



PRESIDIO POST

National Park/Natural Laboratory: Studying Pitch Canker in the Presidio Forest



Trust environmentalists and researchers from UC Davis inoculated Presidio pines to learn which are resistant to pitch canker.

By Peter Ehrlich
Chief Forester, Presidio Trust

The stately Monterey pine once grew along much of the California coast. Today, Monterey pine forests are among the rarest in the world. In California, they cover only 8,000 acres along the central coast region.

One reason for the decline of these forests from their native California soil is a relatively new fungal disease called pitch canker. Pitch canker attacks and, if allowed to progress, kills several species of pine tree, including the Monterey pine.

Although we do not have direct fossil evidence to tell us whether the Monterey pine is native to the Presidio area, these trees have a long-term history here, and currently comprise approximately 17 percent of our historic forest. They are resistant to wind and thrive in a cool, foggy climate, making them well suited to this region.

In planning the revitalization of the Presidio's forest, one

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A Fine View: Open Space Enhancement Underway

Two open space enhancement projects are moving ahead this summer in the Presidio. The first phase of enhancement work at Mountain Lake is scheduled



Inspiration Point

See OPEN SPACE, 5

Draft Presidio Trust Implementation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement Available

The Draft Presidio Trust Implementation Plan (PTIP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are now available for review. The full text of the PTIP and EIS is posted on the Presidio Trust's website (www.presidiotrust.gov). To request copies or a CD-Rom by mail, call (415) 561-5414 or e-mail ptip@presidiotrust.gov. The documents may also be reviewed in the Trust's library. The public review period for the PTIP and EIS ends on September 25, 2001. Written comments should be sent to: PTIP, c/o John Pelka, NEPA Compliance Manager, The Presidio Trust, 34 Graham Street, P.O. Box 29052, San Francisco, CA 94129-0052. See Calendar on page 3 for public meeting schedule.

Meet Presidio Trust Board Member Mike Heyman

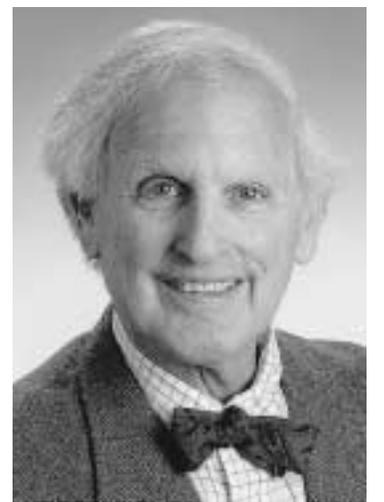
Mike Heyman is a lawyer and a scholar whose thoughtful manner and broad expertise acquired over many years of public service have made him an invaluable member of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors.

Heyman's involvement with the Presidio began in 1991, when he was asked to join the Presidio Council. This blue ribbon panel of national leaders in urban planning, environmental issues, historic preservation, and cultural affairs was formed by the GGNPA to bring national perspective to the planning process for the Presidio.

During his years on the Council, Heyman's fascination with the Presidio grew. He left the Council in May 1993 to work for Secretary of the Interior Babbitt, but remained informed about progress at the Presidio. He became the Secretary's designee on the Presidio Trust Board of Directors in spring of 2000.

Heyman, a professor of law at UC Berkeley, served as secretary of the Smithsonian Institute from 1994 to 2000. He began his legal service as chief law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren. He served as the chancellor of UC Berkeley from 1980 to 1990. He cur-

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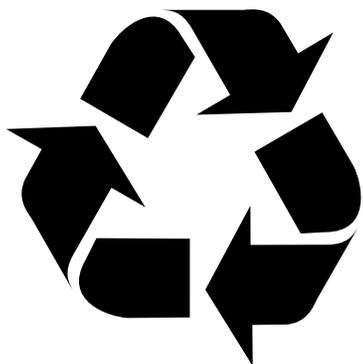
News Briefs

Presidio Trust and City of San Francisco Announce Electronic Recycling Event

The Presidio Trust has joined forces with the City's Hazardous Waste Management Program and Sanitary Fill Company to conduct San Francisco's first E-Waste recycling event. E-waste includes electronic equipment such as computers monitors, television sets, and stereos. This special one-day opportunity, scheduled for August 19, will enable Presidio and neighboring San Francisco residents to arrange to drop-off unneeded electronic equipment at no charge. The old equipment will either be reused or recycled, based on its condition.

