loved jazz, mostly, and easily offering to play the music while entertaining in his magnificent home on Telegraph Hill, which he enjoyed immensely. This was a cherished place to do his cooking, show his unique art collection and provide a cozy respite for his guests to get to know each other. His friendship circle was an ever expanding circumference — he was the epitome of "six degrees of separation."

My memories of Herbie are personal. He was a man who championed gay rights. He was proud to fly the Gay Pride flag on the roof of his home. He was a forthright gay man, who had a successful 40-year relationship until his partner died in 2006. The big events in our lives we recall as meaningful. However, it is the small everyday behaviors, acts and idiosyncrasies that expand and embellish our character which are most missed daily. These I miss most, the small, day-to-day



moments we had.

I miss our weekly walks. He would walk and talk, often stopping to pet a dog as if it was his. The chattering about everything and nothing, the debates over ideology, being stopped by numerous North Beach inhabitants to discuss some local issue — this was quintessential Herb. Our disagreements, at times, resulted in one of us having to say the acronym "SWF: Sorry, Wrong, Forgive me." Herb was thoughtful, kind, one of a kind, wise and curmudgeonly. He provided a rudder for the course of many people's lives that he touched over the years. Serious as he seemed to be, Herb could be spontaneously whimsical: stopping to buy a colorful

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER



I'm Stan Hayes. I've just been elected president of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers Board of Directors. One of the best things about this new job is the chance to talk with you in this quarterly column.

I hope you enjoy reading *The Semaphore*. THD publishes four issues a year. Straight into the mailbox of every THD member, *The Semaphore* itself is worth the price of a THD membership (and more). For more than a half century, it's chronicled our lives on the Hill, our history, our art and culture, our stories.

Founded in 1954 and one of the oldest community organizations in San Francisco, THD has worked hard for more than 60 years to make Telegraph Hill a better place to live for all of us.

We've done that by following the "mission statement" in our bylaws:

- Beautify and improve Telegraph Hill
- Build community

- Protect the unique character of the Hill
- Celebrate the Hill's history and traditions
- Engage in affairs of the city
- When necessary, stand up for the Hill.

Just in the last year, we helped build stronger community with block parties, dinners, social events, and sometimes, just plain talking to neighbors. We honored local heroes who've made extraordinary contributions to the Hill. We worked to improve and reshape planning, zoning and land use to better protect our neighborhoods. We worked to safeguard the Hill's historic heritage. We planted new trees, tried to save old ones, helped build and maintain parks and counted birds.

We worked to give North Beach and Telegraph Hill a greater voice and to protect local businesses. We published *The Semaphore*. We held salons, art exhibits featuring local artists, and book readings featuring local authors. We served on neighborhood coalitions,

waterfront advisory committees, police advisory boards and affordable income working groups.

When needed, we've stood up for the Hill. From Coit Tower, to the waterfront, to North Beach, to the Hill's historic districts, and to neighborhoods throughout the Hill.

THD is a fine organization, doing good work, trying to build a better Telegraph Hill for everyone.

I'm proud to be a member.

Remember – THD is your organization. To make sure it's working for you, we'd like to hear from you. Tell us what we're doing right. More importantly, tell us what we could do better.

Send me an e-mail at Stan.Hayes@THD.org. I'll report back next issue.

Let's keep THD working for all of us. I look forward to working with you!



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If you let your neighbors know about your business we can work together to keep our voice in the neighborhood thriving. Take out an ad in *The Semaphore* for your business or service, or contact a business that you like and ask them to take out an ad. Here are our reasonable THD ad rates:

Business Card 2 X 3: one issue \$45 - one year \$155

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Ad Sales contact person: Andy Katz at Andy.Katz@thd.org.

Please contact Andy to place your ad or if you have questions and need more information.

EVICIONS IN NORTH BEACH AND THE CITY SKYROCKET

By Theresa Flandrich of the North Beach Tenants Committee and Aaron Peskin

Outwardly, the buildings of North Beach and Telegraph Hill appear largely the same as they have for the last 100 years since our neighborhood was rebuilt right after the 1906 earthquake and fire — albeit many of these buildings are being ripped apart on the inside having their historic interiors replaced with granite counter tops and the like. But what is less obvious is the unabated epidemic of evictions that continue to change the soul and character of our community at an increasingly alarming rate.

The Ellis Act is the neutron bomb of evictions. Enacted into California State Law in 1986, it gives apartment owners the unconditional right to evict all tenants if they intend to go out of the rental business for at least 5 years. In most instances, these units are then gutted and converted into market priced “for sale” TICs or condos. As a result, the Ellis Act has become one of the favorite tools of unscrupulous real estate speculators and North Beach has been and continues to be, along with the Mission District, ground zero for this kind of speculation.

In this super heated economy, Ellis Act evictions have almost doubled every year between 2011 and 2013 (the most recent year for which detailed information is available). According to the San Francisco Rent Board, the number of evictions in San Francisco has steadily increased over the past five years — the rate is now higher than it has been in over a decade, with over 4,000 recorded Ellis Act evictions in San Francisco to date.

This number does not include “owner move-in” evictions or instances where tenants are forced out or agree to leave before an actual eviction takes place. In many instances, speculators use the threat of an Ellis Act eviction to coerce tenants into taking a buyout. In addition, by threatening an Ellis Act eviction and bullying the tenants into taking a buyout, landlords can avoid the restrictions on re-renting that are attached to Ellis Act evictions, allowing them to re-rent the apartments at much higher rents or as short-term rentals. Although the City has no official numbers for such buyouts during

this period, the San Francisco Tenants Union estimates based on the number of tenants seeking its assistance with threatened evictions, that for each recorded eviction, there are at least three unrecorded displacements. Under a new city law effective as of March 9, 2015, landlords are now required to disclose these buyouts to the Rent Board, including when they start negotiating buyouts and the actual buyout agreements reached. In the first 81 days, landlords filed 19 buyout agreements and 100 disclosures of initiating buyout negotiations. A reached agreement must be filed within 60 days.

Even though we all personally know people who have been (or are being evicted) or happen to see the occasional protest banner hanging out of building windows, we are unlikely to know the extent of these evictions and their impact on our neighborhood where rent controlled apartments account for approximately 70% of the housing stock.

Within the small area of THD’s boundaries alone, there have been over 200 residential units that have been the subject of recorded Ellis Act evictions since 1999, with over 30 Ellis Act evictions in 2013. Tenants Together reported in April 2014 that seniors and those with disabilities comprised 71% of all Ellis Act evictions during this period.¹ And based on SF Tenants Union estimates, it is likely that as many as 90 additional units have been subject to unrecorded evictions. Many long-standing members of our community, many of them seniors, are facing extraordinary hardships as a result of being forced out of their homes and their community. In the words of the late Ted Gullickson, the former executive director of the San Francisco Tenants Union, “[t]he conversions are dramatically changing the nature of neighborhoods because you’re replacing low-income renters with more high-income condo owners. And the people that get evicted have a hard time finding a place in the city.”

There are three reasons why evictions and TIC conversions are concentrated here: North Beach is a very desirable place to live, with its coffee shops, eateries and picturesque setting; our housing stock is about two-thirds (2/3) rental; and the predominate North

1 <http://www.antievictionmappingproject.net/ellisreport.html>

Beach building type — containing 3 to 6-unit flats — lends itself to conversion into TICs and condominiums.

A handful of speculators, including WB Coyle and Peter Iskander, are responsible for a significant share of the evictions in North Beach/Telegraph Hill. Both are listed on the San Francisco Anti-Eviction Mapping Project² as two of the City’s “Dirty Thirty” who are responsible for the bulk of these kinds of evictions.

WB Coyle³ used the Ellis Act to evict the tenants from at least 69 units as the managing member of 12 active LLCs and has fraud charges against him. Lawsuits against him involved over \$15 million and span nearly a decade. Supervisor David Chiu describes, “The WB Coyles of the world are not only not welcome in my district, or in San Francisco, but ought to be fully prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”⁴

Peter Iskander⁵ is now responsible for an increasing number of evictions in North Beach including those at 525-531 Greenwich Street, where six residential units were subjected to Ellis Act evictions. According to the San Francisco Anti-Eviction Mapping Project website, the following are among the buildings owned by Iskander or one of the companies he owns or controls (SF Affordable Housing LLC; SF Twin Boys Corporation; Lee B. DO, LLC; Ichi Nuts, LLC; Master Builders; or Bubble Realty): 524-526 Vallejo Street (4 units), 454 Vallejo (3 units), 850 Bay Street (2 units), 525-531 Greenwich (6 Units), 1763-1767 Stockton (4 Units), 615-617 Greenwich (6 units), 450-454 Vallejo (5 Units), 28-30 Sonoma (4 Units) and 1327-1329 Kearny (4 Units).

The City’s master plan is predicated on maintaining the City’s stock of affordable housing. Unfortunately, the City is doing little, if anything, to protect the City’s existing low and moderate-income rental housing being lost through the increasing number of evictions motivated by real estate speculation.

2 <http://www.antievictionmappingproject.net/ellis.html>
3 <https://antievictionmap.squarespace.com/evictors#/wb-coyle/>
4 <http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/San-Francisco-Real-Estate-Broker-Not-Welcome-in-City-215887761.html>
5 <https://antievictionmap.squarespace.com/evictors#/peteriskandar-1/>

WATER WATER WATER

By Marilee Gaffney

Water has long been a precious resource in California, and it is the subject of battles between farmers and urban denizens, farmers and fishermen and between Northern and Southern California. There are golf courses in the desert and lush lawns all around California and irrigated fields growing water-intensive foods, such as almonds and walnuts among others in the Central Valley, that are all areas of valid contention.

As we all know, we are now in our fourth consecutive year of drought, and Governor Jerry Brown has issued an executive order to reduce water usage. In

San Francisco, a call to reduce overall water usage 10 percent as compared to 2013 will be in effect June 1, and a 25 percent reduction in outdoor irrigation will be in effect July 1.

