

BAY CROSSINGS

"The Voice of the Waterfront"

April / May 2020 Vol.21, No.4

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COVID-19 Disruptions

Empty Waterfront

Tourism Business Struggles

Ports Step Up

Workers Still on the Job

Unique Earth Day

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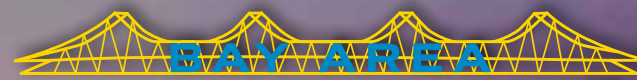


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Bobby Winston, Proprietor
Joel Williams, Publisher
Patrick Runkle, Editor

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Joel Williams,
Advertising & Marketing Director

GRAPHICS & PRODUCTION
Francisco Arreola, Designer / Web Producer

ART DIRECTION
Francisco Arreola; Patrick Runkle;
Joel Williams

COLUMNISTS
Paul Duclos; Patrick Burnson;
Sejal Choksi-Chugh; Matt Larson;

WRITERS & PHOTOGRAPHERS
Bill Picture; Joel Williams;
Natalia Gurevich

ACCOUNTING
Cindy Henderson


Advertising Inquiries:
(707) 556-3323, joel@baycrossings.com

Bay Crossings SF Ferry Building Store
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Ferry Building, #22
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Corrections & Letters

We appreciate the opportunity to publish our readers' comments, letters or requests for corrections, which can be sent to joel@baycrossings.com.



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ON OUR COVER

In San Francisco, a city whose economy is inextricably linked to the 25 million people who visit it each year, the owners of tourism-oriented businesses (and their employees) are anxiously waiting to see what kind of lingering effect the pandemic might have on consumer behavior and spending. Meanwhile, transit agencies are trying to make sense of it all while providing critical services to people who still need to travel for essential work.

Photo by Frazer Thompson PhD



PUBLISHER'S LETTER

On March 16, the City of San Francisco and five other Bay Area counties issued a shelter-in-place order for non-essential activities. This was the most severe measure of its kind in the country at the time, with an initial three-week order that ran through April 7.

I am proud to live in a state and region with leaders who took this pandemic seriously and implemented drastic measures early in this worldwide crisis. I am even more proud of my fellow Californians, who have behaved in a manner that is now being seen by health experts as a model for others nationwide!

Almost immediately, however, ferry ridership fell by more than 90 percent and tourism came to a complete halt. Most of the distribution points for the *Bay Crossings* print publication had little to no activity. With national guidelines restricting movement through the end of April, we saw no reason to put out a regular April issue of *Bay Crossings*. It was the first time in the two-decade

history of our publication that we did not release a monthly issue.

Hoping for the best, we set a goal to publish a special April/May issue featuring articles covering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Bay Area ferry system and tourism industry—effects that are not regularly covered in other news media. These are the industries that have supported *Bay Crossings* over the years, and we want to return the favor in this current challenging environment.

We have achieved our goal of a special issue, although you will likely notice that this issue is a little smaller than usual. Among other things, several of our normal advertisers had to suspend their ads due to their businesses being closed. We sincerely hope that they get back on their feet soon and look forward to working with them again when conditions improve. We have also removed the ferry schedules pages as the ferries have been in frequent flux during the pandemic; updated schedules are always on baycrossings.com. You will also not

see our Around the Bay section (featuring current Bay Area public events) in this issue for obvious reasons.

Our staff writers began working on several assignments in late March and early April and we began posting the articles on baycrossings.com as

they came in. You will find many of those articles in this special issue that we sent to press in mid-April and that will remain in circulation through May. We hope to resume regular production with the June issue.

In the meantime, we encourage you



to visit baycrossings.com for updates on the ferry system, including schedule changes, on an ongoing basis. Please visit us online also to keep track of the latest developments in public transit and tourism as we attempt to get things back to normal in the coming months.

Bay Crossings Publisher Joel Williams has been with *Bay Crossings* since 2005, starting in advertising sales and becoming the publisher in 2007. He is also a frequently contributing staff writer and photographer.



