



PRESIDIO POST

How Dedication and Community Spirit Brought Sixty New Trees to the National Cemetery



Trees were planted by volunteers from Friends of the Urban Forest.

Barbara Birchim loves the Presidio. Her father served as an MP here, and met her mother here. She was married in the Interfaith Chapel on the post, had her children in the old Letterman hospital, and saw her parents buried in the National Cemetery. When her husband was named an MIA in Vietnam, a plaque dedicated to his memory was also placed in the cemetery.

When visiting the cemetery last year, Birchim noticed that some trees were being removed. Additional investigation revealed that more than 60 trees had been lost over the past two years to storms and disease. "I immediately pictured a partnership...veterans helping veterans to restore the cemetery's tree population. I guaranteed the cemetery 60 new trees, which they agreed to maintain. Then I set about making it happen."

Birchim met with veterans' groups around the country, starting with a special operations group based in Las Vegas of which her husband had been a member. "I offered people a chance to participate in improving the National Cemetery," she said. "I offered a live tree to be placed in the cemetery for \$100. People jumped on it. I got the money I needed to buy the trees."

See **COMMUNITY SPIRIT**, 5

Looking Forward: An Interview with Craig Middleton — Presidio Trust Acting Executive Director

Named acting executive director of the Trust following former executive director Jim Meadow's departure, Craig Middleton plans to continue moving the Trust forward while a search is conducted for a permanent director. He had the following thoughts about the challenges of the coming year.

PP What are the main challenges you see coming in the year ahead?

See **LOOKING FORWARD**, 5

President Bush Reappoints Three Presidio Trust Board Members

The White House announced that President George W. Bush has re-appointed three longtime San Francisco residents to the Presidio Trust Board of Directors for second four-year terms. The re-appointed board members are: Toby Rosenblatt, president of Founders Investments, Ltd.; Mary Murphy, a partner in the law firm Farella, Braun & Martel, LLP; and Donald Fisher, founder and chairman of The Gap, Inc. The new four-year terms will expire in 2005.

Rosenblatt, Murphy and Fisher, with four other members, were originally appointed by President Bill Clinton to serve on the Presidio Trust Board in 1997. Rosenblatt is currently board chair, and Murphy serves as vice-chair. The seven-member board has oversight responsibility for the Presidio Trust, which was created to preserve and protect the Presidio in cooperation with the National Park Service.

Six members of the board are appointed by the President of the United States, and can serve a maximum of eight years. The seventh member is the Secretary of the Interior or the secretary's designee.



Toby Rosenblatt



Mary Murphy



Donald Fisher

Save the Date!

Saturday, February 23, 2002

Main Post Open House

Learn about the Main Post – past, present, and future. Walk through historic buildings, enjoy hard hat tours and seminars, and participate in activities for visitors of all ages as you learn about plans to revitalize and "green" the Main Post. Explore the past as you consider plans for the future of the "heart of the Presidio" at this day-long event! (More information in the February issue.)



Welcome to 2002!

A New Year of Planning for the Future

2002 will be a year of substantial progress in planning for the Presidio's future. The general planning process that has been underway since July 2000 will be concluded. We will also work on other planning efforts, both new and ongoing, that will demonstrate our heightened commitment to the qualities that make the Presidio a special place. As the National Park Service stated in their PTIP comment letter:

See **PLANNING**, 2

Inside

This newsletter is printed on 100% tree-free paper that contains 90% post-consumer waste.

Director's Column

A New Year, A New Direction 2

News Briefs

Planting Event Marks Beginning of Reforestation Project in the Presidio 2

Calendar

What's Happening on the Presidio 3

New Exhibit

Japan at the Dawn of the Modern Age: The Colors of Progress 4

Transportation Update

Welcome New PresidiGo Buses 5

Tenant Profile

San Francisco Conservation Corps 6



News Briefs

Planting Event Marks Beginning of Reforestation Project in the Presidio



Seventy-two Monterey cypress seedlings were planted December 10 near the Presidio's Arguello gate, the site of one of the park's four key historic forest stands. The planting marks the beginning of a park-wide reforestation program planned by the Presidio Trust to restore the aging Presidio forest planted more than 100 years ago by the U.S. Army.

