

Weekend Edition, October 20-21, 2007

SF 5

LOCAL

TODAY'S NEWSMAKERS



MUNI

Muni dispatchers, inspectors and street supervisors went back to work Friday after more than 50 called in sick Thursday morning as part of an impromptu sickout, according to a Muni spokesperson. Muni lines were "not affected" despite the absences Thursday, Muni spokesperson Maggie Lynch said. The employees who called in sick are part of the Transport Workers Union Local 200, an approximately 260-member organization in the midst of a contract dispute with the Municipal Transportation Agency.

CYNTHIA GUYER

A leader in the education field in Portland, Ore., was named by the board of the San Francisco School Alliance as its interim executive director. As founding executive director of the Portland Schools Foundation, Guyer raised \$45 million to improve student achievement in Portland's public schools. She helped launch the transformation of Portland's high schools in 2000 with support from the Carnegie Corp., and a \$9 million investment from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Meyer Memorial Trust last year.

DeVAUGHNDRE BROUSSARD

The Your Black Muslim Bakery handyman told Oakland police the day after journalist Chauncey Bailey was murdered in downtown Oakland that he would take the blame for the crime even if he wasn't responsible. But in a taped interview with police Aug. 3, the day after Bailey, 57, was gunned down, Broussard said he was the shooter and shot Bailey three times. When Detective Derwin Longmire asked him, "Did you do this crime?" Broussard said, "Yes." Broussard pleaded not guilty to murder charges Thursday.



Broussard

San Francisco in need of repair

Fixes to Southeast plant most pressing

Sewer spillover during rainfall remains an issue

The City's network of pipes and tunnels has enough capacity to handle the regular flow of sewage and storm-drain runoff that rushes through on a daily basis. When it rains, however, problems arise.

While about 80 million gallons of wastewater run through The City's treatment plants on any given day, when it rains it can swell up to 600 million gallons.

Like other older cities, including Boston and New York, San Francisco has what's known as a combined sewer system — which means the sewage goes through the same system that also collects the water runoff that goes into the storm drains.

"The good news about combined sewers is it's a higher standard environmentally," San Francisco Public Utilities Commission General Manager Susan Leal said. Any toxic substances on the street get treated before going out into San Francisco's surrounding waters, she said.

When heavy rains rush into the drains, however, the system overflows, resulting in flooding in some lower parts of The City and discharges into the Bay and ocean. Some treatment is given to the excess wastewater, according to the SFPUC; nonetheless the discharges consist of approximately 6 percent sewage.

The problem used to be worse, city officials say. In the 1980s and '90s, The City built bigger sewer pipes and storage basins and as a result, it is able to manage most of the storms.

The new strategy would look at ways The City can increase the number of trees, gardens and other landscape elements to absorb water or filter it into the ground.

Adding an ecological component to help manage The City's stormwater is an idea that's supported by the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association, a public policy group. — *Bonnie Eslinger*

SFPUC to weigh options for Bayview-Hunters Point facility

By Bonnie Eslinger
Examiner Staff Writer

As The City prepares for the launch of a multibillion-dollar effort to upgrade San Francisco's aging sewer system, one project is on the top of the list: to modernize the treatment plant in Bayview-Hunters Point that has been leaking its sickening sludge into the neighborhood for decades.

The Southeast Treatment Plant, near Third and Evans streets, is one of the main priorities of the upgrade plan because it is one of the largest and oldest of The City's three plants. It is also the source of neighborhood complaints, as it treats 80 percent of wastewater generated in San Francisco and is located close to residential and commercial buildings.

On Nov. 13, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, the agency that oversees The City's water and sewer systems, will move its meeting from City Hall to the Bayview in order to discuss four proposals drafted for reducing problems associated with the Southeast plant.

Alternatives include upgrading the plant, moving some of the treatment load to other plants, moving the daily treatment to The City's Ocean-side plant, and rebuilding the plant at a new site on the Bay's waterfront.

