

CVIA NEWS

COLE VALLEY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Volume XXXIII

SERVING ALL RESIDENTS OF THE GREATER HAIGHT ASHBURY

SUMMER 2019

SAVE THE DATE! CVIA Summer Social August 24

Please join us 1-4 pm on Saturday, August 24 at the Kezar Bar & Restaurant (corner of Cole and Carl)



Photo: CalBuzz.com

Leah Garchik

Special guest will be San Francisco Chronicle columnist and neighbor, Leah Garchik. Beer, wine and food are included in the \$10 per person entry fee. Members and their guests only.

N-Judah Riders Are Not Happy

Muni has lots of challenges, let us count the ways—the departure of Ed Reiskin and search for his replacement, the astounding rate of constant repairs, the lack of drivers and the contentious union contract negotiations.



Photo: SF Muni.org

Complaints are mounting over Muni's bench seating as riders slip and slide.

Another issue that N-Judah riders complain about are the seats in the new Siemens cars. The longitudinal or center-facing bench seats provide more room for standing, wheel chairs and strollers, which facilitates the flow of people and reduces crowding at the doors. A 2014 internet survey showed that 55% wanted more room

Prospect of 2-Year Project Casts Shadow over Haight St.

With the first phase completed, the second and major stage of the "Upper Haight Transit Improvement and Pedestrian Realm



Street work will have a major impact on the Haight's commercial life.

Project" will get started in earnest later this month. If you're weary of hearing about the long-awaited and somewhat dubious

Continued on Page 2, Column 2

Supervisor Brown Firm on Navigation Center in Haight

Supervisor Vallie Brown attended the CVIA's May board meeting and discussed the challenge of finding a location for a navigation center serving transition age youth (TAY) in the Haight Ashbury.

In the past both the Kezar parking lot and the Waller Center have been identified as options. There may be others, but Brown would not comment further. One thing for sure, she has definitely

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and favored the longitudinal seating. But the seats are high off the floor so shorter folks' feet don't touch the floor. The reason for some of the height is that the seats are over the control system for the cars. The seats don't have any contour definition so people slide—and that is a problem for those with certain back problems.

Muni has listened to the many complaints about the seating and has come up with a plan.

Replacing the longitudinal seats with transverse or forward-facing seats isn't straightforward since the longitudinal ones are lighter



Photo: Joan Downey

Carl Street neighbor celebrates his "transit rich" neighborhood.

weight and so the sides of the cars have to be re-engineered to support the added weight of the transverse seats.

The seat will be lowered by two inches where possible and transverse seats will have contour definition. The first 50 replacement Siemens will have half of the seats converted to single transverse seats (one seat facing forward on one side); the next 101 will have half of the longitudinal seats converted to double transverse (two seats on each side facing forward); the next 68 will retrofit bench seats to an individual style configuration and convert half of the longitudinal seats to single transverse. This will happen between December 2020 and October 2025.

—Joan Downey

Navigation Center, continued from page 1,

eliminated 730 Stanyan as a possibility.

A heated discussion followed in which it was pointed out how hard the community has worked over the last decade to upgrade the area around the East Entrance to Golden Gate Park—converting the Recycling Center into a community garden, revamping Alford Lake, posing extra police details, installing a skate park, a bike rental stand, and a future coffee kiosk adjacent to the lake. Even going so far as to purchase the McDonald's building insuring that there would be over a hundred families living on that corner.

Now, after all that money and effort, the City is poised to bring a magnet for indigent youth into that very location. It feels like a huge step backward.

—Karen Crommie

**Oh, yeah,
Muni single fares
will increase to \$3.00
on July 1, 2019**

Big Changes, continued from page 1, column 1.

endeavor, here are the Cliff Notes: streetscape enhancement, including "pedestrian-scale" lighting, tree planting, sidewalk replacement, curb ramps and bulb-outs, bus bulbs, conduit work, traffic signal installation/replacement, and repaving between Stanyan street and Buena Vista West and a "decorative sidewalk at the historic Haight and Ashbury intersection" (Please, God, say it isn't so). In short, it will set off the major street upheaval that has haunted Haight merchants for over three years. Will tourists try to avoid the noise and confusion by going elsewhere? Business owners think it will. One thing for sure, some traffic will be detoured, there will be even fewer places to park and all the bus lines will be affected (check Muni orange signs for changes of stop locations).

—Karen Crommie

CVIA Gets A Tree Tour

Looking out on a gathering of eager faces stretching up Parnassus, Michael Sullivan beamed, "Wow, this is the most number of people I've ever had for a tree walk." And so it was on Saturday, April 6, when more than forty CVIA members took

advantage of the generosity and expertise of a good neighbor—attorney by profession and dendrologist* by avocation—to learn the fascinating history of our Cole Valley trees. Sullivan is the author of "The Trees of San Francisco," a must-have guide for anyone who likes to identify our largest natural neighbors.



Mike Sullivan enthusiastically shares his fascination with trees.

We saw Carob trees, Chinese Elms, a cork tree, New Zealand Christmas Tree, Grecian Laurel (crunching up a leaf made me hungry), Strawberry tree, Norfolk Island pines and many Blum Gums (Eucalyptus). Of course, all of these trees have Latin names, too, and Mike knows them all. Our thanks to him for this special CVIA treat. And thanks to all who joined us on an informative and entertaining hour and a half.

—Karen Crommie

•Dendron is "tree" in ancient Greek; hence dendrology is the study of same.

Farmers' Market At UCSF

Every Wednesday UCSF plays host to a small farmers' market located on Parnassus in the courtyard just West of 400 Parnassus. The hours are 10-2.