Most of us know the obvious tips, but did you know:

- That by not letting water run while brushing your teeth, shaving or washing dishes saves about two gallons per minute.
- That by installing water-efficient showerheads and faucet aerators saves one gallon per minute.
- That by shortening your shower time by just three minutes can save about eight gallons of water.

- That by repairing toilets and other plumbing leaks as soon as possible can save hundreds of gallons per day. Visit sfwater.org/homeleaks for repair tips.
- That you can get a SFPUC rebate by replacing older toilets and clothes washers with new water-efficient



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FROM THE DESK OF SUPERVISOR CHRISTENSEN

By Julie Christensen
Supervisor, District 3

Dear Telegraph Hill Dwellers —

I would likely not be a District 3 Supervisor today if I had not become engaged with THD long ago. Twenty-one years ago, then-president June Fraps and then-treasurer Maud Hallin coaxed me to head up a street tree-planting project that eventually added 355 trees to green our neighborhoods. A year later, I joined forces with a group of ex-THD presidents — Anne Halsted, Rod Freebairn-Smith and Jane Winslow — and current ones — Joe Lutrell and Gerry Crowley — and other friends and neighbors to repair the sorry state of Coit Tower and the surrounding Pioneer Park. It was a slippery slope from there to work on the North Beach Pool and Clubhouse and Helen Wills Park and the North Beach Library. I never, ever imagined, when we started efforts to improve the Joe DiMaggio Playground in 1999, that I might be cutting the ribbon at the park as a city supervisor 16 years later.

The range of issues that have come up in my first five months in office is broad. There are daily details, such as expediting repair of a sink hole on Alta Street, overseeing retrofitting of the historic streetlights on Union and Calhoun Terrace and trying to lower the volume of the back up bells at the Cruise Terminal. It’s budget season and it was gratifying to secure financing for Next Village and other nonprofits and for upgrades to Washington Square, Pioneer Park and other district open spaces and for crosswalk safety projects near our schools and senior housing.

The power of the supervisor’s office helped me to prevent the eviction of tenants at 2 Emery Lane and to get Target to back off on plans to locate a big-box store on Polk Street. I have crafted legislation that will allow the addition of more new apartments within existing D3 buildings, providing rent-controlled and, in many cases, accessible units in the district while preserving neighborhood character. I was able to get the city to slow plans for a new housing project at 88 Broadway

until we had time for neighborhood input and more consideration of height, bulk and street level integration. My previous relationships with the MTA and Public Works have been helpful as I work with them to coordinate street and transit and pedestrian safety projects in North Beach, Chinatown and Union Square.

The decision to expand my civic work to the all-encompassing role of city supervisor was not an easy one. But, having worked closely with Supervisor Aaron Peskin and Supervisor David Chiu during their tenures, I know that, in order to work well and happily, our district needs someone at City Hall who cares passionately about the district and is willing to shepherd all issues, large and small. That is my goal and my promise to the Hill Dwellers and District 3. I look forward to working with THD’s board and members to do what many of us have been doing for years — striving to preserve and improve this special place we love.





SOCIAL & PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT



By Jen Haeusser
Chair, Social & Program Committee

2014-2015: A Smorgasbord of Events

It's the most wonderful time of the year — time to get social! Before looking ahead, however, let's do a snap shot of last year's events. We kicked it off with the 60th Anniversary Block Party. It was upbeat and fun with neighbors of all ages, economic backgrounds and nationalities. The food, drinks, music and entertainment were extraordinary, but seeing more than 200 neighbors come together was priceless! Next we hosted the Naked Lunch authors' event, where some dozen local authors came together, exhibiting and reading from their latest

books. This was truly a celebration of the diversity and artistry of the writers in our neighborhood. Then who could forget the Holiday Celebration at Original Joe's full of good food, wine and company? Outstanding individuals in the community were awarded for their service. The Ides of March at the Devil's Acre, one of North Beach's newest establishments, was superb! Back to the Barbary Coast was the theme at this throwback tavern and basement bar. Apothecary-themed cocktails were delicious and the Countess Lola Montez, who gives walking tours of North Beach and the Barbary Coast, charmed us all. Last but not least, we wrapped up the year with our membership meeting and election at the shiny new Exploratorium's SeaGlass restaurant.

Join Us for Upcoming Events!

This year, let's make community a priority! They say "a family that laughs together, stays together." I believe that the same can be said about a community. Why not get together and enjoy the relationships that we have in this beautiful and eclectic neighborhood?

However, these events do not just happen. *We need individuals like you to join us!* There are two ways to do this. You can share your ideas and/or help with planning. If you are interested in any of these things please contact jen.haeusser@thd.org.



THE TELEGRAPH HILL DWELLERS INVITE YOU BACK TO THE BARBARY COAST FOR AN AFTERNOON OF COCKTAILS & CONVERSATION

THE IDES OF MARCH AT THE DEVIL'S ACRE

256 COLUMBUS AVENUE

Join your friends and neighbors for an entertaining afternoon at the Devil's Acre, one of North Beach's newest establishments. Enjoy one of the distinctive classic cocktails or a refreshing beverage from the Soda Fountain, along with sparkling conversation and some surprises in this beautifully restored Barbary Coast saloon...

\$10 per person
Light snacks will be provided, No Host bar.
21 and over for this event, please.

RSVP requested. To pay in advance-
Please make your check payable to
Telegraph Hill Dwellers and mail to:
THD March Event
P.O. Box 330159
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Or pay online at www.thd.org

SUNDAY MARCH 15TH 3-5 PM
THD ANNOUNCEMENTS WILL BE MADE AT 4PM

QUESTIONS? CALL 415-THD-1011 (415-843-1011)

(clockwise from upper left) A big crowd gathers for THD Block Party
PHOTOGRAPH BY MARKUS HAEUSSER

THD Devil's Acre event

THD Naked Lunch - The Beat Goes On event
PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD ZIMMERMAN

DAVID IRELAND'S PLEASURE IN NO CONTROL

San Francisco Chronicle
April 25, 2015 (Print Edition)
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
KENNETH BAKER / Galleries

Several monotypes by David Ireland, such as "Untitled" (1990s), pay homage to Marcel Duchamp, a hero of the artist.

[...] the Telegraph Hill Gallery brings an unfamiliar selection of Ireland's frameable works, mostly from the 1990s, into public view from the estate of one of the artist's siblings.

Critics cite Ireland (1930-2009) as a leading figure in Bay Area conceptual art. He did put much stock in ideas and their consequences, but the term "conceptual art" carries no reminder of the vivid physicality of most of his work.

One untitled piece here consists of a paper sheet coated with ink heavily enough that the blackened surface has cracked over time into patterns over which Ireland had no control.

Several other pages, layered with black and white enamel, bring to mind the abstract meanders of painter Brice Marden, until a viewer notices that the initials D and I slowly, but wryly, unignorably begin to obtrude as armatures of Ireland's ostensibly non-signifying features.

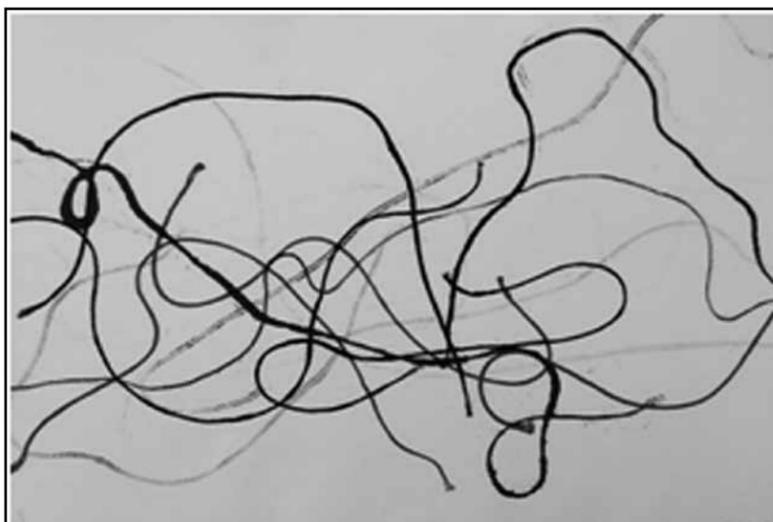
Ireland liked to toy with the convention of the artist's signature, especially because his initials were an anagram of "I.D." — all-but-universal slang for identity.

Several beguiling monotypes pay homage to Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), an acknowledged hero of Ireland's, apparently having been made by dropping pigment-soaked strings onto a page or plate, letting the physics of their falls dictate what we perhaps strain to see as composition. To make that strain felt consciously, and to invite us instead to sense a freedom and pleasure in indeterminacy, seem to have been the point.

Surrender of control and of the constraints of taste pervade Ireland's art, conspicuously here in two untitled sheets slathered thinly, as if blindly, with yellow plaster.

A single sculptural work betokens the opposite pole of Ireland's creativity: the exercise of extreme discipline to achieve a desired degree of impersonality. It is what he called a "dumbball," a grapefruit-size perfect sphere that he formed by tossing a blob of wet cement from hand to rubber-gloved hand hour after hour, for as long as the material might take to pass from real imperfection to ideal sphericity.

Kenneth Baker is The San Francisco Chronicle's art critic
David Ireland: Works on Paper "The Idea That Nothing Was Something Was In My Thought"
Telegraph Hill Gallery, 491 Greenwich St., S.F. (415) 767-9794.



BASIC CHAIN-STORE REGULATIONS LEFT IN PLACE, SOME CONTROLS TIGHTENED

By Kathleen Dooley, Board Member of the North Beach Business Association, and Nancy Shanahan, THD Historian

First adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2004, San Francisco's cutting-edge legislation to limit chain stores, known as "formula retail" controls, has been widely popular and viewed as a successful planning tool to preserve neighborhood commercial character and help to protect small, independent businesses, which enhance this character. The numerical definition of "formula retail" use is a type of retail-sales activity or establishment having 11 or more other retail-sales establishments.

