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Keep Coit Tower, Public Parks Open to All

By Ruth Gottstein

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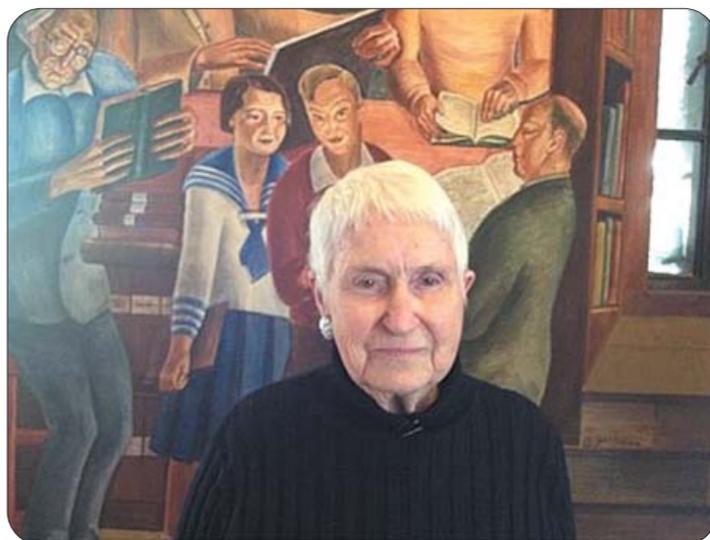
Recently my granddaughter forwarded me a YouTube video -- I am 92 years old, but yes, I watch YouTube -- of neighborhood kids being bullied off the Mission District Playground by a group of adults. Seeing that video, I was as upset as she was -- but sadly I was not completely surprised. The adults who handled the situation so poorly by trying to intimidate the kids rather than sharing with them certainly deserve some of the blame. But the real problem is that the current leaders of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department have been pushing very hard in recent years to commercialize and monetize our public spaces and parks. It's time for that to end.

I have watched this happen first-hand at Coit Tower 80 years ago, where my father, Bernard Zakheim, painted me into his beautiful New Deal mural there called "Library." Three years ago I was quite appalled to discover that the state of Coit Tower and its murals was extremely poor, with lead paint peeling from the ceiling, many of the murals gouged by carelessness or covered in water damage, and nobody really in charge there at all. What other art museum of importance would be treated this way, especially one that brings in over a million dollars a year in revenue from visitors riding the elevator to the top, as Coit Tower does?

That's why I gladly participated in the successful citizen campaign to put a measure before San Francisco voters to preserve Coit

Tower by prioritizing the funding generated there for its upkeep and strictly limiting commercial activity and private events at Coit Tower. I was so thrilled that voters citywide said "Yes" to this measure and made it city law in June of 2012. Subsequently, Coit Tower was comprehensively rehabilitated and the murals thoroughly restored, and since it reopened to the world this spring, it has looked better than ever.

Unfortunately, the Recreation and Park Department has stubbornly continued to divert 90 percent of the elevator revenue generated at Coit Tower away from it to other purposes. This has left the person who was newly hired to run the elevator and gift shop on The City's behalf in a very difficult state where he finds himself losing money while doing a good job. But, instead of fixing this by spending the Coit Tower elevator revenue to upkeep the tower as the voters mandated, the



The little girl in the blue and white sailor suit is Ruth Gottstein at age 12 in 1934...her father, Bernard Zakheim, was the artist. Courtesy Photo to The Gold Country Times

Recreation and Park Department instead is proposing to construct a concession stand building outside to sell more things and make more money. As members of the family of Lillie Hitchcock Coit, whose generous bequest originally built Coit Tower, wrote in a letter recently: "If Coit Tower is generating more than enough money right now from elevator fees to pay the people, the city has hired to run Coit Tower to continue doing a quality job to operate and ...Continued on page 6

Operation Care Receives \$20,000 Grant from the Mary Kay Foundation

While domestic violence has experienced a recent boost in awareness due to recent events, women and children in Amador County are in need of housing, resource and support programs as they flee abusive situations and work to rebuild their lives. Operation Care in Jackson, California received a \$20,000 grant from The Mary Kay Foundation as part of the organization's annual Shelter Grant program to maintain critical services and programs.

The Mary Kay Foundation awarded a total of \$3 million in funding to 150 domestic violence shelters in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam in advance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. "It's been a bigger challenge than ever for shelters to keep their doors open and grants from The Mary Kay Foundation are a vital part in helping shelters move forward in their missions," said Anne Crews, board member for The Mary Kay Foundation and Vice President of Public Affairs for Mary Kay Inc. "The shelter grants are a signature program of the Foundation and represent just one of the ways Mary Kay is committed to ending domestic violence. We are proud to support local shelters like Operation Care that are on the front lines of helping women and children who need shelter and support from abuse."

Operation Care will use the funds from this grant to provide critical support for its shelter program to help survivors of domestic violence. Last year, 276 women, men and children were assisted with safe housing and other services. "Our staff, volunteers and clients are so thankful for this grant from The Mary Kay Foundation," said Tammie Crabtree, Executive Director of Operation Care. "We've provided a safe haven for women who have fled abusive relationships for the past 34 years and this grant will go a long way in helping us serve the needs of our community."

Much of Operation Care's funding is through restrictive grants that state specifically how the money is to be used. The un-restricted funds from the Mary Kay Foundation will help provide the extra services that make such a big difference to survivors. For nearly 20 years The Mary Kay Foundation has supported the prevention and elimination of domestic violence, an epidemic that touches one in

every four women in her lifetime. Through the Foundation's annual shelter grant program, \$37 million has been granted to domestic violence organizations since 2000. Nearly 700 shelters requested funding this year. The mission of the organization is to provide domestic violence and sexual assault support services, crisis intervention and education in Amador County.

For more information, call 209-223-2897 or visit online at www.operationcare.org and <https://www.facebook.com/operationcare>

The American River Trout Hatchery

Operated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) it reopened after warm water temperatures forced the closure of the facility in early summer. Colder winter temperatures and recent rain are allowing hatchery staff to begin filling the raceways with cooler river water and start to produce rainbow trout for planting in northern California lakes this summer.

The trout being grown now will be available for planting in state waters beginning in January 2015. For the fish stocking schedule, please go online to <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FishPlants/>



From the Staff & Board of Directors of Operation Care
We wish you and yours
a Safe and Peaceful Holiday Season!

The Charles Spinetta Winery generously provided scholarships to nine enthusiastic and outstanding Amador Unified School District educators to attend the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom's annual statewide conference held in Santa Cruz last month. The Spinetta family supported this event because they understand the significance of agriculture within a community and the opportunities for learning provided by exposure to real world agricultural practices.

The theme of the 29th annual conference was "Common Core and California Crops" and focused on providing educators with resources and guidance to help meet Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards while engaging students through agricultural-themed lessons. Amador County schools recognize the significant contributions that the Spinetta family has made.

In addition to supporting agricultural education, the Spinettas established the Laura Spinetta Library Fund to support school libraries in Amador County, and members of the family regularly volunteer their time for school projects. More information: Mindy DeRohan - California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom. 916-561-5625

In This Good News Issue ...

- Parade of Lights page 3
- Jackpot Jen page 9
- Smiles For Kids 2015 page 12
- Cat Town Café page 16