The Richmond is talking . . .

Street-tree transfers from the city to private owners continues. Several city-maintained trees on California Street have notices on them informing property owners that tree maintenance will be turned over to them. Maintenance costs on these large trees could run up to $1,000 a year. Dan Flanagan of Friends of the Urban Forest has a proposal for the city to maintain the trees and stop the transfers. See fuf.org or contact Dan Flanagan at dan@fuf.net.

Aquatic pet amnesty at Mountain Lake has begun. Unwanted aquatic pets can be left in a new amnesty box on the south shore of the lake. Recently, two red-eared slider turtles (one of the most popular pet turtles) deposited in the box were taken to Sonoma County Reptile Rescue. Red-eared sliders can live up to 20 years and will eat almost any aquatic vegetation. In November, more than 50,000 carp and 75 red-eared sliders were removed prior to the lake being poisoned with rotenone (a biological agent derived from legumes).

Views, vistas, concrete trails, or a visitor center building for the new Presidio Parkland? The Corner group is trying “to create a welcoming place that embraces cultural diversity, creativity, learning, fitness, and fun. The area will be a place that is inspired by history and responsive to the needs of visitors, today and in the future”—and they want your input. To schedule a site tour, find a guide to upcoming workshops and presentations, or share your ideas and opinions, go to newpresidioparklandprojects.org.

Whales are coming to the Academy of Sciences. This new exhibit opening April 3,

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Spring 2015 PAR Meeting
• Election of Directors & Officers
• Bay to Breakers
• Relocating wires underground

Wednesday, April 15
7 to 9 p.m.
Richmond Recreation Center
251 18th Avenue
(between Clement & California Streets)
Paid parking is available one block away
in the lot behind the Alexandria Theatre
between Clement Street and Geary Boulevard.
Muni: 1 California and 38 Geary

Striped pedestrian crossings come to Geary Boulevard

Over the past several months, the San Francisco Municipal Transit Authority has upgraded 33 intersections on Geary Boulevard with bolder, zebra-painted crosswalks that increase pedestrian visibility.

Geary Boulevard is on San Francisco’s “High Injury Network.” This network is made up of 12 percent of city streets that account for 70 percent of severe and fatal traffic injuries across all modes of transportation.

Even with recent improvements, Geary Boulevard continues to be a problem for pedestrians. On Wednesday, March 11, an 87-year-old man walking in a crosswalk on Geary Boulevard at 26th Avenue was struck by a van and killed. This intersection currently does not have traffic signals, but one is in the planning stages.

Pedestrians have the right of way at 26th Avenue crossing at Geary Boulevard, but, lacking a signal, this crosswalk is not the safest option. A safer pedestrian alternative is to walk a block in either direction to 25th or 27th Avenues where there are traffic lights.

However, even at light-controlled intersections, pedestrians should stay alert when crossing and look out for cars making left and right turns.

Drivers turning onto Geary Boulevard should be aware of pedestrians and look for pedestrians before entering any intersection, even when they have a green light on a left or right turn. Although right turns on red are allowed at most intersections, the red light always means stop first and look before turning right.

Another serious issue for seniors and individuals with disabilities is the length of time before the light changes from green to red. Some individuals are incapable of crossing the entire width of Geary Boulevard in a single light change.

In those cases, pedestrians should walk as far as the median strip, then wait until the light changes from green to red. Although the center strip can be intimidating, it’s safer than being caught in a traffic lane when the light changes from green to red.

—Margie Hom Brown

Sutro Heights Park vistas marred by deteriorating fences

Breathtaking panoramic views of Golden Gate Park, Ocean Beach, the Pacific Ocean and the iconic Cliff House are well worth the trip to Sutro Heights Park. This 18-acre park, once the estate of Adolph Sutro, was a gift from his family to the city of San Francisco.

Unfortunately the beauty of these views has been marred for many years by the rundown, crumbling, broken, rusting fences. These once-beautiful fences and guardrails meant to protect the public from tumbling down the slopes of the

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Dear PAR Members,

The year 2015 started off with some rather surprising changes.