"The key historic forest stands are row plantings, monocultures of either Monterey pine, Monterey cypress or blue gum eucalyptus," said Peter Ehrlich, chief forester for the Trust. "They are considered 'character defining' in terms of their significance to the Historic Landmark Status of the Presidio."

Moore Foundation Announces Major Gift to Support International Conservation Effort

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, a Presidio tenant, have announced a groundbreaking gift of \$261 million to support Conservation International (CI). The gift will help fund CI's global initiative to stop species extinction in certain biodiversity hot spots, and to protect large areas of major tropical wilderness.

The Moore Foundation's gift is the largest ever made to a private conservation group, and will be given over 10 years.

A New Year, A New Direction

The beginning of this New Year finds the Presidio Trust poised for some significant changes. Chief among these was our announcement in mid-December that Trust executive director Jim Meadows would step down from his position after four years of service.

Jim's direct and effective management style helped this organization move from a concept to a reality in a very short time. He formed a great management team, and set wheels in motion for historic preservation, environmental protection, public programming, leasing and much more here on the Presidio.

As the Trust leaves its infancy and enters organizational adulthood, we will be focusing on new areas, and forming new collaborations with neighbors, community groups and national organizations. These alliances will be critical as we introduce a final plan for the future of the park this spring. The board determined that these new challenges call for a



Tony Rosenblatt
Board Chairman

different approach by our management.

The Board of Directors has selected Craig Middleton, deputy director for government affairs, programming and administration, to act as acting director of the Trust as we conduct a search for a permanent director. Many of you know Craig, who was the first employee of the Trust. He served on the Presidio Council, a blue-ribbon panel formed by the Golden Gate National Parks Association to plan for the Presidio's transition from military post to national park. Craig has a broad knowledge of the organization, a deep respect for its staff, and a genuine love for this park. His experience will be invaluable as we move ahead in the coming transition period.

My fellow board members and I remain dedicated to the successful accomplishment of our mission and charge. We look forward to your input and participation as we move into 2002 and beyond.

LoBue & Majdalany Program Will Boost Presidio Community

LoBue & Majdalany, which specializes in helping non-profit organizations maximize their potential and streamline their operations, is now reaching out to help non-profit tenants of the Presidio do the same. The company is planning to develop a web-driven technical assistance center through which non-profit tenants of the Presidio can

share ideas and expertise, expand their networks, and improve their operations.

"The resource center will take a project-based approach to helping non-profits deal with difficult issues such as tax laws, lowering operating costs and improving efficiency," said Michael LoBue, president of LoBue & Majdalany. "We will also try to deepen the professional alliances between non-profit and for-profit park tenants by match-

ing one organization's need with another's expertise."

The service center will begin by soliciting input from non-profit tenants about their projects, problems and priorities. In January or February, Michael LoBue hopes to have the parameters and infrastructure of the center in place. For more information, call (415) 561-6110 or visit www.presidio-nonprofit.org/

New Café Opens in

Presidio Officers' Club

A new café has joined the Presidio community. The Officers' Club Café featuring The Lost Ladle is now open Monday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Presidio Officers' Club. The café features sandwiches, hearty soups, salads, pastries, coffee and more. Drop in for a meal or snack, and check out the Exhibition Store, sponsored by the Asian Art Museum.

Planning continued from P. 1

"The Presidio's unique park character – its significant cultural, natural, scenic, and recreational resources – must be the cornerstone that guides our vision."

Among the interesting planning projects upcoming this year is a wrap-up of Main Post planning that will address landscape changes, parking, and circulation. Planning workshops and design sessions held over the past several years have generated mountains of material that will be compiled into a proposed site plan that will be subject to cost estimates and environmental review, with continued public input.