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FERRY NEWS

Pandemic's Deep Impact on Ferry Services

BY NATALIA GUREVICH

The full economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic reached the Bay Area's ferry services in March.

On March 16, the City of San Francisco and other local jurisdictions issued shelter-in-place orders requiring individuals to stay at home, with some exceptions for essential travel and activities. The order's implications on water transport in the Bay were immediately clear, as ferries quickly emptied of passengers.

Fare box revenue typically makes up about 60 percent of the Water Emergency Transportation Authority's (WETA) budget, according to Thomas Hall, WETA's public information and marketing manager. Normally, Hall said, this is a good thing, because the system doesn't require large subsidies to keep running smoothly.

But now, revenue is down about 96 percent, according to Hall. This is partly due to WETA's decision to cut back on ferry services in the face of the pandemic; even before that, Hall said, "we were seeing ridership plummet."

The monthly WETA Board of Directors meeting was held telephonically in March for the first time ever. During the meeting, on March 19, board members assessed how the transit agency would operate going forward. The main agenda item was to prevent mass crew

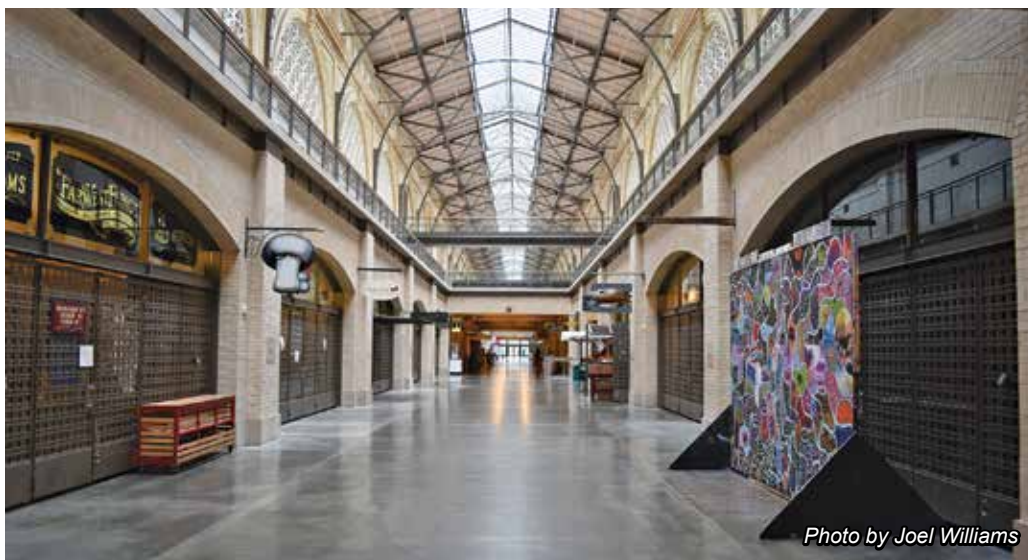
layoffs with WETA's contractor Blue & Gold Fleet. The board passed a resolution to fund staff until the next meeting, which was scheduled at the time for April 2.

"One of the things that we were asked to do was ensure that the crews all remained in employee-paid status," said WETA Executive Director Nina Rannels. "Which we've done, and we've extended that."

Meanwhile, ferry transit has had to adapt to the crisis. To respect social distancing, ferry ridership is being capped on certain vessels to enable passengers to keep at least two or three empty seats in between them, said Hall. For example, the 6 a.m. ferry from Vallejo to San Francisco can usually hold up to 445 people, said Hall. But now, "just to err on the safe side, we would cap it at 120," he said.

And new additional policies have been enacted to help minimize person-to-person contact between crew and passengers, such as a "self-fare verification" for passengers with paper tickets, said Hall. In the past, the passenger would hand a paper ticket to a crewmember, who would tear it and hand it back the passenger. Now, from six feet away, passengers must show crew members the info on the ticket and then tear it themselves.