Farmers' markets provide one of the only low-barrier entry points for beginning farmers, allowing them to start small, test the market, and grow their businesses.

This market features a seasonal selection of freshly picked organic vegetables at reasonable prices. There are also organic berries and a selection of fruits and nuts that, while not organic, are grown without pesticides. This small market is worth a walk up the hill (or you can take the elevator from Irving street which gets you right to the courtyard).

—Lena Emmery



Since the demise of the Waller farmers' market, UCSF fills a neighborhood need.

Photo: UCSF.edu

Cole Valley Chabad Finds Permanent Home

Nosson Potash, the peripatetic Rabbi of Cole Valley, has finally found a permanent home for his growing congregation. Mazel tov! With impressive support from a great many neighbors, Chabad of Cole Valley purchased the corner building at 1300 Shrader Street, until recently Jubilee Montessori School. For eight years Rabbi Nosson and his wife Chaya Potash have served the neighborhood's



Photo: Chabadcv.org

Rabbi Nosson and Chaya Potash moved to Cole Valley in 2011 to meet Jewish needs and interests in the Cole Valley, Inner Sunset, and beyond.

Jewish families with a wide range of activities, both sacred and community. Things like after-school programs, a seniors club, Fourth Friday dinners, volunteering opportunities, as well as on-line classes from Chassidic Thought to Mitzvahs and Traditions—all in addition to the Rabbi's extensive ministerial work.

CVIA News published an article about the nascent project when Nosson and Chaya first arrived. They had a deep belief that they could make a home here. Three children later and with the purchase of the Shrader Street building, they have achieved their goal. They are now working, along with volunteers, to prepare the building for the High Holy Days in September. The Chabad is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) and receives no money from Chabad International but, rather, is completely supported by its Cole Valley community.

—Karen Crommie

NEW SCHEDULE FOR POLICE COMMUNITY FORUM

Captain Una Bailey holds community forums the second Tuesday of every month (except December) from 7 to 8:00 p.m. She gives briefings on upcoming permitted events, reviews neighborhood criminal activity, and addresses the safety concerns of residents. It's an excellent way to stay in touch with what's going on in the neighborhood. The meetings are held at Park Station's Community Room (1899 Waller).



June 12, July 16, August 13, 2019
Mark Your Calendar

S.F. Chronicle Probes Causes of Empty Haight Storefronts

A story on the front page of the Sunday Business Section (5-5-19) looked at reasons for the empty storefronts on Haight Street—as many as fifteen from Stanyan to Central. Allowing for e-commerce; strict zoning regulations that cap the number of restaurants and entertainment venues; and the usual nomadic youth hanging out, those merchants interviewed by reporter Shwanika Narayan also pointed to the present and upcoming street improvements, in the pipeline for years, promising a construction upheaval lasting as long as two years. (See article on page 1.)

Hoodline.com recently reported that the Haight Ashbury has 3.15 restaurants for every 1,000 residents as compared to 6.30 in the Lower Haight. According to Narayan's data, obtained from the



Supervisor Aaron Peskin has suggested a tax on empty storefronts while Supervisor Vallie Brown wants to ease zoning restrictions.

S.F. Controller's Office, Hayes Valley saw a rise of 143% in sales tax revenue while Divisadero Street's rose by 136% from 2010 to 2015. In contrast and in spite of shoulder to shoulder tourists, the Haight Ashbury saw only a 21% rise during the same filing period.

The Chronicle quoted CVIA board member Steven Madrid as saying, "I don't see the street evolving to meet modern needs, like having more food options." Supervisor Vallie Brown agrees, telling reporter Narayan, "I'm encouraging merchants and neighbors to consider changes to codes [with] historically restrictive zoning." The 150 or so new affordable residential units planned for the old McDonald's site will doubtless spark the opening of new businesses, but one could go broke waiting for that.

—Karen Crommie

The 42nd Annual
Haight Street Fair
is Sunday, June 9

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, please let us know at CVIASF@aol.com



Thank You For Your Support



It certainly isn't expected, but when a member sends in an extra contribution, we appreciate it greatly. Only nine Cole Valley merchants contributed to the daily cleaning of Cole Street's business district last year, which costs CVIA \$936 each month. We make up the deficit with member contributions, a discount from CleanScapes and proceeds from the "Santa on Cole" photo shoot. So we would like to take this opportunity to thank the following members for their generosity during the period June 2018 to May 2019. Please let us know if your name has inadvertently been omitted.

Beacons (\$1000): *Kerith & Tony Pucci, Michael Siliski, Les Silverman*

Benefactors (\$250 - \$500): *Lena Emmerly & Charles Canepa, Karen & David Crommie, Diane & Christopher Davies, Kathryn Demas, Marianne Hesse, Linda C. Hothem, Abby & David M. Rumsey*

Donors (\$100 - \$249): *Anon, Cecile & Jeff Bodington, Gina Centoni, Sandra Norberg & Richard Drake, Tresa & Jim Eyles, Mari Coates & Gloria Galindo, John T. Smith & Robert G. Jones, Virginia Joosen, Randy & Rich Lavinghouse, Jane & Michael Miller, Deborah Robbins & Henry Navas, Janan New, Catherine Covey & Thomas Ports, Bill & Joanne Prieur, Michael Rafferty, Elaine Robinson, Sigrid Schafmann, Michael J. Sullivan, Tracy Grubbs & Richard Taylor*