Beginning with just a few neighborhoods in 2004, the controls were expanded widely in 2007 when voters overwhelmingly approved an initiative ordinance requiring conditional-use permits for formula retail in all neighborhood commercial districts (NCD). In general, the Planning Code requires new formula retail uses in NCDs and a few other zoning districts to obtain conditional-use approvals from the Planning Commission. A few districts, including the North Beach NCD, prohibit formula retail stores.

Together with local businesses, residents and other neighborhood groups, Telegraph Hill Dwellers worked to enact the prohibition on formula retail uses that has

been in place in the North Beach NCD since 2005. This prohibition has protected locally owned and managed businesses in the North Beach NCD from the competitive pressure of chain stores.

The character of North Beach has long depended upon the uniqueness of local businesses catering to San Francisco residents as well as tourists. This distinct blend of old and new, local and independent businesses creates a unique ambiance and neighborhood identity, as opposed to the "anywhere U.S.A." monoculture of "sameness" created by chain stores. These controls have been critical in maintaining North Beach's distinct character.

In neighborhoods where formula retail uses are not prohibited, but are allowed with conditional-use approvals from the Planning Commission, formula retail uses are usually allowed, even when they are controversial. A Planning Department report prepared in 2013 found that of approximately 93 formula retail applications filed since 2004, 75 percent were ultimately approved.

Last year, the Planning Department, with the urging of the Chamber of Commerce and real estate interests, made several proposals to weaken and to otherwise relax the city's chain-store controls, including raising

the numerical threshold for what defines formula retail from 11 to 20 establishments. This would have greatly weakened formula retail controls across the city and in North Beach.

After a yearlong process and numerous public meetings, which THD participated in, a compromise was reached between those seeking to loosen the formula retail controls and those seeking tighter controls. Under the leadership of Supervisor Eric Mar, most of the existing formula retail rules were maintained and some requirements were tightened. The new legislation expanded the scope of what counts as formula retail.

As adopted by the Board of Supervisors in early November 2014, the new amendments:

- Maintain the definition of formula retail use as 11 or more. (The Planning Department's proposal to increase the threshold to 20 or more was dropped.)
- Broaden the definition of formula retail to include international locations when determining if a business has the 11 locations that make the use subject to formula retail controls. Previously, only U.S. locations were considered. (Thus, the formula retail requirements apply if a retailer has 11 other branches anywhere in the world, even if the proposed San Francisco location is the first location in the United States.) Also, under the amendments, any entitled or permitted location would be counted toward the 11-location threshold, even if not yet open for business.

Still being discussed is how or whether "spinoffs," or subsidiaries of an already established formula retail enterprise (such as Black Fleece, a subsidiary of Brooks Brothers), should be considered formula retail for the purposes of these controls.

The intensity of San Franciscans' concerns about chain stores may appear to be an "only in San Francisco" phenomenon, but a growing number of jurisdictions across the country are adopting similar chain-store controls. San Francisco's regulation of chain stores has served as an example for other jurisdictions across the state and the nation.



MEET THE NEW 2015 – 2016 THD BOARD MEMBERS

At the Telegraph Hill Dwellers Annual Meeting and Membership Dinner at the Exploratorium Seaglass Restaurant, the Board of Directors' slate for 2015-2016 was voted on and approved by the THD membership as indicated on page 15.

Effective May 1, 2015, the new board members are: Karen Cartales, Dan Lorimer, Joe Luttrell, Melissa Dong Mountain and Romalyn Schmaltz. Thank you Karen, Joe, Melissa and Romalyn for providing the following bios:



Karen Cartales

I join the board after being a resident of the Hill for two years and volunteering to help with last summer's block party celebrating the 60th anniversary of THD. I've lived in Oregon, Seattle and NYC and love the unique attributes of San

Francisco, especially Telegraph Hill's beauty and community. I will bring brand marketing and communications expertise to THD by way of Nike, Microsoft, and start-ups, including Pac-12 Networks located in SoMa.



Joe Luttrell

It is a pleasure to once again be serving on the THD board, after an hiatus of some years, this time as the THD treasurer. My wife and I have had the great good fortune to live on Napier Lane for some quarter-century now, enjoying its bucolic, essentially 19th century quiet and neighborliness, certainly qualities worth preserving, as is our greater community on the Hill in general.



Melissa Dong Mountain

As a native San Franciscan, I am an advocate for raising children in the city of San Francisco. I am proud to say my two children are members of the fourth generation of my family to live on Telegraph Hill. After attending the Full-Time Culinary

Course at the neighborhood's former Tante Marie's Cooking School, my career in the food industry has included work as a private chef, caterer and cooking instructor. For the past four years I have volunteered as a PTA board member at my children's elementary school, and prior to that at another education-related organization for seven years, including roles in fundraising and as board president. I look forward to becoming more engaged in our neighborhood with my new role as THD's corresponding secretary. It will be important to me to work with my fellow board members to build community while preserving the unique character of our most wonderful neighborhood on Telegraph Hill.



Romalyn Schmaltz

Growing up in South Dakota seems to have given me a ken for community, I guess, but it never really found a new home—this yen for local culture and politics in lieu of grandiose abstractions—until I moved to Telegraph Hill in 2006.

Here I've seen that the spirit I yearned for of knowing your neighbors and working with them even through disagreements and certainly through art is still a reality. North Beach and Telegraph Hill are exactly where I've focused these efforts through the participation in and/or organization of more than 40 exhibits in the last seven years.

My strengths are in education—I've taught at the university level for more than 10 years—and coordination, mostly relating to literature, music and the visual arts. I'm convinced that alliances such as ours are crucial in retaining the character of not only this city but this neighborhood, and I bring this spirit to the table in the least alarmist and most concretely creative way possible. Rule No. 1: know your people. Rule No. 2: talk to them. Building follows.

Photo credits:

Karen Cartales
COURTESY OF KAREN CARTALES

Joe Luttrell
COURTESY OF JOE LUTTRELL

Melissa Dong Mountain
COURTESY OF MELISSA DONG MOUNTAIN

Romalyn Schmaltz
COURTESY OF ROMALYN SCHMALTZ

Herb Kosovitz *continued from page 1*

old-fashioned tie at a thrift store for a party; or joining a group of French teenagers singing a song in French on the Metro on the way to Versailles.

His friendships were genuine and loyal that lasted for years. Herbie was a true companion for 16 years. He was supportive, concerned, demonstrative, with his love and caring during the tough times. He was always resilient and unrelenting in fighting the good cause and finding a just outcome.

Some called him a charming urban hermit. He had impeccable taste, a humorous bent and incisive wit.

Those qualities did not infringe on his generosity or positive outlook. Herb was a lovely combination of Old World charm and current hip; always aware and alive with thought, and always interested and interesting.

Herbie loved reciting lines from plays or from musicals, especially of Stephen Sondheim or Bertolt Brecht. This is his final quote that he memorized in his last year:

"In the age of retirement, customary discretions are discarded as needless baggage from the days of midlife responsibility;

We say what we wish,
and do what we want."

Mr. Kosovitz, Herbert Dean, Herbie, is sorely missed.

His Best Friend,
Thomas Bonalanza
San Francisco



A moment of whimsy



PARKS, TREES & BIRDS REPORT



By Carlo Arreglo
Co-chair, Parks, Trees & Birds Committee

Another spring migration has come and gone and successful migrant fledglings will be feeding and storing up fat reserves for their journey south. Resident hatch-year birds will disperse in the fall, seeking their own territories. With all this bird activity going on, now might be a good time to step back and reflect on the Top 10 birds of Telegraph Hill, a highly personal and selective list of birds whose appearances delight and, in the case of migrants, signal seasonal change. Without further ado and in no particular order, I present the Top 10 Birds of Telegraph Hill:

10. **Bushtit.** Resident. This cute, diminutive bird resembles a gray cotton puffball with a long tail. Bushtits travel in small flocks and glean insects in shrubs and trees. Listen for soft twittering, peeping and popping vocalizations as they move in small groups.
9. **Pygmy Nuthatch.** Resident. These small birds are slightly bigger than Bushtits with dark gray upper parts and white underparts. In flight, they present a very short tail. They are often seen in the Monterey Cypress trees that line the path on the west side of Pioneer Park. Look for their characteristic movements up and down tree trunks and their upside-down foraging. They also hack, or "hatch," a nut by wedging it into a bark crevice and trying to hammer it open.
8. **California Towhee.** These robin-sized birds generally prefer ground cover and forage by using the double-scratch method with their feet. An otherwise drab bird, they have what looks like "diaper rash," orange-reddish undertail coverts.
7. **Red-masked Parakeets,** or the Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill. Resident. Well, I think you've heard of and seen these charismatic avifauna!
6. **Golden-crowned Sparrow.** Migrant. Sparrows are



Red-tailed Hawk

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARLO ARREGLO

often lumped into LBJs (little brown jobbers) or LBBs (little brown birds), but some are actually distinctive with a bit of effort. The Golden-crowned have a golden crown, are often seen double-scratching on the ground, and arrive in the fall and winter. Their song sounds like "OH-dear-mee," and when I hear this I know summer is over.

5. **Townsend's Warbler.** Migrant. This stunning yellow, white, olive and black bird is a jewel of Telegraph Hill. For many people, the Townsend's Warbler is their first "gateway" warbler, the warbler that has launched a thousand birders.
4. **American Crow.** Resident. As much as I hate seeing crows mob Red-tailed Hawks and other raptors, there is no denying the intelligence and charisma of

this bird. There's even a book called "Crow Planet." As long-time Telegraph Hill resident Paul Weaver has observed, crows fly past Coit Tower during crow "cocktail hour" by the hundreds, looking for evening roosts on trees and buildings downtown.