"We're instructing passengers to try



Foot traffic in the Historic San Francisco Ferry Building is usually over 10,000 people a day on weekdays and 25,000 on weekends. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the building is almost vacant with just a few shops remaining open.

Photo by Joel Williams

to remain at least six feet away from crew members at all times, and six feet away from each other when they're standing in line or getting off the ferry as well," said Hall.

Despite some cost savings, such as using less fuel with fewer boats running services, labor is one of WETA's biggest costs, said Hall. And WETA is occupying crew in the meantime with training and maintenance work that would not have been addressed during normal operations. In the event of an emergency, ferry crews and captains need to be ready and available.

WETA is not just a commuter transit agency, but it is also designed to be a resource during a disaster, such as

an earthquake, whenever other forms of transportation may be unavailable.

"Here we have a pandemic," said WETA boardmember and Alameda County Fire Department Operations Chief Jeff DelBono. "If we've got to move first responders or people, you'd rather do it on an open-air boat than in some kind of bus or BART system."

"I think it's very important that we find a way to keep the boats in standby mode and keep our crews who know how to run those boats paid and ready to go in case we need them," said DelBono.

And he believes that the staff is essential to maintain the ferry system. "It's so important we keep those personnel in a paid status," he said. "If



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we lay off those captains and deckhands, it's going to be hard to get them back."

"And they're the only ones that know how to operate those boats, and the mechanics, and the engineers, and all of them, you want to keep that operation going," said DelBono.

WETA Board Chairperson Jim Wunderman agreed. "Our hope was that we could keep as much of the staff on board as we could," he said. "Because that way, we're ready for a different disaster that could strike during this period, which is horrible to think about, but it's possible."

"We always thought that in a region-wide emergency," said Wunderman, "that these vessels would be used to move people, emergency personnel, emergency equipment and those kinds of things."

But it's been estimated that because of COVID-19, about \$4 million will be the agency's budget shortfall, which is what the board has requested in aid from regional, state and federal sources, said Hall.

"We're working with Assembly-

member Bonta and Assemblymember Chiu and our lobbyists to try to get aid through the state," said DelBono. The \$2 trillion federal stimulus package that passed recently also included a provision for about \$1.3 billion for Bay Area transit. DelBono hopes that WETA will receive some of that funding as well.

According to Wunderman, the amount of funding that WETA would get from the federal stimulus package would depend on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

"It's a lot of money until you divide it up amongst 28 agencies, but we'll get some share of it, I think," said Wunderman.

But regardless of what amount of aid money ultimately materializes, it could just be enough to tide things over until the end of this current fiscal year, according to Hall. As for next year, "No one knows really whether this is going to linger for several months or whether things will be back to normal by then," said Hall.

At the board's April 9 meeting, WETA extended money for full crewing

for another two weeks—until its April 23 meeting—and also received updates on a variety of financial matters. This included the possibility that WETA will receive less funding from bridge tolls in the future due to reduced traffic, which is a major funding source for the agency.

Rannells has been considering how restarting normal operations will work. "It's upon us to just look at what is it that we think that we can sustain over the midterm," she said. "In terms of retaining crews, and what do we need to start up service."

