



Excelsior News

Volume VII, Number 2

July 1994

Neighbors of the Excelsior Meets at Excelsior Clubhouse, Tuesday, July 26, 7:30 pm

Neighbors of the Excelsior is holding its summer quarterly general meeting at the Excelsior Clubhouse, Russia Avenue and Madrid Street, on Tuesday, July 26, at 7:30 PM. We urge all neighbors, merchants, or other people interested in the Excelsior District.

Neighbors of the Excelsior is a group of neighbors who are working to improve the quality of life in the Excelsior District. We

have been active in this area for about 6 years, working in such areas as building and zoning, park maintenance and cleanup, graffiti paint-outs, tree planting, and police services.

Our current Board of Directors is listed on page 3 of this newsletter. Everyone is welcome to join us and help our neighborhood. You will find a membership form on the back page of this newsletter.

Excelsior Youth Club Organizes Easter Egg Hunts and Car Washes

by Bill Martin

The Excelsior Youth Club continues to support and help the young people in our area with several outstanding activities. These activities deserve our support and we hope all neighborhood residents will participate in these.

One way to help to help is to get your car washed. The Club runs car washes at the Community Church of God at 255 Ocean Avenue once a month, usually the last Saturday. That would be July 25, August 27, or September 24. They charge \$4 per car wash. The Club uses the funds to support their programs.

On Saturday, April, one of those programs happened: an Eastern Egg Hunt held at the Excelsior Playground. About 150 people turned out for this hunt, including a video crew from Channel 53, the San Francisco community station. Their video aired about 2 months after the event and ran 3 minutes long. The stars, of course, were the little egg hunters, who are already learning that helping your community pays off.

The Club has also been meeting with Captain Dower, the

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Calendar and Notices

Neighbors of the Excelsior General Membership Meeting, Tuesday, July 26, 7:30 PM, at the Excelsior Clubhouse, Madrid and Russia. Please come and support your neighborhood group.

Excelsior Youth Club Meeting, Every Tuesday, 7 pm, Excelsior Clubhouse, Russia and Madrid Streets.

Excelsior Youth Club Car Washes, 4th Saturday of each Month, Community of Assembly of God, Ocean and San Jose Aves.

Police Community Meeting, at Ingleside Police Station Community Room, 3rd Tuesday of every Month.

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new Captain of the Ingleside station. The Club and Captain Dower have met twice so far, and the Club says these meetings have been very positive. Captain Dower is forming a community service group among the local police officers to work with the youth in this area, which the Club also sees as a positive activity. As readers of this newsletter and residents of this neighborhood know, relations between the Police Department and young people in this neighborhood have not always been good, and we commend Captain Dower for taking these steps.

The Club is working on two projects, both connected to finding job opportunities for youth in this area. The first is painting a new mural at the Excelsior Playground. The Club applied for and received a grant for this work. The grant money will pay for a muralist to help design and manage the project and for the young people who will work on the mural. They will spending about \$800 on paint, as well as putting up scaffolding to work from. About 8 to 10 young people will be working on the mural, which will be a job for them paid by the hour. The Club is looking for donors to help them out: banks, corporations, local groups of any kind. If you know of any sources for help for this project, please call Jimmy Espinosa at 239-0423. Besides beautifying our local playground and contributing to our community, this experience will help these youngsters learn basic job skills which will help them in the future.

Along with that, one of the youth departments in the Mayor's Office is working with the Club to set up a job training program here in the Excelsior. At this time, this training will focus on the skills needed to get a job, such as filling out an application or handling the interview.

Finally, the Club would like everyone to know that they are meeting in the Excelsior Clubhouse every Tuesday evening at 7:30 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend these meetings, and the Club extends a special welcome to any young person in the area, or to any parents of young people, to find out "what's happenin'" in the Excelsior.

