

October 2000

Notes from Kerry

About the 15th of every month we begin to worry there'll be nothing to print and the newsletter will be blank, then the information begins to flow in and VOILA! We're back to editing things out. It never ceases to amaze me how much happens in our City Hall, there's always an abundance of news about the people within and things to learn about. First I want to thank everyone for participating in our second annual fire drill. It's important we take the time to practice our plans and be sure they work. The fire department was very pleased with the time of evacuation, and how organized everyone was.

You'll see the October issue is an expanded edition so that we could bring you plenty of information from the elections department. As time draws near the staff is frantically working to make the transition to our new system smooth and successful. They've included information concerning volunteer opportunities for you, so be sure to read on.

Congratulations again to Ed. Harrington. Not only was Ed sworn in for another 10-year term as City Controller, but it was also his birthday week. Congratulations also go out to Ed Lee, Martha Cohen, and PJ Johnston; they're about to embark on bigger challenges within City Hall. Good luck, we'll be cheering behind you! Sheri Williams, from the City Architects office, is leaving us in October to work for DMJM as the Project Manager for NASA/Ames Research Center at Moffett Field. She played an integral part on the City Hall Construction Team and will be very missed.

To learn about everything else going on, keep reading. As I said, City Hall is a busy and amazing place.

The Mysterious Dahlia By Ellen Schumer

On Monday mornings, a magnificent floral arrangement arrives from a secret admirer to the Docent Kiosk in the Van Ness lobby. The last 3 arrangements that have arrived contain the official flower of San Francisco, the Dahlia. The dahlia partakes essentially the character of our beloved city- in birth, breeding and habit- for it was originally Mexican, carried thence to Spain, France and England in turn, being changed in the process from a simple daisy-like wild flower into a cosmopolitan beauty. To our secret admirer we send many thanks, the flowers are sincerely enjoyed by everyone who visits us. Ed Harrington shares life lessons and signs on for 10 More Years!

When Ed Harrington was just a boy he learned government was here to provide for its citizens and do "good things" for its people. As an adult, he learned life is too short to do something you don't love. On September 21, surrounded by friends, family and coworkers, Ed Harrington signed on for another 10-years as the City Controller, and because of his life lessons, he's optimistic about loving whatever he does and giving back to the community everyday. Supervisor Kaufman hosted the ceremony, and humorous speeches were delivered by Supervisor Ammiano and Jim Lazarus from Senator Diane Feinstein's office. Mayor Brown had the honor of performing the swearing -in ceremony. Ed's speech was so moving that several people have already called his assistant and asked for a copy of it, and at the time of this printing it was still not transcribed onto paper. Refreshments followed on the 4th floor of the Rotunda where Ed was all smiles celebrating with his guests. Congratulations to you Ed, the City is a better place with your insight and optimism.

Election Trivia:

We use the word "CHAD" to refer to the little square bits of paper that do not completely separate from punch card ballots when voters poke a hole in the ballot to mark their choice. Where did the word "CHAD" come from? According to one theory, back in the days when people used key punches, those little bits of paper decorated office carpets every where until an inventor named Mr. Chadless patented a machine he called the "Chadless Keypunch." His machine moved office technology forward by eliminating the little bits of paper created by the keypunch process. Mr. Chadless clearly assumed that by naming the machine after himself he might gain him the same immortality enjoyed by Mr. Ford and Mssrs. Smith and Wesson. No doubt Mr. Chadless' invaluable contribution to society was appreciated by building maintenance crews everywhere. However, his name was soon forgotten because the users of his technology made the mistaken assumption that the "Chadless Keypunch" was so called for the benefit of providing keypunch operation "without chad." By such historical accidents does our lexicon evolve.

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*The Dept of Elections will make Early Voting available in the basement of City Hall between Oct. 10 and Nov. 6, 8:00 am-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday; 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Provisional Ballot Watch:

Every election in San Francisco, vote counting is slowed to a crawl by the disproportionately large number of provisional ballots cast in San Francisco. Provisional ballots are those ballots cast by voters whose correct names and addresses cannot be found in the rosters issued to the poll workers, usually because they are voting outside of their own precinct or have not re-registered to vote following a name or address change. Since the poll worker cannot be sure that the provisional voter is eligible to vote San Francisco, the voter's ballot is sealed in a "provisional envelope" which the voter must fill out and sign. Those ballots are returned to the Dept. of Elections and processed by hand in order to make sure that the voter is entitled to vote for all of the races that appear on the ballot type they voted on, and to confirm the identity of the voter. It takes one person one working day to process 96 provisional ballots.

In Nov. 1999 we had 7,066 provisional ballots; in the Dec. run-off of 1999 there were 9,233 provisional ballots. The March, 2000 primary resulted in 6,443 provisional ballots. In the same March primary, San Mateo County, with 20,000 more registered voters, had only 700 provisional ballots.

The Dept. of Elections is working hard to minimize the number of provisional ballots and increase the speed of the vote count. Help us by telling your friends and neighbors to:

*Re-register to vote by Oct. 10 with correct name and address information if you have moved or changed your name;

*Vote in your own assigned polling place!

San Francisco Voters Tips:

*Make sure you vote in your own assigned polling place this election, or your vote may not count! Your polling place is on the back cover of your Voter Information Pamphlet.

*Find your supervisorial district by:

Looking in the San Francisco September 2000 Yellow Pages, page 20

Look up your district and polling place on the Department's internet polling place

look-up tool: www.sfgov.org/election/

See the District Map posted at the Department of Elections, Room 48 (basement) Call us at 554-4375

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Midnight Madness!

On October 10, the Dept. of Elections will host an "on the street" Event to provide an opportunity for last minute Voter Registration right up until 11:59 p.m. There'll be a van from 98.1 KISS FM, a visit by the Secretary of State Bill Jones and lots of volunteers with flashlights and clipboards who will assist those last minute drive-up voters to register (or re-register for name and address changes). If you want to be a part of this exciting event to assist voter registration after business hours on Tuesday, October 10, please call 554-5692.

Art in The City By Rupert Jenkins, Gallery Director

by Rupert Jenkins, SF Arts Commission Gallery Director rupert_jenkins@ci.sf.ca.us

This month sees an entirely new display of exhibitions throughout the lower level. You can have fun locating your favorite city places in Terry Holter's color photographic series 36 Views of Sutro Tower. The works are based on the late-

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18th century Japanese artist Hokusai's famous series of wood block prints entitled 36 Views of Mt. Fuji. Holter's work will be on display through December 17, together with photographs from the Friends of Photography community outreach program, and paintings from the collection of the International Children's Museum. Todd Herman's Kathmandu: Impressions of the City at its Margins continues through October 29.

Receptions for these and other San Francisco-based artists will take place the evening of Wednesday, November 8, so mark you calendars and join us for refreshments and conversation with the artists.

Art tours of the lower level exhibitions now take place each 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4 p.m. Call 554-6023 for information. And finally, a word of acknowledgment and thanks goes out to the staff and advisors of the Grants for the Arts program for their funding of our City Hall exhibitions.

City Store Sale!

The City Store has everything on sale 20% off (except city signs)...check it out!