3. **Yellow Warbler.** Migrant. There is just something compelling about seeing a small, all-yellow bird flitting through the trees. The male sports chestnut streaking on his breast. Look for Yellow Warbler at the top of the Filbert Steps near the bottlebrush tree.
2. **Wilson's Warbler.** Migrant. Even cuter than the Yellow Warbler! This small bird with olive upperparts and yellow underparts boasts a black cap, or black beret, in the male of the species. Wilson's can often be seen in the lower Greenwich Steps, the bottlebrush area at the top of the Filbert Steps and in the Coit Tower south lawn area.
1. **Red-tailed Hawk.** Resident. Red-tailed Hawks are magnificent raptors that are sometimes taken for granted, but careful observation makes you appreciate their beauty. Their one-note vocalization "K-EEE-EE-RRR" is sometimes used for Bald Eagles in moving pictures because the eagle possesses a rather undignified sound for an otherwise majestic bird. Red-tailed Hawks do not always have red tails. This occurs in adult plumage. Juveniles have brown tails. These hawks are best identified by their patagial marks, which are present in all plumages. Once you can confidently identify a Red-tailed Hawk, you have a baseline to ID other raptors!

If you'd like to learn more, I lead monthly bird walks for Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS) at Telegraph Hill and San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. E-mail me for times and meeting spots at arregloc@gmail.com or check the GGAS website: <http://goldengateaudubon.org/field-trips/fieldtrips/>



LOMBARD STREET FICUS TREES

By Dale Weidmer

Based on news reports alone, most everyone has become aware that ficus trees throughout the city are experiencing major limb failure on an increasingly regular basis. One failed as recently as early June on Russian Hill and six ficus trees on Lombard Street between Columbus Avenue and Telegraph Hill Boulevard have experienced major limb failures in recent years. Every one of these failures has caused major damage to property and/or cars and resulted in the immediate removal of the tree by the Department of Public Works (DPW). Unfortunately, a serious injury did result from a ficus tree failure in the Mission District in fall 2014.

This injury and the large number and frequency of the tree failures resulted in DPW Director Mohammed Nuru issuing DPW Order No.183151, entitled "Tree Removal Criteria for Ficus Trees" in November 2014. In explaining why it was necessary to issue this special order, Director Nuru explains that "...the tree structure of many



Damaged Ficus tree located near the Joe DiMaggio playground

of these ficus trees includes large, competing trunks with acute angles of attachment." He went on to say that "...Due to recent large limb and tree failures of ficus trees, causing property damage, injury, and concerns for public safety, the Director of Public Works has established



Ficus tree crashes through the Joe DiMaggio playground fence

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DALE WEIDMER



new guidelines for the staff evaluation and determination of whether to approve the removal of this particular species of tree on a case-by-case basis." DPW staff, after inspecting the remaining 50 ficus trees on the 300-to-600-blocks of Lombard Street, approved 36 trees for removal and designated six others as requiring immediate removal based on the criteria in the order.

There are 113 tree basins on the 300-to-600-blocks of Lombard - 50 ficus basins, 56 basins contain other types of trees or shrubs, seven basins are vacant. As of

this writing, 28 ficus trees on these blocks have been posted for removal and replacement. City funds have been made available to cover the cost. Based on resident input, the DPW has been using the Swan non-fruiting single-trunk olive as the tree choice for replacement. The goal is to use the same tree for all replacements to establish a uniform tree canopy for the length of this important corridor. Olives fit the North Beach Italian heritage tradition, have successfully been used around the city and are reasonably easy to manage.

Some residents have expressed regret in having the ficus trees removed at all. These views were expressed at the hearing on the matter held at City Hall on June 3, 2015. Those supporting the removal and replacement project point out that, in addition to the safety concerns, the ficus are fast growing and have an aggressive root structure, resulting in repeated sewer pipe and sidewalk repairs, a loss of sunlight during the day and reduced street lighting at night. Those advocating to keep the trees wonder if frequent and aggressive trimming might mitigate at least the safety concerns. Chris Buck of Urban Forestry explained at the hearing that almost all trees have been allowed over many years to grow to an unsafe height and condition and only dramatic cutting of the large branches could reduce height, weight and the existing potential to fail. However, he also demonstrated that lopping off large branches results in heavy new growth at the location of the cuts that is just as subject to failure as are the overgrown existing limbs.

A group of neighbors, informally organized under the name "Keep Lombard Safe and Green," have consistently advocated for a tree replacement plan that will establish and maintain a uniform and attractive green way along this important Lombard Street corridor leading to iconic Coit Tower. The group is eager to join with others in working to make Lombard both safe again for pedestrians and cars and the attractive street we all want it to be.



THE CONTINUING SAGA OF THE FILBERT STEPS ELM

By Judy Irving
Co-chair, Parks, Trees & Birds Committee

The Filbert Steps elm, before and after major pruning by Tree Shapers in mid-May. With this “haircut,” the tree is no longer top-heavy and should eventually recover from the hacking it received several years ago. Adjacent property owners Oz Erickson and Bee Kilgore shared the pruning cost, after interested neighbors paid for a site inspection and arborist’s report from Ted Kipping of Tree Shapers. All this . . . for one tree? YES! The elm was saved, and everyone is pleased with the result. (Proper pruning is often the key ingredient missing from street-tree care.)



The Filbert Steps elm BEFORE pruning

ALL FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUDY IRVING



Filbert Steps elm AFTER pruning



The extent of the “haircut” from a different angle.



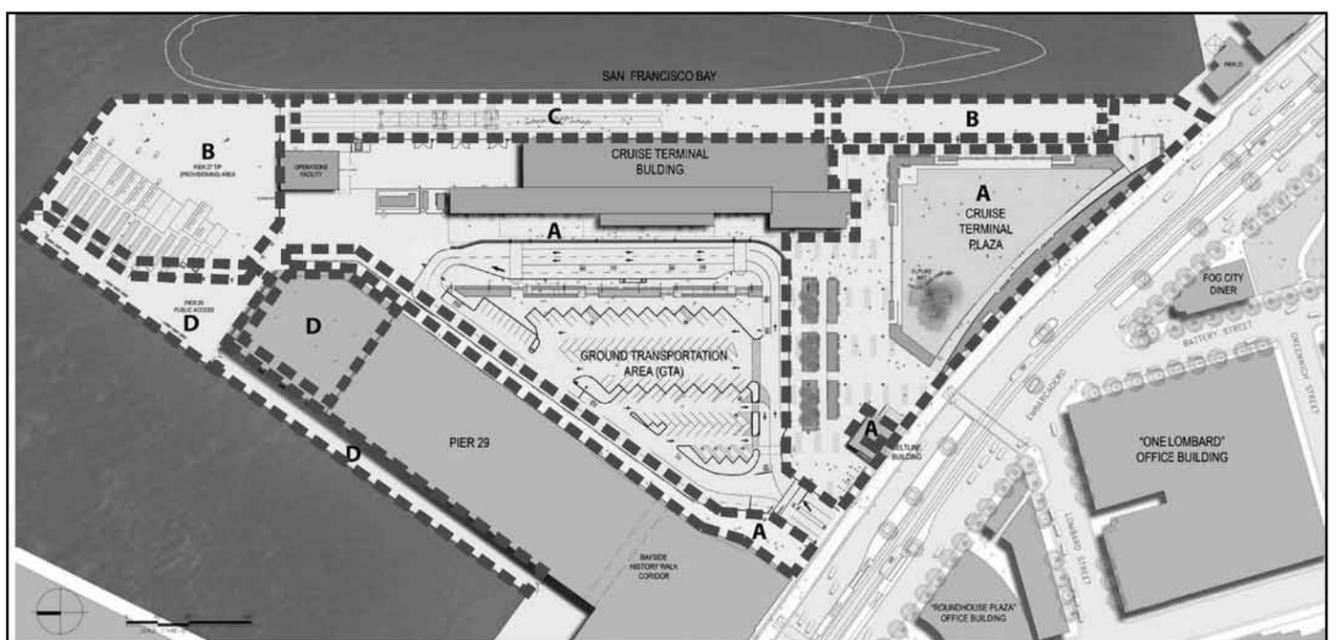
Tree worker in the branches

PIERS 27 & 29 OPEN SPACE ON WATER’S EDGE FINALLY OPEN TO ALL

By Jon Golinger

In June, the amazing new public waterfront access areas on the edge of the bay at Piers 27 and 29, by the new Cruise Ship Terminal, were finally unlocked and made open to the public. This is a great place for San Francisco residents and visitors alike to come enjoy 360 degree views of the bay and the city. For months, we have been encouraging the Port to finally unlock the gates in this area the last few months, since they were supposed to be made open to the public earlier this year.

See the accompanying map of the area from the port which explains which areas are open every day and which are open only when a cruise ship is not in Port. See you on the waterfront!



A Cruise Terminal Plaza, Public Restrooms, Pier 29 South Edge, Walkway at Terminal
Open at all times. Restrooms (anticipated opening September 2015) to be open from 30 minutes before dawn to 30 minutes after sunset and maintained by Port.

B Pier 27 Apron at Plaza & Pier 27 Provisioning Area
Closed when ship is in berth and the day before and after. Open all other days from 30 minutes before dawn to 30 minutes after sunset.

C Pier 27 Apron at Terminal
Closed when ship is in berth and the day before and after, and when there are 4 or fewer days between ships. Open other days from 30 minutes before dawn to 30 minutes after sunset. (Anticipated to open August, 2015)

D Pier 27 Tip, Pier 29 North End of Shed & Pier 29 North Apron
Open from 30 minutes before dawn to 30 minutes after sunset.

THE NEW DEAL'S LASTING LEGACY IN NORTH BEACH AND ON TELEGRAPH HILL

By Harvey Smith, President, National New Deal Preservation Association

Telegraph Hill and adjacent North Beach have been San Francisco's Bohemian Heart since the start.

The historic neighborhood's reputation as a creative hub is well-deserved. Writers, including Mark Twain, Jack London, Ambrose Bierce, Bret Harte, Robert Louis Stevenson, Frank Norris, Kenneth Rexroth and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and artists, such as Maynard Dixon, Dorothea Lange and others, lived and worked here. Many had their studios in a warren of spartan rooms called the Montgomery Block, fondly known as the Monkey Block. This massive building, a survivor of the 1906 earthquake, was demolished in 1959 to make way eventually for the Transamerica Pyramid. In the 1930s, they crowded into the Black Cat at 710 Montgomery St. — below today's Canessa Gallery — to drink, smoke and likely talk politics. Then, as now, Telegraph Hill was known for its activism. In 1934, some New Deal artists working at Coit Tower plastered their pro-labor sentiments into their now-famous murals. That same passion can still be found in the Telegraph Hill Dwellers struggles to preserve Coit Tower and resist monstrous private development



Detail of Bernard Zakheim's mural with his daughter Ruth on the left.