The Excelsior Turns Green(er)

by Bill Martin

Betty Olafsson has done a tremendous job organizing our local tree planting efforts. As readers of this newsletter learned last March, Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF) received grant money for planting trees in several San Francisco neighborhoods, including the Excelsior. That grant money meant that Excelsior neighbors could have a sidewalk tree near their houses for the cost of maintenance. FUF's grant money pays for the trees, the cutting and breaking of the sidewalk, and the preparation of the planting site.

As a result, over 200 new trees are going in this past spring or this summer. Carol Antracoli organized the first plant, now completed. Two anonymous neighbors planned the second one, completed June 25. Carman and Ken Barnes, assisted by Concho Castro and Mike Kirwin, have set up a planting for August 6. In addition, two other groups have completed the planning process, but must wait until February 1995 before planting. As Mel Johnson, Program Director for FUF said, "The program has been so successful and the demand so high that we are months ahead in scheduling tree plantings."

Thanks for this success also goes to Pastor Carlos Zapata of the Iglesia Bautista Hispana Church, located at 950 Avalon Avenue. Pastor Zapata supplied two important items: a place to hold planting organizing meetings, and a place to store trees overnight. We hope Pastor Zapata, and other groups around our neighborhood, will help out February when we begin our next round of planting.

Neighbors of the Excelsior would also like to thank the Friends of the Urban Forest for doing a great job. Their efforts mean quieter, cleaner, more appealing streets for local residents, and cleaner air for everyone. Are you interested? Call Betty Olafsson at 585-0306 to see how you can get more trees in your area.

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The Excelsior News is published by Neighbors of the Excelsior (NOTE), a neighborhood group dedicated to improving the quality of life for all residents of the Excelsior District. Annual dues are \$10 per person, which includes a subscription to *The Excelsior News*. Please send your check to NOTE, P. O. Box 12236, San Francisco, CA 94112.

The Neighbors of the Excelsior Board of Directors:

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Irene Malone	Bill Martin
Alan Mills	Lois Miyashiro
Joe Sugg	Carol Taylor
Jo Coffey	Jimmy Espinosa
Karen Moise	Betty Olafsson

Current Committees:

Building (Marion Aird, 333-6624)
Environment (Bill Martin, 587-5730)
Crime and Graffiti (Bob Christensen, 586-0732)
Membership and Outreach (no present chair)

Current Newsletter Staff:

Editor and Publisher: Bill Martin
Distribution and Ad Sales: Alan Mills, Bill Martin,
Betty Olafsson, and the Excelsior Youth Club
Contributors: Jo Coffey, Joe Sugg, Lois Miyashiro,
Karen Moise, Bill Martin

The July 1994 issue of the *Excelsior News* will be distributed free of charge to various businesses and community locations in the Excelsior District by volunteers from Neighbors of the Excelsior and the Excelsior Youth Club.

Letters to the Editor:

The Excelsior News welcomes Letters to the Editor on any and all topics. Please send your typed letters to the Post Office Box listed above. To be published, letters must include your name, address, and telephone number. *The Excelsior News* reserves the right to edit letters for publishing purposes.

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Editorial**Bayside Discharge? In the Excelsior?**

It's true that we aren't exactly "bayside," but that doesn't mean we won't have millions of gallons of sewage flowing through our neighborhood. Thanks to Tony Sacco of the New Mission Terrace Association, we have learned the following facts about the "Crosstown Force Main" alternative for moving sewage across San Francisco:

- The diameter of the pipe (6.5 feet) is inadequate to carry the load.

- The pipe will be laid in a former creek bed. The excavation and filling of this bed will damage the foundations of surrounding homes.

- The excavation necessary to lay the pipe will cut into and expose Serpentine, a mineral, which contains Chrysotile rock formations. These formations contain asbestos, a known carcinogen, which could expose neighbors, workers, and school children to this compound.

- The air release system, located at I-280 and San Jose Avenue, poses a potential carcinogenic hazard as well, by releasing chlorinated effluents. Other vents are not listed in the current plan alternative.

- This alternative will cause severe traffic problems for many months. Alemany Boulevard, from the Farmers' Market to near the Daly City line, will be torn up, causing major traffic delays getting into and out of our neighborhood.