The Historic Forest Characterization Study will also be concluded. This study describes the Presidio forest, and the features that make it unique and historically significant. The plan will also specify how our foresters propose to preserve each "stand" of trees for future generations. Overall, this reforestation project promises to be one of the largest (over 250 acres!) and most interesting historic preservation projects ever undertaken.

In the coming year, Trust planners will tackle additional pilot projects related to the park's adopted Vegetation Management Plan, and in-depth technical studies public workshops, and environmental review regarding restoration of the Tennessee Hollow watershed. Trails and Bikeways planning will be concluded, as will a traffic safety study. Our staff will continue working on transportation demand management, parking management, transit services, use of reclaimed water, and sustainable landscape practices.

Our staff will also work with colleagues at the National Park Service to determine the feasibility of placing a large museum within an existing building south of Mason Street, and a smaller museum in Building 640, which is just west of the Commissary on Mason Street. The Trust, Park Service, and Golden Gate National Parks Association will also initiate a study regarding the long-term health of Crissy Marsh.

Please call the planning staff at 561-5414 if you would like to receive updates or notices regarding these and other planning projects coming up in the new year!



Calendar

Every **WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY**

Habitat Restoration Programs

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.

Habitat restoration programs run from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Presidio Native Plant Nursery programs run from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.. For more information call (415) 561-4755 or e-mail volunteer@ggnpa.org.



NOW THROUGH **21** JANUARY 2002

At the Presidio Exhibition Meiji: Japan at the Dawn of the Modern Age

Woodblock prints depict Japan's rapid "Westernization" and transformation into a modern nation-state during the Meiji era, 1868 to 1912. The prints are selected from the Jean S. and Frederic A. Sharf Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Presidio Officer's Club, 50 Moraga Avenue at Arguello Boulevard. Hours: daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Closed Tuesdays and holidays. For information, visit www.atthepresidio.org. To reserve tickets, call TicketWeb at (800) 965-4827. See Page 4 for Moraga Series information.



NOW THROUGH **27** JAN 2002

6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Wed & Thu
7:00 p.m. to midnight Fri & Sat

Euphorium

The show melds multiple audio and visual techniques to create a three-dimensional interactive dreamscape that participants walk through. At Presidio Building 920 on Mason Street facing Crissy Field. All tickets \$15. For tickets, reservations and information, call (415) 332-9454 or visit www.antenna-theater.org.

NOW THROUGH **31** JANUARY 2002

Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and by appointment

Photography Exhibit at the Presidio Alliance

This free exhibit features the photography of Tim Baskerville. Presidio Alliance offices at 563 Ruger Street. For information or appointments, call (415) 561-3993.

NOW THROUGH **31** MARCH 2002

Exhibit: The Natural World as Viewed by Young People

A collection of children's art and poetry from the annual River of Words contest, on display in the Crissy Field Center Gathering Room at no charge. For information, call (415) 561-7752.

NOW THROUGH **5** MAY 2002

Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mathematica Exhibit at the Exploratorium

Complex mathematical concepts come to life in a classic exhibit by Charles and Ray Eames. See 512 light bulbs performing multiplication, and 30,000 randomly cascading plastic balls form a bell curve. Special events and demonstrations will be featured. The Exploratorium at 360 Lyon Street. For information call (415) EXP-LORE.

10 JANUARY

Thursday, 7 p.m.

SFMOMA and San Francisco Film Society Film Series Screening of TRON, 1982

At SFMOMA's Wattis Theater. TRON introduced techniques and imagery that influenced the direction of film production. Director Steve Lisberger will attend this rare screening. General admission tickets \$15; advance purchase is recommended. Tickets can be purchased at the SFMOMA admissions desk, or online at www.sffs.org or at www.ticketweb.com. For information call (415) 931-FILM.

12 JANUARY

Saturday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Candy Caps and Slippery Jacks

Walk the Presidio and learn to identify the wild mushrooms that grow under the pines. Find out how to identify the most common types, and discover the relationship between trees and mushrooms. For families with children ages six and up; \$8 per person. Rain cancels. Co-sponsored by the Mycological Society of San Francisco. Meet at the Crissy Field Center. For information, call (415) 561-7752.