USA Work Program (WPA) by an unknown artist, 1936, photolithograph



Mural of the World's Fair on Treasure Island
SOURCE AND ARTIST UNKNOWN

on the waterfront. Following the 1929 stock market crash, which ushered in the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt campaigned for president pledging "a new deal for the American people." Once elected, FDR's New Deal sought training and jobs for young people, limits on investing, bank deposit insurance, massive infrastructure projects, affordable urban and rural housing and rights for workers. Where there was no social safety net for millions of unemployed, the New Deal established Social Security and unemployment insurance and invested in massive jobs programs, such as the Civil Works Administration (1933-34), Works Progress Administration (1935-43) and Public Works Administration (1933-43). The New Deal's imprint can be clearly seen throughout the city, and particularly around Telegraph Hill — the Bay Bridge, Treasure



Telegraph Hill Drive, 1937, WPA work on Pioneer Park
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WPA ARCHIVES

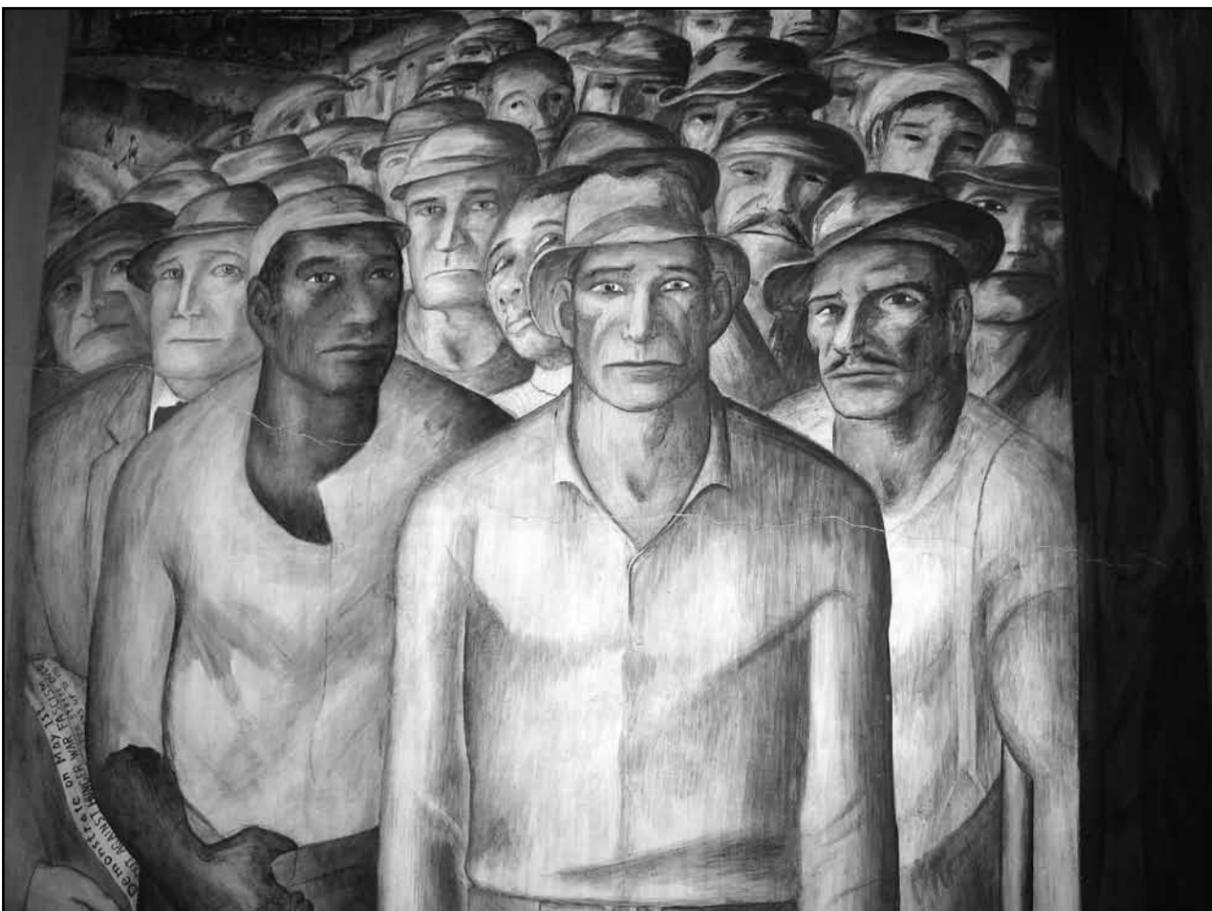
Island, Piers 9, 19, 35 and 37, and the U.S. Appraisers Building on Sansome Street; major improvements to Pioneer Park, Bay Street, Broadway, Calhoun Terrace and Columbus Avenue; the construction of Aquatic Park and Bathhouse (now the Maritime Museum), the latter adorned with murals, sculptures and mosaics by New Deal artists Hilaire Hiler, Sargent Johnson, Richard Ayer and Benny Bufano.

The New Deal's array of programs included:

- The Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) was the first federal art program in the nation. The Coit Tower murals were its first project.
- The Treasury Department Section of Fine Arts hired artists, including Anton Refregier, who painted the series of murals, "The History of California," at Rincon Annex Post Office.
- Under the Treasury Relief Art Project (TRAP), work, such as post office murals, was done by artists "on relief," including Edith Hamlin and Maynard Dixon.
- The WPA's Federal Writers' Project employed Kenneth Rexroth as an editor for its California guidebook.
- The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) and Federal Music Project (FMP) performed downtown and at the 1939-40 World's Fair on Treasure Island.
- The Farm Security Administration (FSA) famously hired Dorothea Lange to photograph the plight of those displaced to migrant camps.

Picture African American painter and sculptor Sargent Johnson, who later lived on Grant Avenue, catching the ferry from Berkeley to the Ferry Building. He'd walk by the Montgomery Block and perhaps stop at the Black Cat where he might see fellow artists Ralph Stackpole, Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Benny Bufano, Victor Arnautoff, Bernard Zakheim, Otis Oldfield, Maxine Albro, Helen Forbes, Rinaldo Cuneo, Ralph Chesse, Dong Kingman, Emmy Lou Packard or Peter Macchiarini.

Many of these artists participated in the 1939-40 World's Fair on Treasure Island, also known as the Golden Gate International Exposition and the Pageant of the Pacific. Much of the unprecedented public works of the New Deal ended in 1941 when the United States entered WWII. By that point, Telegraph Hill and North Beach were much changed — a transformation that took place in less than a decade. How can we commemorate this important legacy? My colleagues at the Living New Deal, a nonprofit begun at UC Berkeley, believe it is through a **National New Deal Museum**. There are many possible sites in San Francisco, including one right below Telegraph Hill at Pier 19, which was beautifully refurbished by the New Deal, but which



Detail of John Langley Howard's Coit Tower mural

ALL FOUR PHOTOS ABOVE BY HARVEY SMITH

continued on page 9

CITY PUC DESTROYS TELEGRAPH HILL WPA HISTORY

In its well-meaning, but ill-conceived, one size fits all quest to convert city streetlights to energy efficient LED lights, the San Francisco Public Utility Commission (PUC) has destroyed a number of the historic light fixtures on Telegraph Hill created as a part of the FDR era Federal Work Projects Administration (WPA) construction of Calhoun Terrace and upper and lower Montgomery Street between 1939-1940. THD has urged the PUC to immediately restore this important civic art.

Dr. Gray Brechin, founder of UC Berkeley's Living New Deal Project,¹ said, "It is shocking that an art-loving city like San Francisco would desecrate these WPA-built treasures that have for so long graced Telegraph Hill. These lights can be upgraded without sacrificing them. I call upon the City to restore the fixtures it has thoughtlessly decapitated."



New Deal in North Beach *continued from page 8*

is now mostly vacant and used as a parking lot. Such a museum could showcase the people, art, architecture and social programs of the New Deal, in interactive exhibits designed to appeal to young and old alike. We owe it to the artists and activists of days past, to ourselves and to future generations to know and honor this extraordinary time in our nation's history. What better place to honor the lasting legacy of the New Deal than in San Francisco?

We welcome your ideas and support. Find out more at the Living New Deal (www.livingnewdeal.org), a growing collaborative effort to identify, map, interpret and commemorate the New Deal. I can be reached by phone at 510-684-0414 or by e-mail at harveysmith-berkeley@yahoo.com.



Calhoun Terrace plaque.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GRAY BRECHIN



WPA-era historic streetlight (left) and city's LED replacement.



PHOTOS BY GRAY BRECHIN



Detail of Victor Arnautoff's Coit Tower mural – The street sign at Montgomery and Washington streets is where the Montgomery Block, "the Monkey Block," was located.

HELP THE 'HOOD *Shop Locally*

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

New members from March to May, 2015:

Conor Granahan, Stephanie Corns, Billie Kay Horst, Christina Isobel, Barbara Lindemann, Evan MacMillan, Brigid McCormick, Adam Sieff, Bob Woehrle.

Seek them out and say hello to them at our next event!

If you ever have a membership question, don't hesitate to reach out to me. You can e-mail to membership@thd.org. You may also call to our general number, 415-843-1011 (THD-Ten-Eleven), and leave a message including when it would be best to get back to you.

Don't forget to always have a membership brochure handy to give out so someone. Personal contact is still the best way to get new members. If you do not have one, pick one up at any event — we should always have some there.

Tom Noyes

THD Financial Secretary (aka Membership)

membership@thd.org

thdmembership@gmail.com

THD BOARD MOTIONS

Prepared by Mary Lipian
THD Recording Secretary

February 2015

No Motions

March 2015

No Motions

April 2015

No Motions



WATER, WATER, WATER... *continued from page 3*

models. These two fixtures are the largest water users in the home.