- This proposal would result in damage to the Lake Merced Ecosystem, possibly causing harm to Nesting Cliff Swallows, San Francisco Garter Snakes, the California Red-legged frog, and other species. The force main will remain above ground near Lake Merced, with the San Andreas Fault only a few miles away. A rupture could severely impact the Lake Merced area.

Neighbors of the Excelsior strongly opposes this proposal. We recommend two possible alternatives:

1. The City should develop plans to treat waste water in such a way that it can be recycled for appropriate uses, such as irrigation. This would minimize the need for such an expensive, disruptive, and possibly dangerous project.

2. The City, in the event that it must create a "cross town" sewage pipe, should choose an alternative which tunnels completely across town. Almost all of the above problems can be avoided if this alternative is used.

We welcome our readers' responses.

Get a Free Tree!!
Call 585-0306!

Library Charter Amendment Passes

by Joe Sugg

San Francisco voters passed a Library charter amendment on June 7, 1994. This amendment guarantees that libraries will be open longer, with many more current books and upgraded services.

The first task for the San Francisco Public Library system will be to conduct a survey, to see how San Franciscans would like their libraries to be improved. Then, a public hearing will be held in each branch library, attended by library staff and one or more Library commissioners.

By January 1, 1995, the Library commission will set new extended hours. The charter amendment requires that these new extended hours be approximately those in 1986-1987. In addition, these hours must remain in force for five years, when the commission can reassess and make changes if necessary.

What does this mean for Excelsior residents? Our local branch will soon have more books that people want to read. By January, 1995, we will be able to use our library more, perhaps two evenings a week, perhaps six days a week, depending on what residents say they would like.

Neighbors of the Excelsior urges all Excelsior residents to get involved in this process. You can find details at the Library about when the survey begins and when the first public hearings are to be held.

In the meantime, our neighborhood committee of TNT (The Neighborhoods Together, which helped pass the charter amendment) is gearing up to help in any way possible. Please call Joe Sugg at 585-2624 if you would like to join the committee or help out in some other way.

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Cleveland School Paint Job: You Can Help

by Bill Martin

Cleveland School, located at 455 Athens, is doing something we all should know about: they are painting their school this summer. Teachers and parents are donating their time to paint the interior of the school using 40 gallons of paint from the San Francisco Recycling Center. Technician Chabello Gomez deserves special thanks for his work filling 5 gallon buckets with this paint.

To begin the project, the School District is bringing in some professional painters to prepare the walls. The existing paint used over the years contains lead, and the District wants to ensure that any lead is either removed or sealed in before any finish painting happens.

Once the walls are prepared and sealed, the School will be needing all the help they can get to complete the painting before the summer ends. They also need help cleaning out older classrooms and portable buildings. If you want to help, with painting, cleanup, or in any other way, please call Mary Johns at 564-6662. Special thanks to Betty Olafsson for much of this information.

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How Safe is the Excelsior?

by Lois Miyashiro and Karen Moise

In the first of what we hope to be a continuing series, we offer for our readers the following statistics culled from police records for June, 1994. These events happened in or near the Excelsior District.

- Domestic violence or child abuse: 25 incidents
- Other violent crimes, 32 incidents, in the following categories:

Aggravated Assault: 9

Robbery: 8

Sexual Battery: 2

Battery: 14

Rape: 1

Carjacking: 1

- Stolen vehicles: 27
- Vehicles recovered: 22
- Malicious mischief (usually vandalism): 22
- Grand thefts (usually from autos): 21
- Petty thefts (usually from autos): 13
- Traffic violations: 20
- Threats of physical harm: 13
- Burglary: 10

- Drug sales and possessions: 9
- Arson: 4
- Weapons violations: 3
- Lewd act: 2
- Other: 13

Without good data for comparison, we don't know how to interpret these numbers. We want to emphasize that these statistics come from the Excelsior area for one month, June 1994. We plan in future newsletters to include more statistics from other months, as well as including statistics from other parts of San Francisco.