"Many people don't realize that the cathode ray tubes in their computer monitors and television sets are considered hazardous waste," said Danielle Blank, sustainability program coordinator for the Trust. "This one-day program, the first of its kind in San Francisco, will give many San Franciscans an opportunity to dispose of equipment they don't want, in an environmentally responsible manner."

For information on the program, contact Danielle Blank at (415) 561-4195. To schedule an appointment for drop-off, call (415) 657-4025.



Participating in PTIP

All of us at the Trust were pleased that over 300 representatives of the community were able to attend the first public presentation of the Presidio Trust Implementation Plan (PTIP), held July 25 at the Golden Gate Club. This meeting marked the beginning of the public participation and comment period, which will extend through September 25, 2001.

The first public hearing on the draft plan will be held on September 11, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Golden Gate Club. At this meeting, Trust staff will present an overview of PTIP alternatives, and will take public comments for the record. A public meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors will be held on September 17, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Officers' Club. At this meeting, the public will have the opportunity to address the board with their views, and again have comments entered into the record. In addition to these two formal public hearings, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area Advisory Commission will receive public comments at their meeting on August 28 at the Cowell Theater, and the Trust will receive written comments



Jim Meadows
Executive Director

through September 25.

From the beginning, PTIP has been a public process, and we have received input that reflects a broad range of perspectives and opinions. When the public comment period ends in September, the Trust will respond to all comments in the record, and make necessary modifications to the plan prior to its adoption by the Trust Board of Directors.

The PTIP draft plan is an updated framework for the future of the Presidio. As a steward of the land, the Trust must create conditions that protect and preserve the park. The draft plan, which we encourage you to review, assures that:

- open space will be increased
 - built space will be decreased
 - cultural and educational programs will be expanded, making the Presidio a center for arts, education, and innovation
 - there will be no net loss of housing on the Presidio
- We will create a resource for the present and the future, and a treasure for all generations.

PTIP EIS Reviews Transportation Impacts on Presidio Neighbors

Presidio neighbors have expressed interest in the plan's impact on traffic and circulation in neighborhoods surrounding the Presidio. In response, Trust planning and transportation experts have conducted an extensive analysis of these issues, including a study of intersections both inside and outside the Presidio, and have found ways to mitigate adverse effects. The analysis focused on potential changes at the Presidio over the next 20 years, and identified possible changes to local roadways, transit services, parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, with a goal of minimizing traffic by encouraging travel by transit, biking and walking.

Recommendations in the PTIP draft EIS focus on reducing congestion within the Presidio and its

surrounding neighborhoods, while improving safety and access. The draft plan calls for the creation of a Presidio-wide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program to encourage tenants, residents and visitors to leave their cars at home and use alternative modes of transportation. TDM measures include carpool/vanpool programs, establishment of a transit hub, parking management, and other actions that would help minimize transportation-related impacts in and around the Presidio. The new Presidio Free Shuttle service can help accomplish these goals, and is now running a circular route through the park on a 20- to 30-minute schedule.

The transportation analysis showed that, although

vehicle trips will increase as park improvements continue, the suggested programs would reduce the effects so that circulation through the Presidio and surrounding areas is acceptable even during peak travel hours.

Physical improvements planned to handle traffic flow safely include provision of bicycle and pedestrian pathways, and the addition of traffic signals or stop signs at busy intersections. New turn lanes, and restriping of intersections will also help to enhance safety and efficiency.

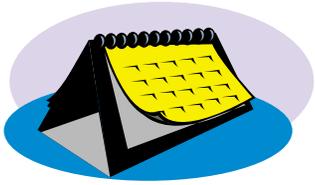
In addition, the Trust is working cooperatively with the National Park Service on a Trails and Bikeways Master Plan for the Presidio. Several public workshops, meetings and visitor surveys have been conducted to solicit input on

this important plan. A draft master plan and corresponding Environmental Assessment (EA) will be released for further public review and comment later this year.