We learned that three key members of PAR’s Board of Directors will not be able to continue as active members. One has passed away; another is dealing with symptoms of a progressively incapacitating disease; and, a third, having undergone a second hip replacement, will need time to rehabilitate. We will miss these three key leaders, and I thank them for their leadership and invaluable efforts in making the Richmond a better place to live.

In addition, other busy board members are looking to limit their participation before the end of the year, thus paving the way to make room for the new generation of PAR board members.

We appreciate the contributions all of these individuals made during their years of volunteer service on the board of directors; each has contributed to PAR’s success.

In anticipation of new board members with new ideas, the board decided that now was a good time to take stock of where PAR is and to determine how to proceed.

Under the leadership of one of its more experienced members, the board spent a significant part of a February weekend jumpstarting a strategic planning process in which the organization’s strengths and weaknesses, along with the opportunities and threats in its environment, are identified, analyzed and evaluated. The board will be providing periodic reports on any decisions that result from this process as they are made.

In the meantime, the board is proceeding to compile its recommendations to the General Membership for the election of officers and directors at its April 15 meeting.

Another significant change since the beginning of 2015 is the publication by the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center of its “Supplemental (Second) Draft Environmental Impact Statement” (SDEIS) with regard to the January 2014 draft of its “Long Range Development Plan” for new and expanded buildings on its 29.2-acre campus in the Outer Richmond District.

There will be a meeting on April 14, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the auditorium in Building 7 on the SFVAMC campus, to discuss and receive comments on that document. The deadline for all comments regarding the SDEIS is May 8, 2015.

Digital copies of the SDEIS are at sanfrancisco.va.gov/planning/eis.asp and hard copies can be found at the Anza branch of the San Francisco Public Library (550 37th Avenue) and in the Engineering Office on the SFVAMC campus (first floor of Building 3 at 4150 Clement Street).

Please share any comments, questions or suggestions regarding the SDEIS with PAR at president@sfpar.org or leave a voicemail message at 1-415-541-5652. PAR’s comments, questions and suggestions with regard to that same document will be posted on sfpar.org on or before May 8.

As noted in the last newsletter, the public process for the design of the New Parklands that will emerge over the top of the new tunnels for the Presidio Parkway, which replaces Doyle Drive, is already well underway. The latest details on that process are at newpresidioparklands.org. We urge you to participate in one or more of the workshops that are being scheduled and to make your voice heard.

Please let me know if you have any comments, questions or suggestions.

Ray Holland
president@sfpar.org

On February 15, the PAR Board of Directors lost one of its own to a long battle with cancer. Cheryl was a loving wife to Doug Schultz and a daughter to Eldon Erb. As a board member, Cheryl was active in historic preservation of the Richmond District as well as in neighborhood beautification.

As one PAR member, Jean Barish, said “Cheryl loved the Richmond District, and worked hard to support the community. She planted trees, helped with neighborhood cleanups and supported preservation efforts here. She was also an enthusiastic gardener and created a magnificent dahlia garden in her yard, generously sharing the flowers with friends, colleagues and neighbors. She was loved by many and will be sorely missed.”

Sadly, the Richmond District lost a passionate advocate and neighbor; we at PAR lost a colleague and friend. Cheryl will be missed by all of us on the board.
Thank you

Our donors’ generosity is essential to PAR’s ongoing ability to advocate on behalf of the residents and businesses of the Richmond District. We appreciate the support of every PAR member.

To maintain its independence, PAR does not accept government funding or grants. Our only income is our members’ tax-deductible dues and contributions.

We gratefully acknowledge those members who contributed from March 2014 through February 2015.