While agency officials insist that the ultimate decision for the future of the Southeast plant will be decided by the five-member commission, at a meeting of the agency's Technical Advisory Committee in July, staff said the "recommended alternative" would be to keep the vast majority

Treatment plants

San Francisco has three treatment plants, but 80 percent of The City's sewage goes to the Bayview facility, shown below.

■ **The Southeast Treatment Plant** was built in 1952 and has since undergone several expansions. It treats an average dry-weather flow of about 67 million gallons per day and can treat up to 250 million gallons per day when it rains, according to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

■ **The North Point facility** has been in operation since 1951, and prior to 1972, when The City made upgrades to its system to comply with the federal Clean Water Act, handled up to 50 percent of The City's wastewater. Located on Bay Street and The Embarcadero near the northern waterfront, it is now used only about 2 percent to 6 percent of the year, during rainstorms, according to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. The facility has a treatment capacity of 150 million gallons per day.

■ **The Ocean-side Treatment Plant**, The City's newest facility, was completed in 1993. Located near Lake Merced, the plant treats 20 percent of San Francisco's sewage, about 17 million gallons per day and has a total capacity to treat 65 million gallons per day.



—City of San Francisco

of The City's sewage flowing to the Southeast plant, which would be partially rebuilt and upgraded.

"The staff has a bias toward that based on community meetings," SFPUC spokesman Tony Winnicker said. "But ultimately it's the commission that's going to determine the alternative we pursue."

Environmentalist Jennifer Clary, co-chair of the San Francisco organization Alliance for a Clean Waterfront, said her group is up about any plan until she hears

more details, but that she doesn't think keeping the plant — and the current flow levels — at the site is fair to Bayview residents.

"They'll say it's cheaper to keep this plant at its current site and do some cosmetic work and swear to the neighbors that you won't be able to smell it," Clary said. "A new plant would smell less, but the question is, if you've screwed the neighborhood this long and this much, how's the neighborhood going to trust you?" *Eslinger@examiner.com*

THE 3-MINUTE INTERVIEW

Linda Ronstadt

For someone whose career has spanned four decades and more than 40 albums reinventing genres of country, folk, Latin, contemporary pop and rock, the legendary songstress doesn't think young musicians can learn anything from her. The San Francisco resident recently sat down for a public chat about music at Herbst Theatre for City Art & Lectures Inc., a nonprofit that offers programs with leading figures in arts.

Fill in the blank here. 'I would categorize myself as a [blank] singer.'
I'm a chameleon. I'm a music mongrel. I do what I admire and sometimes I don't really succeed but I try my best. Sometimes it's horrible sleep [laughs] and you never know what it's going to be. **What can young musicians learn from you?** I don't know if they can learn from me, but it's important if you're going to reinvent the future that you put yourself in the tradition of music. You gotta learn the rules to break them.

What do you think of The City's music scene? I don't know anything about it because I don't get out much. I go to the opera — it's brilliant — and it's just better than good. I'm a big fan of Michael Tilson Thomas. To have this assemblage of musicians with that capable of a director, I'm just so glad to be living here.

What are you working on now? I've been hanging out with a group that I've known for 13 years, Los Sonsoles. They are just fabulous. They are two girls who sing the most elegant duet you've ever heard. They do traditional Mexican music called the fandango — not the place you get tickets from — and everybody just dances to it. I know it's a duet, but I'm trying to put a third part into it. I don't want to run it though. — *BW Lion*



SAN FRANCISCO'S NEXT MAYOR?

Each day until voters go to the polls Nov. 6, The Examiner lays odds on local figures beating Mayor Gavin Newsom

Name: Trent Difer

Odds: 2,500-1

Occupation: Clipboard holder

Why: The 49ers' backup quarterback fills in for injured QB Alex Smith on Sunday against the New York Giants. Difer won a Super Bowl with the Baltimore Ravens a few years ago with some poised and steady play, but win or lose Sunday, he's likely back to holding a clipboard.

■ For a complete list of The Examiner's potential candidates, visit examiner.com/figs/sf_next_mayor