A summary of the transportation and circulation analysis, and complete list of mitigation measures, can be found in the PTIP Draft EIS. The Trust released the Draft EIS on July 25, 2001 for public review and comment. Members of the public are encouraged to review the Draft EIS and Draft Plan and provide comments to the Presidio Trust either in writing or verbally at one of two public hearings on this project schedule for this September (see www.presidiotrust.gov for more information).



August Calendar



Every WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY

Habitat Restoration Programs

Participate in natural history! The native plant and wildlife communities of the Presidio represent the natural heritage of San Francisco. But the Presidio's native habitats need the help of human hands to stay healthy. Come help restore the natural gems of the park. Habitat restoration programs run from 9 to 12. Presidio Native Plant Nursery programs run from 1 to 4. For more information call (415) 561-4755 or e-mail volunteer@ggnpa.org.



Every TUESDAY

Ladies' Golf Clinic

6 - 7 p.m.
Presidio Golf Course
Cost is \$15. Call (415) 561-4661 X4 to sign up.



Every THURSDAY

Beginners' Golf Clinic

6 - 7 p.m.
Presidio Golf Course
Cost is \$15. Call (415) 561-4661 X4 to sign up.

3-28 AUGUST

Face Time: 17 Years of the San Francisco International Film Festival

Tuesday through Saturday, 1 to 6 p.m.
Photographs by Pamela Gentile. 39th Exposure Gallery in the San Francisco Film Centre, 39 Mesa St., Studio 4 (basement level). For information, visit www.exposure39.com, or call (415) 561-3123.

4, 5, 7 AUGUST

The Guns of San Francisco

1 to 2 p.m.
Learn how the gun emplacements around the Presidio were used for the defense of the harbor during World War II. Meet docent Sheldon Smith for an illustrated presentation at Battery Chamberlin, Baker Beach. Reservations suggested: (415) 561-4323.



8 AUGUST

Inspiration Point On-Site Tour

5 to 7:30 p.m.
Learn more about the Trust project to restore the historic view at Inspiration Point. Meet Trust environmental experts across from the Presidio Golf Course Clubhouse. To RSVP, call (415) 561-5307.

12 AUGUST

Houses, Heroes and History

1 to 2:30 p.m.
Explore the heart of the Presidio and view some of its classic historical buildings representing many architectural styles. Learn about the history of this former army post, and the plans for its future. Meet docent Jim Farquharson at the William Penn Mott Jr. Visitor Center on Montgomery Street, Main Post. Reservations recommended: call (415) 561-4323.



12 AUGUST

Mount Sutro Tree Tour

2 to 4 p.m.
Tour the forest atop Mount Sutro and see this open space reserve that is home to native plants and many of the city's best view. Meet at 500 Parnassus, opposite the UCSF Medical Center. Sponsored by Friends of the Urban Forest. For information or reservations, call (415) 561-6890 X108.



14&28 AUGUST

National Cemetery Walk

10 a.m. to noon
The San Francisco National Cemetery is the final resting place for a Union spy, an Indian scout, Buffalo Soldiers, and 35 Medal of Honor winners. The walk is one mile with a steep uphill climb. Rain cancels. Meet docent Galen Dillman at the Cemetery entrance gate, Lincoln Blvd. near Sheridan Ave. Reservations required: call (415) 561-4323.



18 AUGUST

Horseshoes and Carrots

Noon to 1:30 p.m.
Tour the Presidio's historic stables and meet the mounted Park Police's four-legged allies. Great activity for children; bring a carrot if you like. Note: this program ends at the stables, a 1-mile walk from the Visitor's Center. Meet docent Denise Chapleau at the William Penn Mott Visitor Center on Montgomery Street, Main Post. Reservations required; call (415) 561-4323.



18 AUGUST

Sounds Like Summer

10 a.m. to noon
Use your ears in this workshop to get up close and personal with nature. Join sound designer Amy Hunter and naturalist Paul Matzner for this special outdoor walk to listen in on the sounds of summer with a specialized microphone. For families with children ages 7 and up. Fee: \$6 per person. Call Crissy Field Center for reservations and information: (415) 561-7690.