Contributors (\$50 - \$99): *Anon, Joan K. Boyd, Chris Broderick, Mary Ann de Souza, Claudia Scharff & Timothy Dunn, Joelle & Ralph Edler, Ryan, Emily & Penelope Floyd, Margaret & Russell Garvin, Mary & John Hooper, Lyn & Harold Isbell, Margareta Ekblad & Vojtech Licko, Michelle & Wallis Lim, Bahereh & John Manning, Carolyn McKenna, Ineke Ruhland & Bill O'Such, Jan Platt & Jeff Ross, Ellen Rashbaum, Jonathan Scoles, Brenda Stone, William A. Villarroel, Mary Ann Wolcott, Victoria Zaroff*

Supporters (\$25 - \$49): *Katherine Alba, Barbara Alexander, Robert Anooshian, Molly Barry, Gail & Howard Berman, Jennifer Braun, Katherine L. Brody, Ellen Curry, Kevin Dede, Kelsie Dore, Adele Dorison, Jeanne Blamey & Rob Fram, Kate Ditzler & Stuart Gasner, Melissa & Glen Gee, Carole Glosenger, Marissa Gomes, Bill Haskell & Robert Gordon, Carol & Richard Harris, Jean Hayward, Karen Hourigan, Thomas Hubbard, Bryn Jedlic, Jessica Justino, Jeff Lakusta, Judith Bishop & Rober Liner, Richard Magary, Peter Mansfield, Teresa Olle, Robert Page, Celia Price, John Priest, Sandra Radtka, Helen & Allan Ridley, MeMe Riordan, Katherine Bird & William Rothrum, Brian Sedar, Diane & Bob Silver, Jay Stevens, Shelly Sutherland, Jillian & Blake Tyrrell, Karina Valle, Deborah Van Atta, Ilya Kaltman & Jack Vognsen, Edward C. Walls, Boyd Watkins*

Boosters (\$24 and below): *Anna Almberg, Travis Becker, Alivia Birdwell, Sharon Birenbaum, Lucia Caltagirone, Jessica Cry, Heather Drake, Beverley Epstein, Andre Ferrigno, Lavion Gibson, Allison Grass, Minette & Isac Gutfreund, Andrea Higgins, Catherine & Brian Kane, Jonathan Lowell, Gabriel Peixoto, Marie Samson, Elizabeth Corden & Ken Shannon, Elsa Rosenberg & David Zuckerman*

A CLEAN COLE STREET



Our Neighborhood Heroes 2018 Merchant Participants

Bambinos, Cole Cleaners, Cole Hardware, Crepes on Cole, Finnegans Wake, Jerome's Antiques, Pacific American Group, * Padrecito, Postal Chase.

* Owners of 930 Cole Street (former Cole Garage)

Hopes Rekindled to Renovate Venerable Grattan Playground

CVIA board member Steven Madrid has taken the lead in organizing the renovation of Grattan Playground, located on Alma, between Stanyan and Shrader (not related to Grattan Elementary School). Spurred by the generous offer of a longtime resident of Cole Valley to sponsor part of the repair of the playground, Madrid is working with Friends of Grattan Playground's Kitty Teerling on a list of priorities (wish list) in order of need: 1) rebuilding play structure in upper yard 2) greening the lower yard including an irrigation



A generous private donation has triggered a new partnership between neighbors and Rec and Park.

system 3) Boulders to be placed in the sand as extra sensory play element in playground (5K includes crane expenses for installation) 4) resurfacing concrete to smooth dangerous surfaces 5) repairing and replacing gates and fencing at entrance/exits to reduced nighttime visitors and to facilitate access for the Rec and Park crew to service playground 6) new water fountains on the tennis court 7) more sand on the playground.

Rec and Park's Steve Cismowski is a partner in these plans and would like to get started within six weeks on replacing bathroom stalls. Community workdays have been proposed for June 1 and August 17.

If all this falls in place, it is an impressive start on a long-ignored Cole Valley asset and we thank Kitty Teerling, Steve Cismowski Steven Madrid and our anonymous benefactor for their dedication to seeing that this renovation happens.

—Karen Crommie

Cathryn June Brash

June 26, 1926 - March 9, 2019

Longtime CVIA member Cathryn Brash passed away at St. Mary's Hospital supported by family and friends on March 9. Born in San Francisco, Cathryn attended Lowell High School, Lone Mountain College (USF) and the University of California, Berkeley (1958). After earning a teaching credential she began a long career in the San Francisco Unified School District. She returned to Lowell to become an English Literature teacher and guidance counsellor. She will be greatly missed by her many friends in Cole Valley. Services were held on May 11 at St. Agnes Catholic Church (Excerpted from the SF Chronicle, May 9, 2019)

District 5 Battle Heating Up

On May 13 the three candidates running for D-5 supervisor held a debate at the African American Art and Cultural Center. The room was packed, the audience highly charged. Who won? That would depend on your politics but all three gave it their all—Incumbent Supervisor Vallie Brown, tenant activist Dean Preston and bartender Ryan Solomon.

When former D-5 Supervisor London Breed was elected Mayor, she appointed Vallie Brown to fill out her term. Vallie has proven to be a smart, level-headed moderate who, after working in city government for many years knows the ins and outs, makes her moves slowly and carefully. An appointed position must be voted on in the next scheduled election, so because Breed's supervisorial term ends in 2020, the candidate winning this November will only have the authority to serve until then and will have to run again in



Supervisor Vallie Brown



Dean Preston

2020. A lot of money will be spent for a chance on that 12-month job. The hope is, of course, that incumbency will insure reelection. How much that bias will work for Supervisor Brown this time is yet to be seen.

Brown's main opponent is Dean Preston, who ran an unsuccessful campaign for the same position in 2016. He has reappeared as a "Democratic Socialist," which strikes fear in some, and hallelujahs! in others. Preston is a smart and confident tenant organizer who graduated from UC Hastings. He is founder and executive director of Tenants Together.