13 JANUARY

Sunday, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Up a Creek

Discover the continuing transformation of Lobos Creek Valley as you follow part of San Francisco's last free-flowing stream from the ocean through restored dune habitats on an easy one-mile walk. A Crissy Field Center program. Meet ranger Janice Cooper at Crissy Field Center at Halleck and Mason streets. For reservations call (415) 561-7752.



19 JANUARY

Saturday, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Twisters and Tornadoes: Weather Workshop

Cook up a hurricane in the Urban Ecology Lab, and learn how clouds form, how rain is made and why hurricanes happen. Participants will make weather "happen" right in the lab. For families with children ages seven and up; \$8 per person. At the Crissy Field Center. For information, call (415) 561-7752.

19 JANUARY

Saturday, 11 a.m.

Special Winter Performance: She Shells with Deborah Lewis

Enjoy Deborah Lewis as she creates a stage full of underwater creatures through dance. Free and appropriate for all ages. Participation on a first-come, first-served basis; seating is limited. At the Crissy Field Center. For information call (415) 561-7752.

20 JANUARY

Sunday, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Rotten Eggs: The Science of Decomposition

Learn about decomposition of organic materials by examining the roles of fungus and bacteria. Dig into a sample landfill to see what happens to buried trash. For families with children ages seven and up; \$8 per person. At the Crissy Field Center. For information, call (415) 561-7752.

20 JANUARY

Sunday, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

People Make a Difference

Parks are ideal places for demonstrating how individuals influence society. Learn about some of these people and their contributions on this easy hike with ranger James Osborne. Free; appropriate for all ages. Meet at the Crissy Field Center. For information, call (415) 561-7752.



22 JANUARY

Tuesday, 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Tennessee Hollow Watershed

Explore El Polin Spring on this lunch-hour walk. You'll hear stories about the history of this unique ecosystem, where fresh water flows, a pioneer woman lived, and fertility myths were born. Learn about plans to restore this riparian corridor on this one-mile walk. Wear boots or shoes suitable for climbing. Meet docent at Inspiration Point off Arguello Boulevard. Reservations suggested at (415) 561-4323.

26 JANUARY

Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

Quail Habitat Restoration Program

Join Presidio Trust experts to plant dune strawberry, coyote bush and Indian paintbrush. Volunteers are needed to help restore fragile quail habitats! For more information, call Damien Raffa at (415) 561-4449.



26 JANUARY

Saturday, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Tule Boats and Cattail Rope

Join Ohlone instructor Rico Miranda to learn about two wetland plants used by his ancestors for thousands of years to sail the bay. Build your own miniature tule boat, test it in the waters off the shore, and take it home. You'll also learn to make rope from a cattail plant. For families with children ages six and up; \$8 per person. Meet at the Crissy Field Center. For information, call (415) 561-7552.

27 JANUARY

Sunday, 1 p.m.

Concert at the Main Post Chapel

Minori Yata and Shigeki Asakawa perform "Poetry in Space," featuring Japanese instruments, poetry, songs and jazz. \$10 charge at the door. For more information, call Jan Chaffee at (415) 441-2343.

3 FEBRUARY

Sunday, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Presidio Golf Course Super Bowl Party

Join your friends and neighbors at the Presidio Cafe to watch the Super Bowl on the big screen and enjoy drink specials, raffle prizes and a special menu. For information or reservations call (415) 561-4661.