18 AUGUST

Trashformations

1 to 3:30 p.m.
Join architect Shirl Buss and industrial design student Beth Nahom in this introduction to ecological design, and all the ways trash is being transformed into tools for the living. Then design and make your own project using some recycled goods and materials that will be provided. For families with children ages 7 and up. Fee: \$6 per person. Call Crissy Field Center for reservations and information: (415) 561-7690.

19 AUGUST

Electronic Equipment Recycling Day

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
A collaborative program of the Presidio Trust and the City of San Francisco. Presidio residents and tenants, and residents of selected city areas, can call (415) 657-4025 to schedule an appointment to drop off unneeded computers, televisions, stereo equipment, etc. for reuse or recycling. For more information, contact Danielle Blank of the Trust at (415) 561-4195.

19 AUGUST

Pedaling the Presidio

1 to 2 p.m.
Explore history and scenery on this moderately strenuous bicycle ride through the Presidio. Helmet is required. A Crissy Field Center "Presidio Treks" program. Meet ranger James Osborne at the Crissy Field Center. For information, call the Crissy Field Center at (415) 561-7690.



25 AUGUST

The Changing Tides of Environmental Values

10 to 11 a.m.
Crissy Field is an ideal place to learn how environmental perspectives have changed over the centuries. Learn how cultures, technology and values have shaped this beautiful place by the bay. A Crissy Field Center "Presidio Treks" program. For more information, call the Crissy Field Center at (415) 561-7690.

28 AUGUST

Golden Gate National Recreation Area Advisory Commission Meeting – PTIP Public Hearing

7:30 p.m.
The Draft Presidio Trust Implementation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement will be a topic of discussion. Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center. For information call (415) 561-5414.

11 SEPTEMBER

PTIP Public Hearing

6 to 9 p.m.
Plan to attend the first formal public hearing on the draft Presidio Trust Implementation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Attendees will have an opportunity to learn about the plan and enter their comments into the record. Golden Gate Club. For information, call (415) 561-5414.

17 SEPTEMBER

Presidio Trust Public Board Meeting – PTIP Public Hearing

1 to 4 p.m.
A public meeting of the Presidio Trust Board of Directors will feature information on the draft Presidio Trust Implementation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Attendees will have an opportunity to enter their comments into the record. Presidio Officers' Club, Main Post. For information, call (415) 561-5414.



Letterman Hospital:

A Historical Overview

by *Randolph Delehanty, Ph.D.*
Presidio Trust Historian

In the mid-nineteenth century, the scalpel joined the sword as a tool of modern warfare. Major Jonathan Letterman, after whom the hospital at the Presidio was renamed in 1911, was the medical director of the Army of the Potomac. A founding father of military medicine, Letterman organized forward first-aid stations, mobile field hospitals, and ambulance services for the evacuation of wounded soldiers during the Civil War.



The Presidio in 1930 showing old Letterman Hospital to the left center, the O'Reilly Avenue officers' row and parade ground in the center, and East Hospital top right. Letterman Army Medical Center and Letterman Army Institute of Research were built in the 1960s and 1970s on the site of East Hospital and the parade ground.

National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives, Lloyd 30th Infantry Album

At the turn of the century, the U.S. Army General Hospital at the Presidio of San Francisco was established to cope with the health problems of the 22,000 troops at Camp Merritt, a cantonment of tents hastily set up in the sand dunes of the Richmond District south of the Presidio. Built between 1899 and 1902, it was a 300-bed, pavilion-type hospital consisting of 10 wards, with administrative and support buildings arranged around a rectangular central green and linked by covered corridors. Today, twelve surviving buildings of this complex have been reborn as the Thoreau Center for Sustainability.

The hospital served troops in the western states and those



Letterman physicians and nurses in about 1901.

National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives, J. R. Clark Collection

Letterman Hospital medical ward at Christmas in about 1901.

National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives, Letterman Album

returning from Hawaii, the Philippines, China, Siberia, the Panama Canal Zone, and Alaska. In 1901, Letterman was the first army general hospital to employ women of the Army Nurse Corps. Civilian San Franciscans were admitted to the hospital in the aftermath of the earthquake and fire of 1906, and medical officers from the Presidio took charge of sanitation in the post-quake refugee camps.