We would greatly appreciate help to gather, compile, and summarize numbers for our future articles. If you are interested, please contact Bill Martin at 587-5730.

Also, please note that Captain Michael Dower of the Ingleside Station hosts community meetings at the Ingleside Station Community Room every Tuesday at 7 pm. You can learn more about crime in our area by attending these meetings.

Police-Related Services

Emergency	911
Non-Emergency	553-0123
Parking Complaints	553-1200
Abandoned Cars	781-JUNK
Security Survey of Home/Business	673-SAFE
Neighborhood/Block/Business Watch	673-SAFE
Landlord-Tenant Disputes	554-9550
Neighbor Disputes-Community Boards	863-6100
Domestic/Family Violence-Woman Inc	864-4722
Victim/Witness Assistance	553-9044
Suicide Prevention Hotline	221-1423
Abused or Dangerous Animals	554-6364
MUNI Shelter Damage or Graffiti	882-4949
Business Permits for Ingleside area	553-1607
Scheduling the Community Room	553-1603
Community Policing Supervisor	333-3433

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McLaren Park News

by Jo Coffey

The McLaren Park Task Force

Following a resolution taken by the general membership at our March meeting, NOTE board members have organized a McLaren Park Task Force for the purpose of increasing neighborhood use of the park. The task force consists of groups around McLaren Park. To date, six organizations have sent representatives: El Dorado School Neighborhood Betterment Council, Neighbors of the Excelsior, New Mission Terrace Improvement Association, Northeast McLaren Park Neighborhood Association, Portola Heights Neighborhood Association, and Visitation Valley Community Center. We are still actively soliciting additional member organizations, particularly those that represent cultural groups not yet on the task force.

We are conducting a survey in the greater McLaren neighborhood to determine how often people go to the park, what they do there, and what improvements they would like to see. It is available in Cantonese, Spanish and Tagalog as well as English. The survey was published in the last edition of this newsletter, and was also distributed in other task force groups. If you have not yet filled out a survey, call 585-6506 to get one.

To date, 183 completed surveys have been returned. As graph 1 shows, the great majority of respondents (almost 75%) never use the park, or do so infrequently. Graph 2 shows what people want improved, and clearly, safety is the primary concern. Over 90% of the respondents say improved safety is important or very important to them. Next in importance is improved maintenance. 78% say that is important or very important.

Our next step is to do a point by point analysis of the city's Master Plan for McLaren in light of the survey results. Quite possibly, we will have recommendations for changes in the plan, or changes in priority in implementing it. Particularly given people's concern for improved maintenance and improved safety, we have asked the

Recreation and Park Department for the allocation of the maintenance budget in all parks in the city, and we have asked the Ingleside CPOP (Community Police on Patrol) for statistics on crime in the park and in the surrounding neighborhoods. The Ingleside police have been reported as saying that fear of the park is based more on perceived than actual crime, and that the park is actually safer than the surrounding streets ("Neighbors Act to Reclaim Park", *San Francisco Independent*, March 25, 1994). We need to know how much actual crime there is in the park so we can see how much work needs to be done in crime control, and how much in public education.

Native Plant Restoration

This is prime fennel season. This European transplant which has taken all to well to our climate has its maximum above-ground life in summer, so it's the best time to cut it back. We've used a big chunk of our Bank of America grant to purchase a weed trimmer, and will give that a good workout between now and October. Join us. We work on the second Saturday of the month between 10:00 and 2:00. For the summer, we'll be on the hill on Geneva, just east of the Crocker Amazon playing fields. For information, call 585-6506.

Excelsior Stairways

Do you live near one of the outdoor stairways in the Excelsior? Would you be willing to commit a little time to make it more beautiful? Adah Bakilinsky of San Francisco Beautiful, author of *Stairway Walks in San Francisco* is looking for neighbors who will help maintain plants on their stairway. If you're interested, call 585-6506.