—Karen Crommie

Panhandle Groundbreaking Marks New Day for Playgrounds

There was a ceremonial ground breaking of the old style at the Panhandle on April 25 when Mayor London Breed and D-5 Supervisor Vallie Brown inaugurated a 13 park renewal program called Let'sPlaySF, a partnership between the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department and the San Francisco Parks Alliance, which will support the renovations by supplementing \$22 million in public funds with \$14.5 million in donor contributions.

"The renovations at Panhandle Park will finally bring this community the high quality playground our children deserve," said Mayor Breed. "But we are not stopping here. We are upgrading playgrounds across the City, which serve thousands of children, because this is a matter of equity. Every child in every community should have a safe, clean place to play."

"We need outdoor spaces for children and families," said Supervisor Vallie Brown. "Playing outside is part of being a kid and



Everybody digs in: (Left to right) General Manager Phil Arnold, Mayor London Breed, Supervisor Vallie Brown, among others.

has so many benefits—of course for the kids, but also for all of us. Their joy and laughter radiate out into the City."

"Supervisor Vallie Brown has been a champion for recreation and open space in District 5 for decades and playgrounds are no exception," San Francisco Recreation and Park Department General Manager Phil Ginsburg said. "They are essential to both children and adults; modern town squares where urban families forge friendships while kids experience the rush of outside play."

Rec and Park Project Manager Cara Ruppert reported that during the time the playground is closed for construction, access to the adjacent garden, restroom, and basketball courts will be unaffected. The south Panhandle pedestrian path will remain open for the most part, only closing as needed for construction access.

But, don't forget, the Let'sPlaySF! campaign is ongoing. An additional \$5 million in private funding is needed to complete all 13 sites in the initiative.



Would you like a copy of this newsletter sent to a neighbor? Send an email to cviasf@aol.com or Leave a message at 431-1414 with their name and address and consider it done.

It's Nearly Summer, Let's Get Together and Garden **Surviving 4/20 Again**

Volunteers are needed the fourth Saturday of every month to help the gardeners at Alvord Lakelet in Golden Gate Park.

Meet at Haight and Stanyan Street. Look for the Rec and Park vehicle to locate the work party. We begin at 9 am and finish by noon.



Eastern entrance to Golden Gate Park needs a little love. Volunteers provide it.

Mark your calendar: May 24, June 22, and July 27.

Typical gardening tasks include weeding, planting, mulching and general clean-up. A few hours working in the fresh air is a great way to start the weekend. Many hands make light work, so please consider joining this monthly effort.

Please wear appropriate clothing for working outdoors and prepare for varied weather. The event will occur rain or shine.

To commit yourself or a larger group (so there are enough tools on hand), please contact the Rec and Park volunteer center at recparkvolunteer@sfgov.org or call 415-831-6330.

—Susan Strolis

Norman Larson Leaves Legacy

There was a one-day opportunity on May 15 to take a tour of Norman Larson's home at the corner of Haight and Ashbury (557 Ashbury). The event commemorated the building's official status as a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation



It's official: The Doolan-Larson house is now a National Treasure.

Larson, who died early last year at 79, was a well-liked neighborhood character who bequeathed his 1903 colonial revival building to

San Francisco Heritage. He had bought several multi-unit buildings in the 60s when prices were low. But now the three-story, 7,500 sq. ft. structure belongs to SFH. We learned that they have been negotiating with the National Trust to turn it into a museum focusing on Haight Ashbury history. Staff assured me that this would be done "only after full input from neighbors." They may know that, although merchants have long been in favor of a Haight Ashbury museum, residents fear more tourism and, particularly tour busses, brought into the neighborhood.



The building had already been declared a San Francisco Landmark in July 2006.

It was a day full of traffic jams, honking, yelling and low hanging smoke as thousands flocked to Sharon Meadow to be on Hippy Hill, or as close as they could, to inhale deeply when the clock struck 4:20 pm. Was it a pain for us who live here? Or did you rejoice in memory of a time when marijuana was illicit and therefore tantalizing?

I thought that, once legalized, the April 20 ritual would die out, but I couldn't have been more wrong. About 15,000 people made their way to Golden Gate Park this year, even though Police set more restrictions—adults only and no sales of cannabis in the Park. They also went to heroic lengths to reroute traffic and supply officers at strategic places while the event sponsors provided overall security,



Event organizer Alex Aquino made sure the entire area of Robin Williams Meadow and Hippy Hill were fully fenced in.

porta-potties, emergency medical staff and cleanup. Although I think more accurately, they "helped pay" for cleanup, because Rec and Park estimated hauling away anywhere from 17,000 to 22,000 pounds of trash.

Officially permitted vendors were the only ones who could sell various cannabis-related gear and non-alcoholic drinks. In attempting to avoid the events of the prior year, city officials encouraged attendees to purchase their weed from a licensed cannabis dispensary. At a news conference beforehand, Supervisor Vallie Brown warned "Last year we had between 10 and 12 people who overdosed on fentanyl," supposedly from a dosed joint that had been purchased on the street. (That claim was later questioned by the SF Weekly.)

By 6 pm there had been eight arrests—three made before the event began for arrest warrants and the rest misdemeanors for intoxication and assault. There were 25 parking citations. Captain Una Bailey said, "Despite record attendance, there were fewer medical calls and less criminal activity."

There were a few potentially disastrous minutes when someone erroneously yelled that there was a shooter on the Hill, triggering the beginning of a stampede. Cell networks shut down for nearly 10 minutes at 4:20 pm, presumably from photo-taking. "Hey, man, I'm, like, HERE."