By 1918, Letterman Hospital was the Army's largest general hospital, and had opened a School of Nursing. Letterman cared for many of the wounded returning from Europe during World War I. Staff physicians developed orthopedic devices including the Letterman Leg, and also pioneered the field of physical therapy.

To deal with the sudden influx of returning wounded, East Hospital, an orderly array of 21 frame buildings which more than doubled the patient facilities, was built east of the (since built over) O'Reilly Avenue parade ground. By 1921, Letterman hospital had 56 permanent buildings and 29 temporary ones staffed by 41 medical officers, 58 nurses, and 484 enlisted men.

Letterman was a frenetic place during World War II, serving the sick and wounded from far-flung international battlefields. Its 48 acres, including a temporary Crissy Annex, had grown to 100 buildings with 3,500 beds, making it the largest military hospital in the nation.

By 1944, the Army's Hospital Train Unit was dispatching as many as four full trains a day from the Presidio, transferring the wounded to hospitals closer to their homes. In 1945, its peak year, Letterman admitted 72,000 patients. Letterman

also served troops returning from the Korean War from 1950 to 1953.

In 1960, the Army began planning for a more modern hospital. The East Hospital complex was demolished and in 1969 a 10-story, 550-bed, reinforced concrete facility opened on the site. The new Letterman Army Medical Center trained a quarter of the Army's medical specialists. It served the wounded and POWs returning from Vietnam.

In 1971, the Army opened the adjoining Letterman Army Institute of Research. It consisted of four concrete buildings that housed research in artificial blood, laser physics, and the treatment of trauma. During these years, the Army began demolishing parts of the

1899 quadrangle to build housing for nurses and enlisted men; the remaining historic buildings housed support services. By the late 1980s, Letterman served mainly military retirees and their dependents. Both the hospital and the research institute were deactivated in 1995.

Letterman's history and contributions to medical and military history are shining and significant. Neither architecturally significant nor up to contemporary seismic standards, it is expected that the 1960s Letterman complex will soon be removed to make way for the Letterman Digital Arts Center. This change guarantees the vitality of this site for years to come.

Do you have stories or memories about Letterman Hospital? If so, we'd like to hear them. Please call Dianna Waggoner at (415) 561-7636, or email dwaggoner@presidiotrust.gov.



Shuttle Service Debut

Get on the Shuttle and Ride!

The Presidio Trust is pleased to be sponsoring the free park shuttle service. The shuttle is designed to make it easy for visitors, residents and tenants to move around the Presidio without their cars. It runs a loop route around the park, with stops at residential areas, offices, and natural, historical and recreational destinations within the Presidio. The shuttle also links the Presidio with transit options including Muni and Golden Gate Transit.

The shuttle program will have two phases. During the introductory phase from

August through early 2002, shuttle buses will operate every 20 to 30 minutes, seven days a week, running a single one-way loop. The map, viewable on the Trust website at www.presidiotrust.gov, shows the route and stop locations. Hours of service vary slightly on weekends. See the schedule for details.

The permanent service, beginning early 2002, will expand routes for additional rider convenience. The Trust has ordered clean-running compressed natural gas (CNG) buses for the permanent service. CNG vehicles offer many advantages over conventionally fueled vehicles, including lower air emissions and less noise.

For information, or to offer comments or sugges-

tions, call the Trust at (415) 561-5300. You can also visit our website link at www.presidiotrust.gov/shuttle.

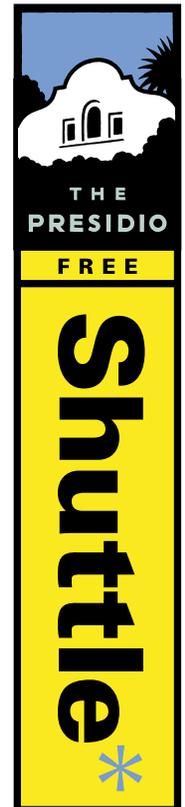
***In Search of a Name**
Help us name the shuttle service! Our clean-running compressed natural gas (CNG) buses will arrive in early 2002, and we're look-

ing for the perfect name for this convenient, environmentally responsible service.