- That by reducing one load of laundry per week by waiting to run full loads will save 20 gallons.

As far as outdoor irrigation is concerned, those who don't comply with the 25 percent reduction in water use will be subject to excess use charges. Some tips for efficient landscape watering include:

- Water between the hours of 8 p.m. and 10 a.m. to reduce water lost to evaporation and wind. *Add organic material to soil, such as two-to-three inches of mulch or compost, to help improve the soil's ability to retain water.
- Discuss conservation goals with your gardener. Consider drip irrigation or look at manual adjustments that can help with avoiding overspray or runoff.
- Discuss other ways to reduce water use in the garden with a landscape professional. Look at ways to

increase no-water zones such as creating hardscape areas using stone or other hardscape materials set in sand to allow for more permeability. Other considerations for your garden design include low water-use plants such as Mediterranean plants, California natives as well as succulents.

Some other tips include:

- Pick up or sweep waste materials, trash, food and debris and dispose of it in trash bins instead of using water saving about 15 gallons per minute.
- Use liners in compost and trash bins to avoid needing to rinse bins with water. *Use water sparingly to spot wash areas where substances have accumulated. If a hose is necessary it should have an automatic shut-off nozzle, and never water continuously.

You can also schedule a water-wise evaluation from the SFPUC by calling 415-551-4730 for further help.

Hopefully these tips will help in all of our efforts to do our part in conserving water during this drought, and for the years to come!



A WILL IS A WAY

Make a lasting commitment to the neighborhood by remembering Telegraph Hill Dwellers in your will. Your support will help beautify and protect the character of the neighborhood you love.

Telegraph Hill Dwellers Gift Planning Project

for more information call Jon Golinger at (415) 531-8585

or email Jon.Golinger@thd.org



RESTAURANT REVIEWS



ACQUOLINA: A TRUE TASTE OF ITALY

By Carol Peterson

Acquolina Restaurant
1600 Stockton St.
San Francisco, CA 94133
415-781-0331

When Café Divine closed after many successful years, the neighborhood mourned. Everyone wondered what would go into the space that had been a meeting place where friends could sip coffee, enjoy a meal or hear music. Neighbors worried that another dress shop would go into the space.

The windows were covered for many months. Finally, we saw activity and to our happiness we learned that an Italian restaurant was soon to open. Luckily, I was in North Beach on the day Acquolina opened and went in to see what the new space looked like. To my good fortune, owner Dario Nicotra was there and I had a chance to talk with him.

Nicotra moved to the Bay Area six years ago to take a job as a CFO with a local corporation. He never thought of opening a restaurant, but because he is Italian, he found North Beach and ate most of his meals at E Tutto Qua. He became friends with the owner and the idea of opening a restaurant slowly began to germinate. Nicotra started looking around the city, but could never find the right spot. Then his agent notified him of a new site in North Beach. He looked at it and knew it was for him. He put in a proposal in September and was accepted in January. He then set out designing the concept of the restaurant, from style to food.

The renovation of the small restaurant is stunning, with its high ceiling and the large, cleverly carved wood Acquolina sign up front and center on the upper wall above the bar. One wall has been opened up with glass, which looks into the neighboring Goorin Bros. Hat Shop, making for three walls of glass. The bar was redesigned, too, so more people can stop by for Italian



Dario Nicotra & Meri Serpillo



coffees or eat at the counter. Nicotra recruited Donato Colatruglio to come to Aquolina to serve as the barrista after 25 years of working as one in Italy. He is also in charge of all the Italian pastries sold at the bar. This congenial young man gives the bar a real Italian feel.

After the inside design was done, Nicotra pondered who he was going to recruit as chef. He wanted authentic Florentine food. He remembered his old days of hanging out at the beach near Florence and always going to a family restaurant where he loved the food. He recollected Meri Serpillo, who worked there for 12 years. It turns out she had been living in the U.S. for four years, working in North Carolina. Nicotra and his chef partner, Marco Marianelli, persuaded her to come to San Francisco. They had all lived in the city of Livorno. Marianelli was happy to share some of his tried-and-true recipes as he and Serpillo created the menu. Serpillo is an inventive, excellent chef and I think she will never bore us.

Here's what I found enticing.

Hands down, one of the best dishes on the menu is House Flan (\$7). This

seasonal vegetarian dish is a carefully formed flan, infused with finely chopped vegetables and topped with a butter sauce that includes the chosen vegetable of that flan. I had three different kinds: carrot, zucchini and mushroom, and it would be difficult to choose a favorite. They were all delicate, creamy and tantalizing. These flans will change daily with seasonal vegetables.

The Carpaccio de Salmone (\$15) salad is exactly that. Rich, thinly sliced smoked salmon nestles atop a bed of fresh arugula, red onions and capers, and is finished with oil and vinegar. There is a generous portion of tender salmon.

Although Serpillo has the ability to change the menu when she gets an idea for a dish, Marianelli is responsible for classic Florentine dishes that are likely to remain on the menu. One of my favorites by Marianelli is the Mezze luna di Castagne al Burro e Salvia (\$20), which translates to homemade chestnut pasta stuffed with burrata and ricotta. All of the pasta is made every day and cooked fresh for each dish, unlike other establishments that make big batches in the morning and then refresh them with hot water.

Of all the pasta dishes I have ever had, this is the most unusual. The pasta is rather brown because of the chestnut flour and the texture is slightly dense. It is filled with imported burrata and fresh ricotta cheese and covered with a light butter and sage sauce. The taste of the chestnut flour is so unique you'll find yourself trying to distinguish the delicious flavor. The blend of the cheeses smooths the unusual pasta.

I had a few entrees I liked very much, such as the Agnello in Crosta di Pastacchio (\$29) – rack of lamb in a pistachio crust, topped with balsamic reduction, an excellently prepared dish. The best entrée on the list, however, earns that title because of its rarity and how well prepared it is. The Quagie alla cacciatora (\$29) – quail stuffed with pecorino cheese and wrapped in pancetta – is extremely moist and tender for quail. The little bird oozes the pecorino, giving you the opportunity to include in each bite of quail the cheese and the pancetta it is wrapped in. You will find yourself sucking the bones and wanting more. All of the entrees come with sides of spinach and stewed seasonal vegetables.

Panna Cotta is one of my favorite desserts, but Serpillo gives her special Panna Cotta (\$7) a little twist. The texture of this dish is denser than most and gives your tongue a moment longer to gather the flavors and enjoy the silky, creamy texture. It is finished with a variety of toppings, but I loved the berry.

When I asked Nicotra about his vision for the restaurant, he said, "I want this to be like our places in Italy, where people go to meet and food is a social matter. Friends can come here to relax, drop in for a coffee, eat at the small tables or come with friends and sit around the communal table. They can watch the large TV screen installed for watching old Italian movies. I want the restaurant to be a place of energy."

After a few visits to this new restaurant, I have a feeling that David Wright, the former owner of Café Divine, will be smiling about this new place where the owner will not forget the importance of the neighborhood, good food and good cheer. ✦



Inside Acquolina

Fog Hill Market

Hanna Chedyak

415-781-8817

1300 Kearny

San Francisco, CA 94133

Little Vine

CHEESE, WINE & PROVISIONS

MARIN SUN FARMS . STRAUS

ACME BREAD . SANDWICHES

THURS NIGHT WINE TASTING

1541 GRANT AVENUE @ UNION

SHOPLITTLEVINE.COM 738.2221



A STUNNING FACELIFT FOR ROSE PISTOLA



Rose Pistola's newly remodeled dining room



Grilled Whole Branzino

By Carol Peterson

Rose Pistola
532 Columbus Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94133
415-399-0499

Even though I have been reviewing North Beach restaurants for several years, I was surprised when my editor forwarded an invitation from Rose Pistola's owner Laurie Thomas to dine at her renovated and reconceived establishment. That's because I usually write about new places in the neighborhood and Rose Pistola has been serving a loyal clientele for 19 years. But Thomas wanted to show off the restaurant's new look, new chef and new general manager.

Though Thomas was one of the original investors in the restaurant, she is now the sole owner and in charge of every detail. For instance, she decided on the new more subtle color scheme.

"It suits better the subtlety of our food and the Italian feel we are trying to achieve," she said.

The bigger changes, however, came with a new staff. Thomas had always promoted from within, but when her head chef left with a few of his colleagues, she decided to go outside to find a new executive chef. When she met Steve Walker, she knew she had a fit. Not only was he excellently trained by award-winning chefs, but he had taken a research trip to Italy, immersing himself in both the innovative and traditional food of Italy presented with a Tuscan touch.

When I first saw the staff at work in their open kitchen, I knew who was in charge. Walker was overseeing every dish that came out of the kitchen. "We make everything ourselves here," he told me, "so it's easier to stay in control."

Not everyone on the staff is new to the restaurant. Thomas promoted Lisa Robins, who had run the front of the restaurant since 2011, to general manager. She is also the wine director and head of the bar.

The changes in decor and staff along with an increased emphasis on fresh ingredients from local farms makes the "new" Rose Pistola an exciting place to dine.



Laurie Thomas, owner of Rose Pistola

Here are a few of the dishes I tasted that I found especially rewarding. From the Cold Antipasti menu, the Giardiniera (\$9) of pickled vegetables was not what I anticipated. This dish is too often harsh and overloaded with vinegar, but not here. The Rose Pistola dish consisting of cauliflower, baby carrots, turnips and house-cured olives dusted with spices was most intriguing. The richness of the vegetables took front and center. House-cured olives are always a treat, with less salt than mass-produced ones.

The refreshing Chopped Salad (\$7) consists of several kinds of lettuce, Point Reyes Blue Cheese Vinaigrette and is generously sprinkled with hand-grated imported Parmesan cheese. This is not a busy salad, but full of flavors and the perfect start for a meal.

I am always searching for the "best" Fritto Misto and think I have found it at Rose's. The light breading and perfect cooking is the key. This dish includes calamari, prawns, anchovies, fennel and onion. The freshness of the seafood, the perfect cooking, the light breading and portion size earns this dish a designation as the best Fritto Misto (\$15) in North Beach.