—Karen Crommie

Park Branch Library Open Hours
(1833 Page Street)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1-5	12-6	10-9	1-9	10-6	1-6	10-6

Japanese Tea Garden: Not Just For Tourists

I recently joined a City Guides tour of the Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park and was fortunate to pick a day when CVIA member Jay Streets was the volunteer guide. I thought I knew the basic history of the garden but found that there was so much more.

Originally a "Japanese Village" exhibit for the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition, it was landscape architect



Photo: Joan Downey

CVIA member Jay Streets is part of a City Guides program that trains volunteers to lead free tours all over the city.

Makoto Hagiwara who persuaded superintendent John McLaren to allow him create and maintain a permanent Japanese style garden as a gift for posterity.

Did you know that Hagiwara lived in a 17-room house on the Tea Garden grounds and that when he was interned, as part of the evacuation of approximately 120,000 Japanese in 1942, the house was demolished? Jay will point out the remains of the foundation.

City Guides is a non-profit, primarily volunteer operation with more than 200 active guides. Regularly scheduled City Guides tours are free, although donations are always welcome.

City Guide tours in our area include Haight Ashbury on every Sunday at 11 am and Golden Gate Park: East End given year-round on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. Check out these and others all over the city at <http://www.sfcityguides.org/>

—Joan Downey

**Visit our website at
CVIASF.org**

Call for News

We need news items, articles, letters, opinion pieces. Please tell us what you know about Cole Valley and the greater Haight Ashbury: handwritten, typewritten, e-mailed or scrawled on a cocktail napkin. We want to hear from you! CVIA News: 628 Ashbury St. or cviasf@aol.com



Haight Gas Leak Culprits Finally Shown the Door

What do you have to do in this town to get punished for a crime? Jen Longley of the Usual Suspects reported that, finally, "San Francisco can remove the subcontractor deemed responsible for



Customers evacuated Haight shops as gas spread.

five gas leaks in five months while completing repairs on Haight Street, according to a state appeals court ruling May.

The city had signed a \$13.7 million contract with Ghilotti Bros. to replace sewers and installing water mains between Ashbury and La-

guna streets. The subcontractor, Synergy Project Management, alleged that the City could not remove them as SF statute authorizes removal on request of the primary contractor, in this case Ghilotti Bros., who had not made such a request.

The SF Chronicle's Bob Egelko quoted Presiding Justice James Humes as saying, "Allowing only the prime contractor to seek replacement of an errant subcontractor would undermine the (law's) overarching purpose of protecting the public." He said they must act on San Francisco's request to remove Synergy.

Synergy maintains that the fault lies with PG&E's placement of underground pipes. Installation of water mains on Haight Street, which were on hold pending the court's ruling on removal, can now continue.

—Karen Crommie

Birding at Botanical Garden

The San Francisco Botanical Garden is holding a "Birding Walk in the Garden" event on Sunday, June 2 from 8 to 10:30 am.

Join expert birders on a morning amble through San



Cedar Waxwing



White Crowned Sparrow

Francisco Botanical Garden. All levels of birders are welcome. Beginning birders can

expect tips on spotting, identifying, and learning about the amazing behaviors and adaptations of the many birds of the Garden. Walk departs from the Main Gate at 8 am on the first Sunday of every month. This is a free program, although donations to San Francisco Botanical Garden are welcomed and appreciated.

Heavy rain or wind cancels. RSVP not required but helpful in the event they need to communicate last-minute cancellations.

CVIA Board Minutes

The following is a summary of what took place at the CVIA board meetings the last three months. Those wishing to bring a neighborhood issue before the Board are welcome to do so. Meetings take place on the first Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the home of a member. There is no meeting in December. Call 415-431-1414 or email cviast@aol.com to learn the location.

Every meeting begins with a reading of the minutes of the last meeting and reports from delegates to the Kezar Stadium Advisory Committee (KSAC), SFMTA Citizens Advisory Council (CAC), the Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB), UCSF Long Range Planning Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) and the Coalition for SF Neighborhoods (CSFN).

March

Location: Home of Carole Glosenger – March 4, 2019 - 7 p.m. Guests: Mason Smith, Supervisor Vallie Brown, Kitty Teerling

■ Treasurer Joan Downey reported a bank balance of \$51,188.61 out of which \$15,245.30 is being presently held in the Clean Cole Street fund and \$24,767.20 is being held in the account (as fiscal sponsor) for the Stanyan Parklet.

■ Mason Smith of Cruise (Automation) gave a presentation on the history of this San Francisco based driverless car, now owned by General Motors, using info from GPS, Lidar and the car's cameras and sensors. There are 30-70 autonomous vehicle testers (AVTs) on the road in the compact 100% EV Bolts roaming the city at any time, observing the technology in varying situations, taking notes and constantly reporting back. Smith made a riveting case for their safety, accessibility and environmental superiority, specifically in ride-share application. But there are multiple challenges, regarding both technology and bureaucracy, before Cruise can be actually launched.

■ Karen Crommie, in her report from the CSFN, described the effect of State Senate Bill 50 which would override local zoning to further the State's imperative to build more residential housing faster "by right." Supervisor Vallie Brown assured Board that the original legislation had been greatly modified and that neighborhood protections (including discretionary review and conditional use) would still stand.

■ Chuck Canepa gave an update on UCSF's "reimagining" of its Parnassus campus including a flyway over Parnassus Avenue, an extension of Fourth Avenue (south of Parnassus), possible high rise buildings behind the hospital and a more welcoming transit arrival location on Irving.

■ Kitty Teerling of Friends of Grattan Playground described the long history of grant applications, public funding and neighborhood volunteering to make improvements in an old city playground containing both sand, swings and other features no longer code compliant. Although Rec and Park has made many small improvements over the last decade, there are still structures that need wood replacement on the upper level, new higher fencing and gates that are locked at night. She will return to the CVIA Board with list of specific needs with which CVIA may be able to help with a matching grant. Supervisor Brown also invited her to apply for "add back" funds later in the year.