Patrons ($100 and above)
330 Arguello Home Owners Association
Fred Alschsuler & Julia Cheever
Maria Gloria, Angelina’s Café & Catering
Paul Angelo
Mr. Leonard F. Armstrong
Daniel & Kathryn Baroni
Ellen & Russell Breslauer
Cliff House
Steve & Phoebe Combs
Jonathan & Audrey Dunn
Herb & Bonnie Elliott
Robert & Chandra Friese
Linda & Sanford Gallanter
Kwock Don Gee
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Golden Coast Properties
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Eugene & Ellen Lew
Louis Haas, Louis N. Haas Professional Corp
Lawrence & Elinore Lurie
Liz Mamorsky & Melburn Knox
Melanie Marks
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Ron & Ruth Miguel
Judith & Walter Miller

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A reduced speed limit on Fulton Street was recently announced in a press release from the mayor’s office: “The city also recently completed a speed limit reduction on Fulton Street from Arguello to the Great Highway from 35 mph to 30 mph.” Slowing down saves lives.

Save some water for ME! The drought continues. Do your best to conserve water by reusing your gray water to flush toilets or water your garden. Rebates are available for water-efficient toilets and washing machines. Learn more at sfwater.org/conservation.

Sweep sidewalks rather than hosing and equip all hoses with shutoffs. Water wasters can be reported at www.sfwater.org.

Street banners in the Richmond promoting the hidden charms of our district are now on display! The Geary Boulevard Merchants
Move it or lose it—ongoing exercise plan is key

You may have heard the term “move it or lose it”—“it” being mobility and flexibility. If you do not remain active, especially after age 50, you will lose it. Inactivity sends a message to the body is that it doesn’t need certain muscles; the body responds by not maintaining the unused muscles. We may think that slowing down and loss of flexibility are natural accompaniments to old age—but that’s not true.

Experts in health and aging say that the benefits of activity are numerous and include prevention and or delay of disease, management of stress and mood elevation. According to the National Institute of Health: Senior Health: “Regular physical activity and exercise are important to the physical and mental health of almost everyone, including older adults.”

Simple things such as opening doors, stretching to put dishes away, getting dressed, even making a bed are all things that require flexibility and strength. Regular exercise with an emphasis on flexibility and movement can ensure that you can do simple household tasks and more well into old age.

From 20 to 25 senior citizens regularly take charge of their health by going to the Saint James Episcopal Church (4620 California Street) to participate in the “Always Active Program,” held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 to 11 a.m.

Always Active is designed for seniors over 60 and strives to improve health, fitness, maintain independence and a better quality of life in a supportive atmosphere where everyone is encouraged to do the best they can.

The group exercise program includes warm up, stretches, light weights and resistance band exercises, all designed to maintain flexibility and strength throughout the whole body. Nationally certified, professional exercise leaders conduct the classes and are on hand to instruct participants on the correct posture to avoid injury.

Of course, there is also a social aspect to the class. Participants and staff get to know one another and look forward to twice-weekly chats as well as sharing down time at holidays and the occasional potluck lunch.

The program is free to qualifying seniors. An annual donation of $25 is suggested, but no one is denied participation if unable to donate. A signed physician’s release form is required, and participants must be able to exercise without assistance.

For more information on the Always Active program, go to alwaysactive.org or call Irene Solis at 415-550-2265 or Sue Mittelman at 415-923-4482.

The Richmond District offers many good exercise opportunities, so find the one that suits you and that features flexibility and movement—and keep on moving for an active, healthy life.
Join PAR now and make your voice heard.

Membership is open to all persons living, working, or owning property in the Richmond District of San Francisco. PAR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Your contribution is tax-deductible as provided by law.

Yes! I/we want to support the Richmond District.

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E-Mail PAR respects your privacy and will not share your email.

Membership

- [ ] Individual
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- [ ] Supporting membership, $15.00/year and above
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Please complete and cut out this form and mail it together with your check (payable to the Planning Association of the Richmond) to

PAR
5758 Geary Boulevard, Box 356
San Francisco, CA 94121-2112

THANKS for helping to support the quality of life in San Francisco's Richmond District.

Pay Your PAR dues online!

sfpar.org/site/join-par-via-paypal.html
to join, contribute or pay your dues the easy, electronic way!