Japan at the Dawn of the Modern Age:

The Colors of Progress

By Randolph Delehanty, Ph.D.
Presidio Trust Historian

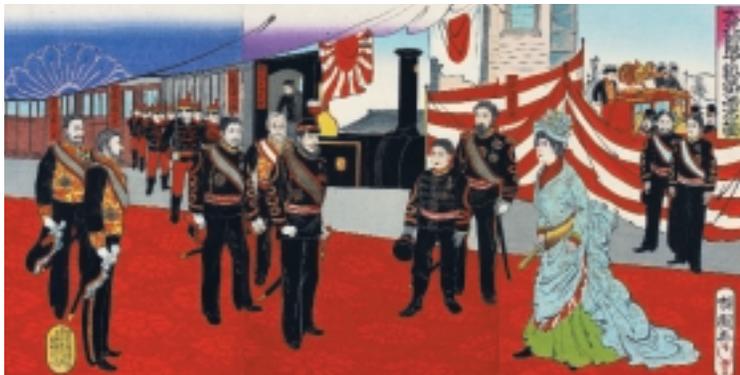
At *The Presidio's* second exhibition will close on Monday, January 21, 2002 with a "free admission" day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Based on an exhibition organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston from the Jean S. and Frederic A. Sharf Collection, the serene installation of Japan at the Dawn of the Modern Age: Woodblock Prints from the Meiji Era, 1868-1912 at the Officers' Club Exhibition Hall has gotten great reviews and wide media coverage. These 70 woodblock triptychs combine a traditional and painstaking technique, newly invented aniline dyes known as "the colors of progress," and novel subject matter to produce a vivid artistic record of the rapid modernization of Japan.

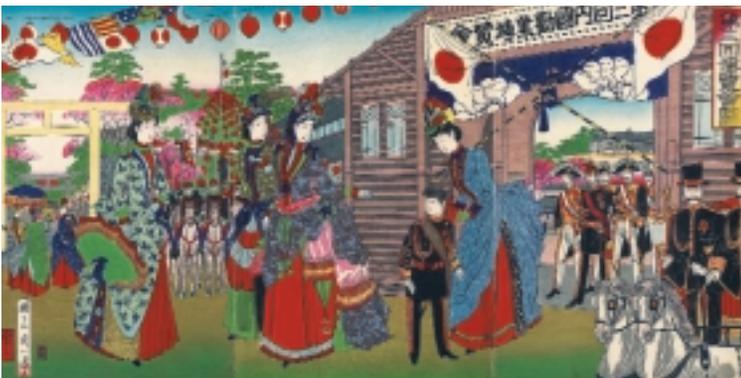


Toyohara Chikanobu,
Excursion to View Cherry Blossoms by the Sumida River, December 1887.

Utagawa Kokunimasa,
Illustration of His Imperial Majesty, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, Arriving in the Capital in Triumph, April 1895.



Watanabe Nobukazu,
illustration of the Third National Industrial Exposition, 1890.



The Moraga Series

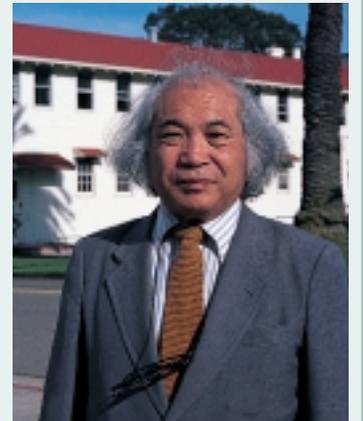
Wednesday, January 9, 7-8 p.m.
America's Geisha presents "The Story of the Kimono"

Liza Dalby was the first Westerner trained to become a geisha, an experience that heightened her appreciation of the kimono and its importance to Japanese women. As a scholar she also understood that clothing and fashion offered an excellent window to view Japanese society and culture. Join us as she presents a slide lecture illustrating the history and place of the kimono in Japanese culture. Afterwards, Liza will answer questions and sign her books, including "Kimono: Fashioning Culture."



Wednesday, January 16, 7-8 p.m.
Masaru Maeno on the Meiji Legacy

Professor Masaru Maeno asked for a piece of paper. "Trash," he insisted. Presented with a letter from the recycle bin, he began to fold. "This is litter, yes? I'm giving it a new value. Reuse is very important." As he spoke, his fingers created smaller and smaller triangles. Within moments an intricate bird with outstretched wings balanced on his palm, beautifully illustrating three basic principles of historic building preservation: reuse, added value, and the importance of capturing the public's attention.