The thin crust pizzas are unique, with most of them being vegetarian. With asparagus in season, it was only fitting to try a Quattro Fromaggi (\$18), consisting of a thin crust cooked perfectly with slightly burnt edges. The center has asparagus, pancetta, salsa verde and fresh mozzarella. The pizzas can be easily shared by two and can be a meal.

All of the pasta, but the spaghetti-type noodles, are made fresh everyday. The Ricotta-Black Truffle Ravioli (\$18) is a particular standout. The tender pasta pockets are filled with finite black truffles mixed with ricotta cheese. The dish is topped with a butter sauce, finely chopped spring vegetables, garlic and pasta water to give it a silky texture, then sprinkled with hand-grated Parmesan cheese.

A classic dish for years at Rose's is the Grilled Whole Branzino (\$37) and for good reason. This whole fish is grilled, with a crispy skin and moist, flakey flesh inside. It is sweet, with a delicate texture. It sits atop a bed of ceci bean, shaved fennel and grilled onion. There is a reason this show-stopper has been a winner for years. The staff debones this easily shared dish.

Unlike the old Rose Pistola, all the desserts are

now produced in-house. There are two I would particularly recommend. The gelatos (3/\$6) are wonderful. I sampled a unique trio and was particularly impressed by a scoop of grapefruit/grappa, tangy with a little jolt at the end. The flavors change with a whim depending on what is brought in that morning from the farm. However, nothing beats the Torta della Nonna (\$9), a generous slice of vanilla custard tart with pine nuts and crème anglaise. The thin delicate crust never interferes with the custard. This dish tastes exactly as you want it to.

For years, neighborhood folks have spotted jazz musicians honing their craft in the area closest to the front window. They play four nights a week, Thurs.-Fri., 8 p.m.-10:30 p.m., and Sat.-Sun., 9 p.m.-11 p.m. As there are currently very few places to enjoy music in North Beach, this is a special gift Thomas continues to give to the neighborhood.

Many North Beachers know Laurie Thomas, as the brave soul who took over the dinner preparation from Francis Ford Coppala at the Gala Event for North Beach Citizens. She, her chef and staff put together that huge dinner for five years. She is also on the board of many charities relating to food and

has been the president and vice president of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association, where she is still on the board. Her dedication to North Beach is a prize for all who live in the neighborhood and the new and improved Rose Pistola will live on as one of the best Italian restaurants in the neighborhood. ❖



Steve Walker, executive chef

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ART & CULTURE REPORT



By Romalyn Schmaltz
Chair, Art & Culture Committee

On the Subject of Meeting

Our first Art & Culture Committee meeting was held on Saturday, June 20 at the Canessa Gallery at 708 Montgomery St. Anyone wishing to participate in shaping the events A & C will be producing in the next two years of my term (or beyond, of course) was encouraged to attend. We addressed the first salon at Canessa (see below) to be held probably in September, plus other A & C possibilities. At that time, a new potential gallery/community artist space/work studio will also be discussed.

On the Subject of Dwelling

Unless you're of the elusive species *nativus san franciscanus*, you remember what it was like when you first rolled into town: Because of the neighborhood-y nature of San Francisco, it can be hard to find any niche — much less *your* niche — while also feeling as if everyone else has carved their figure into the bas-relief of the bayside frieze, leaving you to twist in the fog. But it's a city that breathes visibly from one bridge to another and from one decade to the next. The nexus that is North Beach is no more impervious to that pulmonary impulse than any other living village. It follows that the fresh air blown our way should be taken in and, when it smells sweet, made to feel at home.

Jen Haeusser, chair of THD's Social Committee, joined me recently as I was meeting a newcomer to the Filbert Steps, Bob Woehrlé of Kentucky, who had already joined THD and expressed an interest in Art & Culture and Social committees' activities. We lounged on the deck chairs of the S.S. *Vallejo and Grant* — Caffè Trieste — and held a three-person press conference about living in North Beach/Telegraph Hill for what seemed like minutes, but really was two hours. I'd forgotten how intensely pleasurable it is to introduce our inimitable neighborhood to a newcomer who really wants to *stay*. Because it was a rare sunny day in May, the passersby couldn't have been more numerous or illustrious. At one point, some film crew was shooting

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IMAGE COURTESY OF ROMALYN SCHMALTZ

a video of Paul Kantner on his perch by the Chronicle box at the corner, so Bob got that slice of the Beach life (I started with, "Ya like Jefferson Airplane?"). He met Roy and Officer Alvarez, Kim and Abby (the baristas on deck) and at least 20 other dominant threads in the tapestry. Another recent THD member stopped by and joined us on a break from "picking up rubbish" (Brigit's from New Zealand and now lives on Vallejo) in the streets! By the end of it all, we were giddy with enthusiasm, not just to have new active members and patrons of the arts living on the Hill, but surely from the high of getting to share one of the things you love most with someone you've never met, yet really believe will nurture and protect it.

I challenge all members and *Semaphore* readers to do this at least once this summer: Host a newcomer to the neighborhood. It doesn't have to be for hours, or at your house, but the effort it takes to make a human feel

at home in a new environment — again, especially one as (*insert your favorite adjectives here*) as North Beach — is infinitesimal compared with the infinite benefit of hospitality. Grab a coffee or something stronger, have a dinner or a walking tour.

Make someone feel at home in a way that will make them wish to truly *dwell* here.

On That Note

"Family Suppers" have gained quite a lot of popularity in culinary circles in the last 10-15 years in restaurants and "pop-up foodie culture." After yacking with some of the locals, I have concluded that this is something many people yearn for in North Beach and among THD members: an opportunity to casually get to know new members through a rotating roster of what could be called Telegraph Hillbilly Dinners, in which a household would agree to sign up to host another household or two (depending on size) for dinner one night perhaps every six months, enjoying a monthly dinner at others' houses in return. This would be something to organize with the Social Committee, but it is also certainly "Culture," and I am interested in members' feedback regarding viability. I mean, it's certainly viable. Who wants to do it?

Zach in the Saddle Again

Zach Stewart and I held our first official meeting, fortunately with former A & C chair Julie Jaycox present. He confirmed that we can use the Canessa Gallery space as a meeting place and for our future salons. What a treasure is Zach! He enthusiastically welcomed our idea for the first salon: Storytelling (the official title will be determined later), with a few anchor storytellers, but an open forum for others to join in the fun and make it an interactive, lively night of storytelling. While this isn't reinventing the wheel event-wise, this art is resilient and exciting enough to vivify a whole community. I'll supply the Super Soakers!

The added element I'd like is the visual arts element: Photography, painting and music. Fine art or photographic prints could be for sale with a fraction of the proceeds benefitting THD and the artists.

Speaking of Canessa Gallery

Richard Zimmerman, of late THD's Art & Culture chair, will be showing his photography this month at Canessa Gallery at 708 Montgomery St., beginning First Friday, June 5. Stop by and catch up on what we board members do with our own creative lives! Can't wait, Richard!

Speaking of Spooking

Lastly — and this dovetails again with Social — I'd like to propose an artistic neighborhood Halloween art ball of some kind. Maybe historical/neighborhood luminary costumes? We can put this on the June meeting table for starters. ✂

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COLUMBUS CUTLERY HAS NOT CLOSED

The Spring 2015 issue of *The Semaphore* reported that Columbus Cutlery had closed.

That is incorrect. They are open and located at 358 Columbus Ave. in San Francisco's North Beach.

MORE WIRELESS COMING

Wireless carriers are gearing up to add hundreds of new cellular equipment sites on wooden utility and streetlight poles in the Northeast neighborhoods, including North Beach, Telegraph Hill and the waterfront. Public notices will be going out to thousands of residents near the sites in the coming weeks and months. For more information and answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) visit our website (thd.org).



WATERFRONT COMMITTEE REPORT



JUDGE TELLS WATERFRONT HEIGHT LIMIT FOES TO PROVE THEIR CASE IN LAWSUIT TO OVERTURN PROP. B

By Jon Golinger
Chair, Waterfront Committee

In March, Superior Court Judge Suzanne Bolanos sustained in part and overruled in part a motion by City Attorney Dennis Herrera to dismiss a lawsuit by the State Lands Commission aimed at overturning Proposition B, the Waterfront Height Limit Right to Vote Act, which was approved by 59 percent of San Francisco voters in June 2014. In her ruling, Judge Bolanos made clear that the voters have the power to adopt an initiative ordinance that affects the land uses of the waterfront, striking down the State Lands Commission's claim that Prop. B violated the City Charter. However, the judge denied the city attorney's motion to dismiss the entire case without giving the State Lands Commission the opportunity to present facts that they say will prove Prop. B has unreasonably "subjugated" state interests on the waterfront.

Because the judge made clear that the people do have the right to participate in shaping the future of the waterfront, the burden now falls on the State Lands Commission, the Chamber of Commerce and development interests to provide the judge with facts that prove the state's interests have somehow been undermined by the application of local zoning laws to the waterfront. As voters recently overwhelmingly approved a modest height limit increase to develop Pier 70 with Proposition F, how the state plans to prove its case remains a mystery.

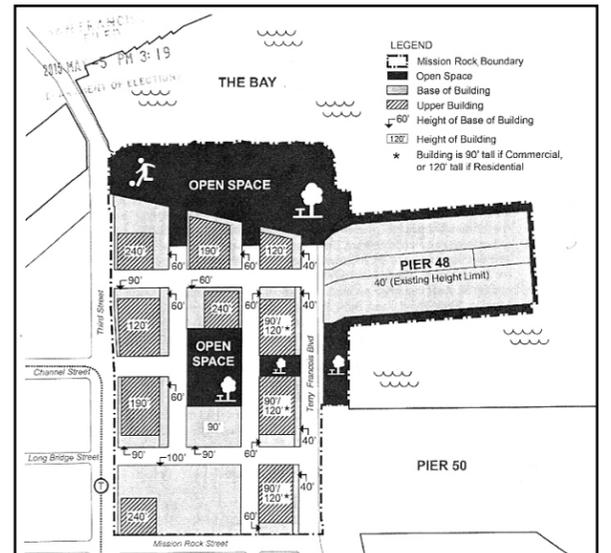
Judge Bolanos has directed the parties to return for a case management conference on July 29, with a one- or two-day trial on the merits expected this fall. The case is California State Lands Commission v. City and County of San Francisco, Case No. CGC-14-540531.