If your name is the winner, you will win a great grand prize! And the first 50 entries will receive a gift just for entering. Send your idea to: Presidio Trust Public Affairs Department, 34 Graham St.,

P.O. Box 29052, San Francisco, CA 94129 or email shuttle@presidiotrust.gov.

SCHEDULE		
Days	Times	Frequency
Monday thru Friday	AM Peak Period 7:00 - 10:00 am	Every 20 minutes
	Midday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Every 30 minutes
	PM Peak Period 4:00 - 7:00 pm	Every 20 minutes
	Evening 7:00 - 9:00 pm	Every 30 minutes
Saturday, Sunday & Holidays	All Day 9:00 am - 6:00 pm	Every 30 minutes



Natural Laboratory continued from P. 1

key goal is to increase the ratio of native tree species to the predominant non-native eucalyptus trees introduced by Major Jones in his historic planting project. However, the spread of pitch canker fungus throughout this region has raised the issue of whether Monterey pines should be included in future plantings.

Fortunately, experts in plant pathology, insect biology, and environmental science are looking for ways to stop the spread of pitch canker, and the Presidio will play a role in advancing their research.

Dr. Matteo Garbelloto of UC Berkeley has begun a study of the mechanisms by which pitch canker is spread. Theorizing that this fungus is not only passed by insects, but also through the air, Garbelloto will place "traps" in the Presidio forest. These traps will be used to collect insects and tree parts that may carry spores in order to determine the most frequent method of fungus spread.

Researchers at UC Davis, led by Dr. Tom Gordon, are taking another approach to the problem. Some Monterey pines seem to be resistant to pitch canker, and Gordon's team wants to develop a resistant strain. Such a fungus-resistant pine strain could be used in our reforestation efforts, and others throughout the state, perhaps as little as two years in the future. The researchers are planning to test trees here in the Presidio to check for resistance. Once they understand the characteristics that help trees resist infection, they hope to develop and grow a type of tree that would remain healthy even if exposed to the disease.

The Presidio's value as a natural resource is widely recognized. I am gratified that our forest is also a resource to promote scientific research that can potentially benefit forests across our state and our nation.

...one key goal is to increase the ratio of native tree species to the predominant non-native eucalyptus trees...

Heyman continued from P. 1

rently heads the Center for the Study of Higher Education on the Berkeley campus.

Heyman envisions changes in the Presidio that will increase its relevance to the region, and to visitors around the world.

"This is such a splendid place," Heyman says of the Presidio. "I am proud to be involved in shaping such a wonderful and unique resource." He is also proud of his role as a liaison between the Trust and the National Park Service. "These two agencies cooperate on so many issues, and I believe our working relationship has improved dramatically over the last couple years," he said.

Heyman spends his limited free time with his wife of 50 years, son and daughter-in-law, and his three grandchildren. He is currently enjoying refreshing his knowledge of early American history.

Open Space continued from P. 1



to begin in mid-August. Just a golf course away, the Inspiration Point Viewshed Enhancement project will focus on restoring the site's historic view of San Francisco Bay. At each site, targeted non-native trees and vegetation will be removed, and thousands of native grasses, shrubs, and trees will be planted.

The approved plan for restoring Mountain Lake calls for dredging to improve the quality of the lake, and replacement of the eucalyptus trees with native woodland. A new interpretive trail will be established along the east shore, and improvements made along the lake's former east arm.

Monterey cypress trees will be planted along the south west edge of the golf course. Beginning in late August, exotic weeds and 86 eucalyptus trees will be removed; four of the largest eucalyptus trees will be removed at a later date. This fall, much of the area will be replanted with native willows, alders, oaks, and other woodland species.

The striking historic view from Inspiration Point will be restored when, beginning August 20, approximately 117 non-historic trees that are currently obstructing the view are removed. Revegetation with native species will span a period of two years, beginning this winter.

Presidio Trust staff will be on hand during tree removal periods to provide information to visitors. Brochures and information boards posting the latest project updates will be available at both sites. These projects are the joint effort of the Presidio Trust, the National Park Service, and the Golden Gate National Parks Association.

For more information about the Mountain Lake Project, please contact Michael Boland at (415) 561-2702. For more information about Inspiration Point, please contact Sharon Farrell at (415) 561-5307.