On January 16 as part of the Moraga Series, Professor Maeno will present a lecture with slides about the Meiji era buildings in Japan that he has helped to save.

Professor Maeno's first historic preservation battle was in 1978 when the administration of the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music announced plans to demolish the Meiji-era concert hall where Japanese audiences had first experienced "western style" music. Professor Maeno believes Meiji era buildings are an important physical representation of a unique age when Asian and European cultures first mingled. He also believes people should be able to see history in its original context.

Since that first battle, which he won, Professor Maeno has become an important force in historic preservation, helping to bring together related groups that are scattered around Japan. He also organizes students to survey and preserve architecturally significant structures throughout Japan.

Join Professor Maeno and facilitator Cherilyn Widell, historic compliance officer for the Presidio Trust. Professor Maeno will show slides and explain his work in Japan. He will also discuss buildings and structures depicted in the woodblock prints hanging on the gallery walls of the Officers' Club.

All programs are free and will be held at the Officers' Club. For program information, visit www.atthepresidio.org, or call (415) 561-5086.

Presidio Officers' Club Exhibition Hall

Presidio of San Francisco • 50 Moraga Avenue at Arguello Boulevard • Main Post • (415) 561-5086

Parking and Transit

The 29 Sunset MUNI bus stops at the Officers' Club. The Presidio Free Shuttle serves the exhibit directly, and connects with public transit at the Lombard Gate every half hour. For more information, visit www.presidiotrust.gov. Free parking is available.

Hours		Admission	
Open Daily:	10 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Adults:	\$9
Tuesdays/Holidays:	Closed	Seniors, Students, Children 12 and under:	\$6
Wednesdays:	10 a.m. to 8 p.m.	Groups of 15 or more with advance reservations:	\$5

An audio guide by Antenna Audio, included in ticket price, brings the exhibit to life. To reserve tickets, visit www.atthepresidio.org, or call TicketWeb at (800) 965-4827.



Transportation Update

Welcome New PresidiGo Buses!

The Presidio Trust's five new compressed natural gas (CNG) buses have arrived in Northern California. One of the buses was tested in the park in December, and performed up to expectations. The buses are now going through a final inspection. Graphics and electronics will be added before new service begins by March, 2002.

The free shuttle service also has a new name.

PresidiGo was the winning entry in the Trust's Name the Shuttle contest, and was suggested by three respondents. The first winning entry was submitted by Michael S. Warner of Baker Beach Apartments. For his effort and creativity, Michael will receive a framed panoramic photo of the Presidio taken by renowned photographer Robert Campbell.

The Trust received over 130 contest entries, suggesting over 300 names. The first 50 entrants will receive a Presidio collector's edition pin from the Golden Gate National Parks Association.

New Routes and Schedules for the New Buses

The Trust interviewed current riders, potential riders, and tenants to get wide input on how the shuttle service and route could be improved. The most frequent requests were to run the shuttle in both directions, and to improve connections with Muni. There were also many requests for more bus shelters, and for better lighting at stops. The Trust Transportation Department is currently using these and other suggestions to create a transit system that is efficient, easy to use, and clean-running.

Looking Forward continued from P. 1

CM We are facing many challenges, and we can't accomplish them alone. While the scope of our work remains the same, the recession and our shifting national priorities have resulted in lower leasing revenues and federal appropriations. We'll have to find creative ways to do more with less.

We also need to improve our relationship with our neighbors, community groups, agencies, and with local and national government officials. While we may not agree with everyone on every issue, open communication is critical if we are to reach a middle ground of dialogue, understanding, and mutual respect. This is how we'll get the ideas and involvement that will carry us forward.