Postscript

I got writer's block in the middle of this article, so I went for a walk in the park to clear my head and get some inspiration. I picked up some garbage - not much, two Safeway plastic bags full, bags that had been thoughtfully left on bushes for my use. I admired the buckwheat, possibly my favorite native plant, and the radiant farewell to spring, re-introduced into the park just last January. These are about the only natives left, the others having already dropped their seed and withdrawn into the earth to wait out the rainless summer. The wind was strong, and I thought what fun it would be to have a kite, or see some kids with kites. To the northwest, I saw wisps of fog playing around Mt. Davidson, and wondered why I hadn't brought the camera. The park is beautiful, folks. Give it a chance. Get some friends together and do some exploring. Take a picnic. Take a kite.

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Recycling Works for Everyone: Win Tickets to Giants Games

This article was provided by the San Francisco Recycling Program.

In a unique public-private collaboration, the City's Recycling Program and the San Francisco Giants have announced a summer outreach effort which will allow residents in the southern part of the City to earn Giants tickets by recycling. The "Twelve Weeks of Recycling" campaign focuses on the 12 items that can be recycled through the curbside and apartment recycling programs in San Francisco. The 12 recyclables are junk mail, cardboard boxes, office paper, cereal and other dry food boxes, phone books, magazines and catalogs, paper bags, newspapers, glass jars and bottles, tin/steel cans, plastic two-liter soda bottles, and aluminum cans.

From June 1 to August 31, residents in the Mission, Excelsior, Visitation Valley, Bayview-Hunters Point, and Ingleside districts can enter the drawing for a pair of Giants tickets by filling out "Go to Bat for Recycling" cards each time they recycle. The Giants have donated 1,000 tickets to their September 16 game against the Houston Astros. Recycling cards will be available in neighborhood recreation and community centers, libraries, and some grocery stores.

The recycling public outreach effort is part of the City's comprehensive response to a recent market research study. Conducted for the San Francisco Recycling Program, the survey showed that San Franciscans

are doing well on recycling but must continue to improve their recycling habits for the City to meet the state's mandate to reduce waste by 50 percent by the year 2000. The study found that:

- San Francisco's residents remain in the top rank of California cities recycling solid waste. According to a telephone survey of 600 randomly selected San Francisco residents, 72 percent are recycling on a regular basis.

- The most-often recycled materials in the City are newspapers recycled by 94 percent of those surveyed, glass (89 percent) and aluminum cans (86 percent). The least recycled materials are white paper (62 percent) and tin/steel cans (69 percent). More than half of the respondents said they were able to recycle everything they would like to recycle, although 22 percent say they would like to be able to recycle plastics, and 2 percent would like curbside pickup of clothing and used motor oil.

- Seventeen percent of residents use buyback centers found in supermarkets and 14 percent use drop-off centers such as the ones operated by Richmond Environmental Action and the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Council.

- Significantly, the study revealed a high level of understanding and support for "closing the recycling loop." Sixty percent of respondents felt it was very important that packages be made from materials that can be recycled, 50 percent considered it very important

that packages be made from recycled materials, and 44 percent thought it very important that items be manufactured from recycled materials.

According to Sharon Maves, San Francisco Recycling Program Manager, "This type of thinking is essential to long-term success of the City's and state's recycling goals. In order to succeed, we need to build markets for collected recyclable. Increasing public demand for recycled materials and packaging greatly strengthens those markets."

While the survey results are encouraging, they also identify targets and tactics to improve the City's recycling programs. For example, the majority of residents (64 percent) have done nothing to reduce the amount of material they have thrown away in the last 6 months. Only 7 percent say they are now buying in bulk and 5 percent are reusing containers and bags to cut down on garbage.

"We're two-thirds of the way toward our 50 percent waste reduction goal now," says Maves. "Given the support identified in the survey, plus targets to improving recycling performance, we believe San Francisco will be among the leaders in achieving full compliance."

Additional information from the survey is available upon request by calling 554-3409. Residents who want details of the "Go to Bat for Recycling" program with the Giants may call the Recycling Programs' hotline at 554-6193.

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