Tenant Profile:

Just Think

By Dianna Waggoner

"I can't believe this!" A dozen teenagers crowd around a television to watch a video created to recruit actors for a Pepsi commercial. Images of handsome, white toothed teenagers fill the screen as a narrator describes the physical characteristics of actors sought by PepsiCo to sell their product.

"You have to be good looking, extremely good looking," one girl at the table shouts. "No ugly people," another responds. "That's not fair. It's not real." The room fills with laughter, and comments about who's cute and who isn't.

One youngster sneers, "They said Hispanic-looking teens, not real Hispanics, but if you look like one, that's good enough."

From a corner of the room, one boy folds his arms. After a bit of prompting from a young man barely older than himself, he announces his verdict quietly. "They're creating a stereotype."

Lesson Learned

These teenagers are participating in a program sponsored by the Just Think Foundation, located in the Film Centre building on the Presidio. By the end of the summer, they will have considered many such media-related issues, and produced content for a web site that will support "Senior High," a new show set to air on PBS this winter. In the process, they will learn how to analyze the constant stream of rap lyrics, video games, music, films, magazines, and television and more television which fills their lives.

Elana Rosen, executive director and co-founder of Just Think, explains, "We're not trying to kill the fantasy. We're trying to help kids

understand the difference between reality and fantasy."

Rosen understands the media from the inside, having produced documentaries for public television for many years. She decided she could make a difference by teaching kids how to understand what they were seeing, so they could make more informed choices.

The foundation offers school classes, and after school workshops on topics such as "Media Images, the Body and the Self" and "Dissin' the Hype About Smoking, Drinking and Violence" in sessions that average twelve weeks or less.

"On a superficial level, kids understand that ads are trying to sell them something," Rosen says, "but they don't understand how messages can influence their thoughts and feelings."

One technique used to reveal media tactics is to strip the sound away from commercials or videos, or to add different music, and discuss how that changes the message and its impact.

Just Think has spread its messages all over San Francisco, as well as across other states and countries. Rosen helped produce a widely-used educational curriculum whose title states the foundation's lofty goal: "Changing the World Through Media Education."

Rosen believes that the best way to help kids understand the media is for them to create their own videos and web sites. It also quickly became clear to her that Just Think's programs needed to be brought out to the students. So, the foundation bought a big yellow 1978 school bus. Josh Lee, who doubles as director of technology and bus driver, describes it as having "100,000 or maybe 200,000 miles on it".

Step inside, however, and

all vestiges of the 70's are banished by half a dozen colorful iMacs, each a self-contained computer lab. Youngsters stream out of the bus with digital cameras, and return to edit the results. They fold up the tables, shove the chairs against the wall, flop onto the blue carpet, pull down a screen behind the driver's seat and watch their own movies.

The foundation currently owns three buses, including one with air conditioning and a shorter body to accommodate the heat and twisty mountain roads of Hawaii, where it went this summer. Three teachers have traveled to Bhutan to help students produce a five-minute documentary. A training session with students in Yugoslavia



Just Think participants at a recent training program held in Harlem.

resulted in six videos that were shown at Sundance Film Festival. Other student films have been aired on ABC, NBC, CBS and the Disney Channel.

"Then there's the stuff we never predicted," says Elana Rosen. Like Dominic Bannister, a member of Just Think's East Palo Alto program a few years ago.

Now he's a computer science student at San Francisco State University, mentoring teenagers at Just Think while earning a salary and tuition. "What about you?" he gently quizzes one of the quieter kids. "What do you think?"

It's the same question that Elana Rosen has been asking youngsters for years.

2001 The Presidio Trust Board Members:

Donald Fisher
Jennifer L. Hernandez
Ira Michael Heyman
Amy Meyer
Mary Murphy
William Reilly
Toby Rosenblatt

The Presidio Post is published monthly by The Presidio Trust, P.O. Box 29052, 34 Graham Street San Francisco, CA 94129-0052

Your questions and comments are welcome. Send them to: Jacquie Michels, Editor (415) 561-2764 jmichels@presidiotrust.gov

Visit our website: www.presidiotrust.gov



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