PP **How will you focus the Trust's efforts over the year?**

CM The Trust Act states that we must protect the natural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources of the Presidio. The people who wrote this law recognized that the Presidio is very complex, and that we can't focus on any single element of our mission to the exclusion of the others. We need to integrate efforts across all our programs if we are to succeed.

There are several specific milestones I believe we will reach in 2002. First, we will finish our planning (PTIP) process and issue a final plan for the park's future. We will identify priority opportunities for long-term leasing activities to facilitate rehabilitation of our historic buildings. We will conduct pilot projects that will guide and shape our reforestation effort.

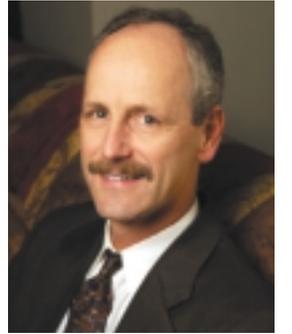
We are planning a collaborative program of natural resource enhancements with our colleagues in the National Park Service. We also want visitors to learn about the natural and human history of the park. The NPS is expert at developing "interpretive" materials that explain and enlighten. We will use these and other tools, such as informative plaques and kiosks, to help improve the experience of those who visit the Presidio.

PP **What about programming?**

CM Educational and cultural programs help bring people to the park. I hope to increase our current commitment to educational programs that teach students about natural preservation and restoration, history, archaeology, and other topics. I'm also a proponent of cultural programs that attract people to the Presidio and enrich their lives and perspectives.

PP **The Trust has faced some criticism in the media lately. How will you overcome this as you plan for the future?**

CM No organization is immune to errors in judgment, many of which may be made with the best of intentions. In the long view, the Trust can stand on its record of accomplishment as we move toward 2013, our Congressional deadline for reaching financial self-sufficiency. We're going to move forward with a renewed commitment to communication and openness. We will review and realign programs and practices to ensure they are entirely equitable and efficient. But overall, we will continue building on our accomplishments to assure that the Presidio will always be a haven by the Golden Gate.



Craig Middleton

Community Spirit continued from P. 1

After fighting miles of red tape and overwhelming logistics, Birchim finally saw her dream through. The trees she promised to provide were selected by experts from Friends of the Urban Forest, and were planted in the San Francisco National Cemetery on Saturday, December 15. More than 30 volunteers from Friends of the Urban Forest and the Presidio Trust were on hand to plant the trees, and many others attended the ceremony to salute Birchim's effort. "This place holds history and heart for many thousands of Americans," she said. "Those of us who love this place have a special obligation to protect and preserve it."

Meet Presidio Trust Board Member Donald Fisher



Motivated by the fact that he couldn't find a pair of Levi's that fit him, Donald Fisher determined to start a chain of stores that would sell nothing but Levi's trouser products. He and his wife Doris opened the first Gap store in San Francisco in 1969. Today, Gap, Inc. operates 4,100 stores in five nations and 50 U.S. states, and employs 166,000 people to bring affordable fashion to the world.

Fisher attended high school and college in the Bay Area (Lowell High, and U.C. Berkeley), and then began working for his father's mill and cabinet business. He next spent several years in real estate, developing homes, industrial properties, apartments, and converting hotels into retirement residences.

Since the Gap's inception in 1969, Fisher has poured his professional energy into growing the company into three divisions (Gap, Old Navy, Banana Republic). As committed as he is to growth and success, Fisher insists that the Gap be environmentally responsible in its operations. "We have a corporate mandate to protect the environment in the countries in which we do business, and to empower our people to uphold our environmental commitment," he said.

Fisher's environmental, business and building restoration experience serves him well in his role on the board of directors of the Presidio Trust. "We have broad responsibilities here, and we are committed to making the Presidio financially viable and environmentally sustainable," he said. "My fellow board members have outstanding records of commitment to environmental preservation. The public should have confidence in the knowledge that, as we build a diverse base of tenants in our historic buildings, we will preserve the green environment that makes the Presidio such a regional landmark."