■ Steven Madrid reported on the survey by Ford GoBike to determine the best place in Cole Valley to install a bike dock. The response was the most robust of any neighborhood indicating a high level of interest. The overwhelming majority of responders picked a spot between Cole and Shrader Street, probably due to its proximity to the N-Judah stop. At this point, it is thought that a hearing will be held in April with

■ Supervisor Brown described her current legislation to require businesses to accept cash for purchases. She also said that she is looking at two "small site" properties for possible purchase by the city to protect endangered tenants by providing rent subsidy: 520 Shrader and 239 Clayton. She reported on several traffic calming measures planned for Frederick and Clayton, including pedestrian "daylighting" at intersections.

■ Supervisor Brown informed us of an organization called Downtown Streets, which has taken over the sweeping of Haight, Waller, and Page streets. They will do the same work once done by the now-defunct Taking It To The Streets. The workers, all previously homeless, are currently housed a part of the program. The city has granted the organization \$200,000.

■ Karen Crommie described Supervisor Peskin's proposed ordinance "Controls on Residential Demolition, Merger, Conversion and Alteration" due to go to the Board of Supervisors for a vote in early March. She expressed concern that, in attempting to thwart "serial permitting" and housing mergers, the measure will impede homeowners from making modest improvements. She will follow up with more information at the next meeting.

■ Steve Madrid described a proposal for the interim use of 730 Stanyan Street by Street Soccer, who would contract with the city, to provide free soccer for low-income kids and also DPH health fairs on the premises twice a month. Sharing the large lot with them would be Off The Grid, which would also put up a portion of the capital necessary to erect temporary buildings and provide a small version of their well-known food truck operation. Others have shown interest in joining the consortium, such as San Francisco Village, a seniors group.

■ Date for the Summer Social has been set for Saturday, August 24, at Kezar Bar and Grill, provided owners Steve Schick and Jim Angelus are agreeable.

■ The next meeting will be at the home of Shannon and Chris Hock. Adjourned at 10:00.

April

Location: Home of Shannon and Chris Hock – April 1, 2019 - 7 p.m.

■ Treasurer Joan Downey reported a bank balance of \$52,413.26 out of which \$15,742.30 is being presently held in the Clean Cole Street fund and \$24,767.20 is being held in the account (as fiscal sponsor) for the Stanyan Parklet. She reported 442 paid CVIA household memberships (approximately 600 individual members).

■ Joan also circulated for approval a sample letter to Cole Valley merchants asking for their annual contribution to the cost of the daily cleaning of the Cole Street commercial corridor. She will prepare one for each merchant. Steven Madrid has volunteered to deliver them personally to each business owner.

■ Agreed that Joan is empowered to change the organization's account to a bank or credit union of her choice and withdraw all funds from Wells Fargo, which has repeatedly demonstrated incompetence.

■ Agreed to donate \$750 to the 2019 Cole Valley Fair as a sponsor.

■ President Lena Emmery reported receipt of a letter of thanks from Dignity Health for publicizing their free tax preparation assistance at GoHealth Urgent Care. She also said that board member Steven Madrid (absent) has learned that the proposals for interim use of the 730 Stanyan site are now being evaluated and a decision should be announced before the end of April. She is helping Supervisor Brown find a venue for a Town Hall Meeting.

■ Karen Crommie, reported that the CSFN voted 1) the CEQA exemption for Outside Lands sound levels should be rescinded, 2) that members write Muni requesting that new LRV trains have "transverse" seats 3) that new trains have capability for "coupling" and 4) to appoint someone with "retail experience" on the MTA Board. The final vote on Supervisors Peskin's "Controls on Residential Demolition, Merger, Conversion and Alteration" legislation has been postponed for 90 days, which would set the vote for approval around May 14.

■ Agreed to pay and additional \$100 to have the newsletter folded after printing and collating.

■ Discussed alternative venues for Summer Social if Kezar Bar and Restaurant is not available.

■ Shannon Cooper Hock reported on the declining condition of the Whole Foods parking lot with early evening space closures to accommodate truck-unloading resulting in cars cuing on Stanyan Street. There is lack of security personnel to direct traffic and remove carts left in spaces. Shannon agreed to draft a letter for Lena to send to Whole Foods corporate headquarters (Amazon) with copies to store manager, Park Station Police captain and Supervisor Vallie Brown.

■ Discussed generous offer of CVIA member Maggie Sedar to contribute to the repair of Grattan Playground. Members are stymied as just whom to contact to manage an organized restoration effort. President Lena Emmerly will write to Ms. Sedar expressing our appreciation and asking that she delay her offer until we determine a needs priority, itemized list of repairs and approximate cost. Steven Madrid to contact Rec and Park as well as the Friends of Grattan Playground.

■ The next meeting (May 6) will be at the home of Lena Emmerly and Chuck Canepa, with the following meeting (June 3) at that of Karen and David Crommie.

Adjourned at 9:00

May

Location: Home of Lena Emmerly and Chuck Canepa – May 6, 2019 - 7 p.m. Guests: Supervisor Vallie Brown, David Oates, Vicki Hanson

■ Treasurer Joan Downey reported a bank balance of \$52,585.75 out of which \$15,089.30 is being presently held in the Clean Cole Street fund and \$24,767.20 is being held in the account (as fiscal sponsor) for the Stanyan Parklet. Joan noted 460 members, 3 new household members and 57 renewals. She indicated her decision to transfer funds to the Redwood Credit Union. She also filed the 2019 SF Business Tax form.