Giant Waterfront Height Increase Measure Headed to Voters

Meanwhile, Prop. B remains in effect and any proposed waterfront height limit increases must be approved by San Francisco voters. A developer has proposed a height increase measure for this November's election that would be the biggest upzoning of the waterfront in decades. Backed by the San Francisco Giants, the "Mission Rock Initiative" will ask voters to approve raising waterfront height limits up to 240 feet for 11 office and residential towers on Seawall Lot 337 in Mission Bay.

Five of the 11 waterfront towers in the "Mission Rock Initiative" would rise to either 190 feet or 240 feet tall: that's more than twice as high as the tallest building in the Pier 70 initiative (90 feet), taller than the "original wall on the waterfront," the Fontana Towers (180 feet), and taller than the 8 Washington waterfront high-rise would have been (136 feet).

Deceptive mailers from the developer have already begun flooding voters' mailboxes making the same sort of slick pitch that the 8 Washington developer did – replace an ugly parking lot with new homes! – showing



Waterfront Height Limit Increase map on page six of the "Mission Rock Initiative" as filed with the Department of Elections on May, 5, 2015

pretty pictures of happy people frolicking, but without showing any of the high-rises that would be built or even mentioning the waterfront height increases that are the reason this measure has to go before the voters. Don't be fooled.

SF Symphony Playing Free Concert in Pier 27 Public Park on Sunday, July 12

Mark your calendar for some free summer music on the waterfront on Sunday, July 12, from noon to 2:00 p.m., when the San Francisco Symphony will play a free outdoor concert in the Pier 27 public park to celebrate the public space on San Francisco's waterfront that is open to everyone.

THD was an instrumental part of the Citizens to Save the Waterfront coalition that defeated development interests and the Port a decade ago when they tried to build a massive shopping mall and private office complex at Piers 27, 29 and 31. Instead, we now have a beautiful cruise terminal and public park and public access around the piers that are required to be open to all. Come celebrate the waterfront we love on Sunday, July 12, with the Symphony. Set up for the concert, including putting up the temporary stage, will take place on July 9 and 10, with a cruise ship docking in port on July 11.



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TREASURER'S REPORT



For reasons buried in history, THD's financial year is a fiscal year, from April 1 to March 31. So, as you read this, we are in the first quarter of THD's financial year (April, May and June).

By Joe Luttrell
 THD Treasurer

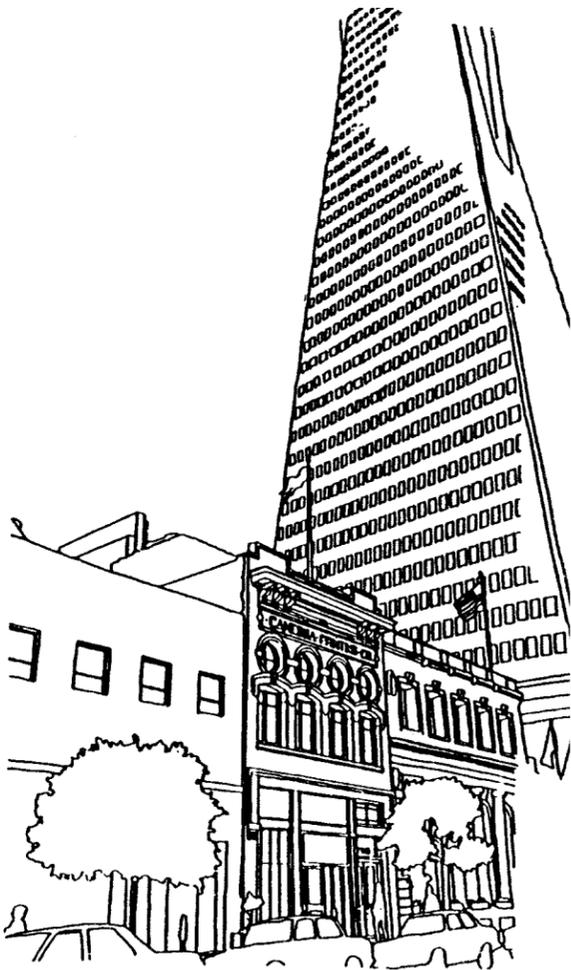
At the May meeting of the new THD Board of Directors, this year's budget was adopted, based essentially on the budget and actual

financial data of the previous fiscal year. The aim is to have a break-even year, with our revenues matching our expenses.

The principal expense THD has is publishing *The Semaphore*, which makes up nearly half of all THD expenses. Advertising revenues offset this expense to some degree, but it is really membership dues which make by far the larger contribution. Expenses from events are the second largest costs, but revenue from those attending the events ideally equals the expenses.

THD does not have a staff. All the officers and directors are volunteers. If expenses are incurred for THD, they are reimbursed, but there are no other payments to them.

This is my first report as THD treasurer. I am learning the ropes! May I thank Tom Noyes, last year's treasurer, for all the help he has generously given me to get me started.



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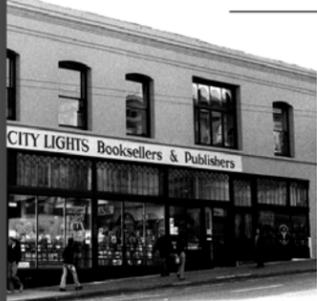
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Visit the THD website to explore a wealth of neighborhood history and get the latest information about what's happening on the Hill.

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Schedules of Committee Meetings

PLANNING & ZONING: Last Thursdays. Call for time and location. 986-7070, 563-3494, 391-5652.

Look to the THD website for information on THD events. **Log on to <http://www.thd.org>**

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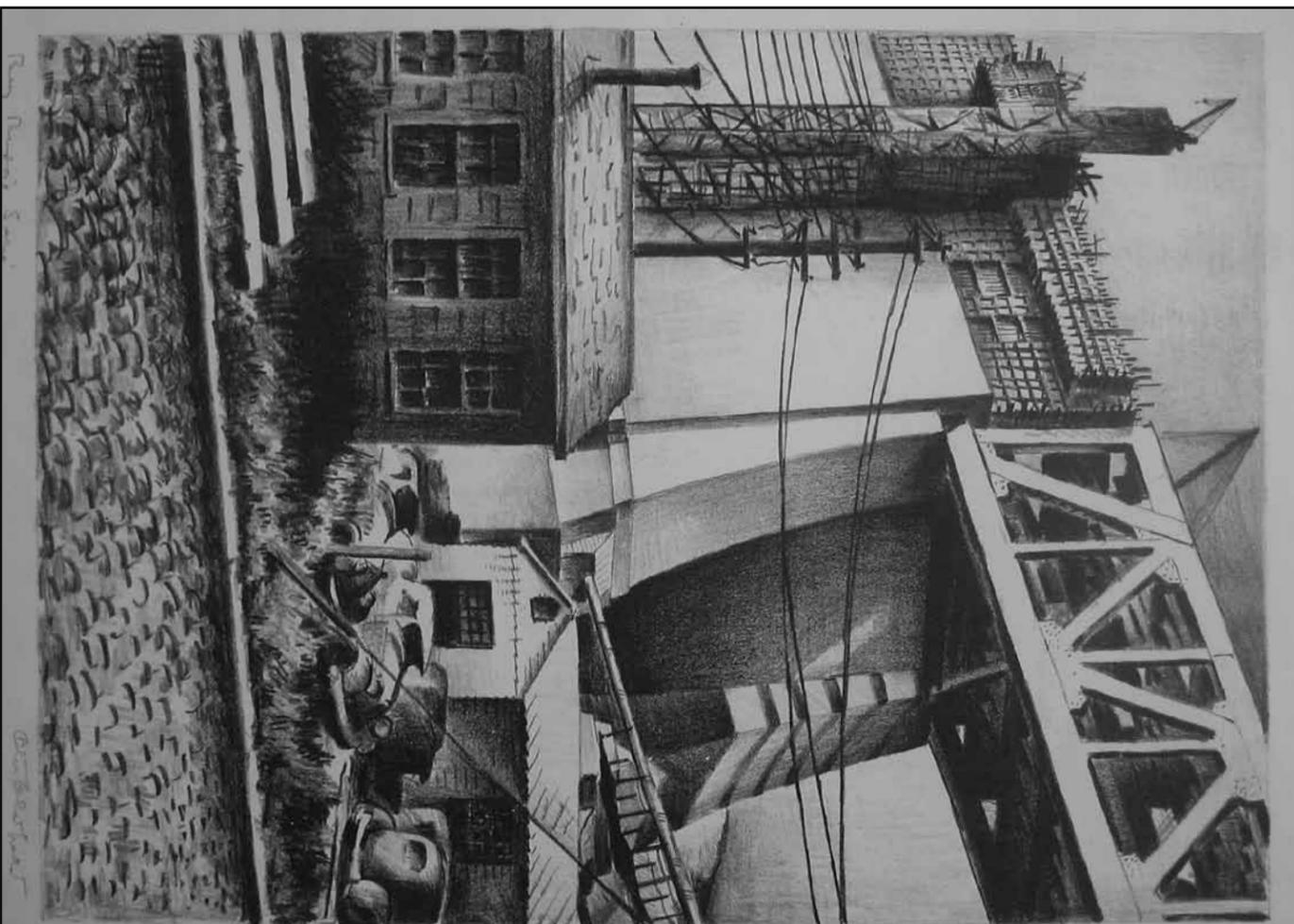
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The Semaphore

A Publication of the TELEGRAPH HILL DWELLERS
Issue 210 Summer 2015



The Lasting Legacy of the New Deal in
North Beach and on Telegraph Hill
See Page 8-9