Fisher is a member of the Board of Trustees of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, of the University of California Haas School of Business Advisory Council and Princeton University's Board of Trustees. He also serves as a member of the California State Board of Education and a Governor of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.



Presidio Tenant Profile:

San Francisco Conservation Corps



Recycling is only part of the mission at San Francisco Conservation Corps.

By Dianna Waggoner

Micah Burns flipped off the lid of a yellow recycling bin and peered inside. “Oh, yum!” he announced. This bin contained clean wine, beer and water bottles, miscellaneous jars, plastic lids, and no “nasty stuff” such as ceramic cups, coffee grounds, cd’s, or the child’s wading pool which had inexplicably been stuffed into a recycling bin at an earlier site.

He slung the container up to Ryan Fitzpatrick, who stood inside the open door of a truck. Ryan dumped the contents into a large barrel and flipped the empty back to Micah.

The bright blue paper bin Micah opened next was equally tidy – filled to the brim with newspapers, computer paper, letters, envelopes – the blizzard of miscellaneous paper that is generated in even the most conscientious offices.

On this afternoon, Micah and Ryan were two of the more visible members of the San Francisco Conservation Corps as they made the first of their regular bi-weekly rounds picking up recycling from offices and buildings around the Presidio. Back at Building 1243, formally known as The Presidio Recycling, Re-Use and Education Center, six additional Corps members sorted through the morning’s

collection of bottles, cans, plastic, and paper. At the peak of the day’s activities, the building rings with the sounds of shattering glass and smell of stale beer, as bottles are emptied and broken. The glass and paper are sold and the funds recycled into the program.

The Presidio is home to two branches of the San Francisco Conservation Corps. At the Community Service Training Center on Gorgas Ave., young people from the Bay Area learn pre-employment skills by doing environmental and conservation work around the Presidio. Most weekdays, Corps members trim shrubs, install bike racks, and install playground equipment. Every Friday they work just as hard in classrooms, learning geometry from their playground measurements, and improving their grammar by writing presentations to classrooms of youngsters. One of their goals is to earn a high school diploma.

The Recycling Center team is made up of young adults (aged 18-23) from around the country. On Mondays and Thursdays they pilot big white trucks and collect recycling from the Presidio, California state buildings, and a handful of non-profits in the Mission district. On Tuesdays they visit elementary schools around the city, or host

youngsters who make field trips to the Recycling Center. On Wednesdays they work on art projects (from recycled materials), and polish educational presentations they will make at local schools. And on Fridays they have a group meeting with all the San Francisco Conservation Corps members to discuss the week’s events and attend workshops on topics such as time management and public speaking.

Jeremy Kaller, who supervises the recycling program, points with pride to the cards, mobiles, and even a Christmas tree created from aluminum cans, all part of the Center’s reusable arts and crafts project. “We collect everything under the sun to do art projects,” he said.

Micah, 18, came to the project in September from Washington, D.C. After graduating from high school, he realized that he didn’t want to waste his parents’ money in college until he was ready to take advantage of an education, but he also knew that he didn’t want to drift around. He filled out an Americorps application and was sent to “the coolest place I’ve ever been,” doing a job he really cares about. It’s outdoors, it’s a great workout, and he gets to smash glass, which he says “adds entertainment to my day.”

“What we do is change expectations,” said Ann Cochrane, SFCC executive director. “The SFCC provides role models and peer groups that teach San Francisco’s young people to expect more from, and for,

themselves. Ultimately, these young people help each other while caring for their community, which in turn helps them develop a sense of civic pride.”

Behind an office building near the Main Post, Micah opens another yellow bin. This one contains a messy soup of bottles half full of unidentifiable liquid, broken cups, and a deflated balloon. Soggy paper sloshes in the bottom. “I just don’t get it. It’s not like this is difficult,” he says, shaking his head sadly. “You just put stuff in one bucket or the other.” He tosses the unacceptable waste into a nearby garbage can as he sings a few verses of rock and roll, and gets on with his work.

To make Micah’s life easier, call with your recycling questions: (415) 561-2178.

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