■ Lena Emmerly said that the owner of Flywheel Coffee Roasters has applied for a permit to convert the restroom building at Alvord Lake into a coffee kiosk. Hearing will be before the Rec and Park Commission on May 16. She also reported on a meeting with the Coalition to Underground Utilities and the excellent job of the SFPD to contain the mobs in Sharon Meadow and ensuing traffic issues on April 20.

■ Steven Madrid said that a measure restricting the SFPD from using video surveillance footage in a court of law had been rescinded.

■ Karen Crommie, in her account of the April CSFN meeting, reported on amendments to SB50 lessening the impact on "by right" residential building; postponement of the Peskin anti-demolition bill; a new \$500 million affordable housing bond proposed for the November election; the failure of the suit against Outside Lands to rescind their CEQA exemption for sound restriction during their concerts; the SFPD's need to extend the high pressure Auxiliary Water Supply System to the Sunset and Richmond districts; the controversy over the leasing of the Balboa Reservoir (PUC property), now used by City College for parking, to be used for 1,900 units of housing.

■ Chuck Canepa gave a summary of UCSF's "reimagining" of its Parnassus campus including a new hospital at the site of Langley Porter, a flyway over Parnassus Avenue, an extension of Fourth Avenue-south of Parnassus, possible high rise buildings behind the hospital and a

welcoming transit hub on Irving.

■ During a discussion of a keynote speaker for the Summer Social on August 24, Leah Garchik was suggested and approved by all. Karen to invite her. It was decided that both Mayor London Breed and Supervisor Vallie Brown should also be invited and that the business meeting should precede the speakers.

■ The slate for 2019-20 officers will remain the same, as all current office holders are willing to run for another year. President: Lena Emmerly, Vice-president: Kathy Haller, Treasurer: Joan Downey, Recording Secretary: Karen Crommie.

■ Board agreed to give this year's commendation to journalist Leah-Garchik for her longtime reporting on the neighborhood life of San Francisco.

■ Steven Madrid reported on the generous offer of CVIA member Maggie Sedar to sponsor part of the renovation of Grattan Playground (not related to Grattan Elementary School). He is working with Friends of Grattan Playground and Rec and Park on a list of priorities and a work schedule. (See article on page 4.) Board agreed that CVIA should contribute \$5,000 to the renovation.

■ Supervisor Brown discussed at length the challenge of finding a location for a Navigation Center serving transition age youth (TAY) in the Haight Ashbury. (See article on page 1.)

■ In addressing possible problems as a result of the presence of the proposed Navigation Center in the Stanyan-Haight area, guest Vickie Hanson suggested a possible task force made up of senior community members to walk regularly in a group around the Center to monitor behavior much as the RAD group did in the nineties.

■ Steven Madrid reported on the proposal by Street Soccer for the interim use of 730 Stanyan Street providing free soccer to low-income kids and evening use for adult soccer. They would contract for the use of the entire lot but sublet to Off the Grid (popular food trucks), which, in turn, would put up the money for site improvements. There would also be two DPH health fairs per month, and several community-based nonprofits such as SF Village. This proposal, along with others, including one by the Coalition for a Complete Community (CCC)—sponsored by Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council—is still being considered by the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, as are possibly others.

■ Joan Downey suggested that CVIA initiate a program to paint existing AT&T utility boxes with small murals such as Hayward has done. She will send board members samples of its mural program, which engages professional artists to carry out agreed-upon designs of relevance to the neighborhood.

■ Karen and David Crommie circulated options for a new postcard/poster format for the "Santa on Cole" publicity. David to send pdf copies to board members for evaluation and comments.

Adjourned 10:00

CVIA Executive Board: Chuck Canepa, Shannon Cooper Hock, David Crommie, Karen Crommie, Joan Downey, Lena Emmerly, Carole Glosenger, Cathy Haller, Marianne Hesse, Chris Hock, Steven Madrid, Edward Walls

Cole Valley Fair September 29, 2019

Want to have a booth? Want to perform?

Want to show off your vintage car?

Go to Colevalleyfair.org

Grattan Boosters Pitch In

February 23 was “Green Up and Love Your School Day” at Grattan Elementary. It was an incredibly productive and fun day for about 30 people who worked on litter collection and filled about a dozen bags of green waste and trash. They built bird houses and bug boxes, they weeded, trimmed, swept, and started a California native plant garden (on the lower Shrader Street side of the school).

The Grattan community thanks Luke’s Local for donating fruit and cream cheese, Greg Garr from the Golden Gate Park



Grattan Elementary School parent Serena Unger does some heavy lifting.

Community Garden for donating some choice SF natives, and SF Department of Public Works for donating litter pick up sticks, brooms, and other supplies.

Haight Lit Event on June 6, 2019

My Life, My Stories / Real Life,
Told by San Francisco Seniors

6:30 pm The Bindery, 1727 Haight Street

Having brought these events to cities across America, David Romanelli joins elders with young people to open a bottle of wine, and talk about life. His book* shares some of the best lessons and wisdom from the elders on parenting, marriage, loneliness, resilience, and how things look different through the lens of an elder, nearing the end of life, looking back on the past.

“My Life, My Stories” is a local non-profit that preserves the life legacies of seniors in our community. We match a volunteer with one senior, and over the course of several months, the senior’s memories are recorded and transcribed into memoirs. We focus on helping underserved populations in the Bay Area including minorities, immigrants, homeless seniors, vets, and LGBTQ elders.

Note: Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$12 at the store or online. If available, tickets will be for sale at the door. All proceeds go directly to My Life, My Stories to help more seniors preserve their legacy. Copies of David’s book, “Life Lessons from the Oldest and Wisest,” will be available for sale.

Come early, grab a drink, meet new friends, and learn something new!

Cole and Carl Improvements Finally Begin (This Time Really)

It’s been a long wait, with flurries of letters exchanged between CVIA and Muni, some not very nice. But after reporting in this newsletter on the upcoming “streetscaping” around Cole Valley’s N-Judah stops for five years, it seems anti-climatic to report that, yes, work has actually begun.

To refresh your memory, Muni got money from a variety of sources (CalTrans, GoBond (Prop A) Sales Tax, General Fund, MTC and FTA) to build bulb-outs of sidewalks at transit stops all over town. The reason was to protect boarding passengers from automobile traffic. Once constructed CVIA wrote letters demanding that the extra space of blank concrete



Photo: Joan Downey

Long delayed street enhancements are coming to Cole Valley Muni stops.

be made more attractive. Planners came to the rescue with a list of possibilities to glam up these corners. Benches, planters, even sculpture and medallions have all been offered. The problem was that the “Carl and Cole Streetscape Improvement Project” was on a work schedule just after the Inner Sunset’s Streetscape Project.

There were repeated problems in the Inner Sunset causing delays necessitating Cole Valley’s work to be postponed time and time again. But last week they broke ground (no ceremony) on the long awaited project.

Postscripts

Iyara Traditional Thai Massage has applied for a permit to open on Haight Street at the former site of La Rosa vintage clothing (1711 Haight). Hoodline.com’s ace reporter Camden Avery reported that “They’re [massage parlors] expressly prohibited by city planning code. In order to get its permit, Iyara will need to meet certain design and health code mandates —including window transparency, pedestrian lighting, and street-side visibility.” There was a public hearing before the Planning Commission on May 16.

La Alacran (1701 Haight) is the new kid on Haight Street featuring unusual plants in an intriguing space. Succulents, carnivores, large tropicals and potted arrangements perfect for gifts are alongside a selection of decorative Mexican folk art pieces and even some ordinary house plants. Owners **Leo and Landsly Vega** were San Francisco landscape gardeners who realized they had a flare for retail. The space was most recently occupied by **Earthsong**.

The **Always Active Senior Exercise** classes that meet Mondays and Thursdays from 1:30 - 2:30 pm will be temporarily changing venue to **St. John of God** (1290 Fifth Ave.) from June 10 to August 8, before returning to St. Anne Community Hall on August 12. For more information, contact Marina Lazzara at 415-524-3922 or marina@sfcommunityliving.org.

Last month, **Cole Hardware** marketing coordinator **Julia Strzesieski** wrote us that store manager **Sheldon Klein** was retiring on Monday, April 8 after 30 years. “He will be there until noon Friday and Saturday and Monday from 10-2, if you are able to stop in to say goodbye.” And so we did. I received several photos from CVIA members who wanted him remembered in this newsletter. But of those who dropped by, I

may have been the only one who also apologized. Twenty-five years



Photo: Carole Glosenger

Cole Hardware owner, Rick Karp with Shel Klein on his last day.

ago I asked him to speak at a CVIA community meeting. The night had several other speakers and some heated discussion. I kept moving Shel later on the agenda. Short version: Shel waited patiently to speak until 9:30 pm and, by then, everyone but the CVIA officers had gone home. He went through his talk as if there was an audience but he never spoke to me again.

Or maybe it was the other way around, so embarrassed was I. On Monday I finally apologized to him and, after laughing, he graciously forgave me.

By now you have probably visited the new Cole Valley Pet Store, drawn in by its open windows and the imperious Great Dane posed in



the doorway. Or maybe it's the engaging smile of Rikki Cox, the shop's attractive new owner.

-Karen Crommie

CVIA Officers

- President.....Lena Emmerly
Vice President Cathy Haller
TreasurerJoan Downey
Recording SecretaryKaren Crommie
MembershipLena Emmerly
Special ProjectsJoan Downey, Steven Madrid
Shannon Cooper Hock

CVIANEWS is published quarterly as a forum for residents of the greater Haight Ashbury neighborhood. The views expressed reflect those of the writers. Contributions for the Fall edition should be sent before July 15, 2019 to CVIASF@aol.com. We encourage submissions from anyone interested in our neighborhood. Send questions or comments to the above address or call 415-431-1414.

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Editorial AssistanceJoan Downey

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Table with 2 columns: District and Telephone. Lists 11 supervisors with their names and contact information.

BECOME A CVIA MEMBER

Membership in the Cole Valley Improvement Association is open to anyone interested in the greater Haight Ashbury. CVIA's mission is to promote a sense of responsibility and mutual respect throughout the district; preserve the character of its architecture; support the police in law enforcement efforts; encourage neighborhood-serving business; and be

constructively involved in San Francisco's governmental process. Annual dues are \$25.00. Membership provides contact with other responsible neighbors, a quarterly newsletter and participation in an active forum for effecting change. If you would like to become a member, please send in your dues with the form below.

Please clip and mail the coupon below to CVIA, P.O. Box 170611, San Francisco, CA 94117



Yes! I'd like to become a CVIA member!

Here's my check for \$25.00 made payable to: COLE VALLEY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION Renewal

NAME _____ E-MAIL _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

What I like about the neighborhood: _____

What I dislike about the neighborhood: _____

Optional contribution to Cole sidewalk cleaning \$_____ Do NOT acknowledge my contribution in the newsletter

Dues and contributions to Clean Cole Street may be taken as charitable deductions. Contact your accountant regarding the tax law.



**Cole Valley Improvement Association
P.O. Box 170611
San Francisco, CA 94117**

CVIA MEMBERS GET 50% OFF
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