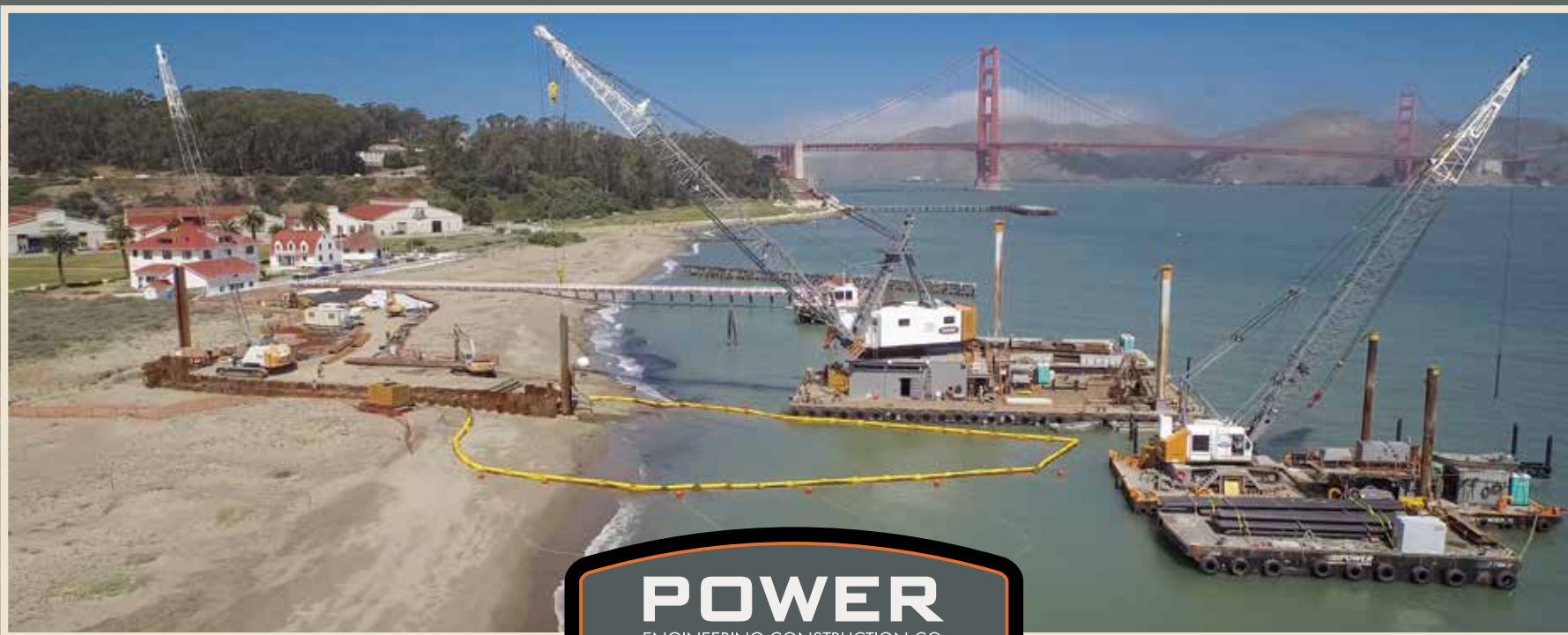
"I think we need to look at the immediate term and we also need to start looking at the foreseeable future," she said. "And that future is probably relatively bleak, in terms of we rely on a high ridership to help fund what we do."

And, looking at the big picture, "If we're going to be in a recession, I think that's going to make our finances much more complicated as we move into next year," said Rannells.

Going forward, WETA boardmembers have been discussing what changes should be made to secure the future of the ferry system. "One of the things that this teaches us is you need to plan for the unexpected, because this virus wasn't expected," said Wunderman. "And now we're going through all of this post-appearance of the virus planning which could have taken place probably before."

"I think we're going to find out whether everybody thinks we're an emergency agency or not," said Wunderman. "I think that conversation is sort of yet to be had."

Natalia Gurevich is currently working towards her masters degree in journalism at UC Berkeley, with a focus on narrative writing. She has most recently reported on Oakland crime, criminal justice and law stories for *Oakland North*, and previously worked for a policy-based weekly journal, *CQ Researcher*, in Washington DC.



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COVER STORY



Photo by Frazer Thompson PhD

Waterfront Tourism Businesses Struggle to Find Footing

BY BILL PICTURE

As business owners nationwide struggle to find a way to stay afloat while shelter-in-place orders remain in place, those with strong ties to tourism are bracing for a very shaky start to the normally robust summer season.

And in San Francisco, a city whose economy is inextricably linked to the 25 million people who visit it each year, the owners of tourism-oriented businesses (and their employees) are anxiously waiting to see what kind of lingering effect the pandemic might have on consumer behavior and spending.

“There’s a lot of talk in the news about businesses getting back to normal, but what will ‘normal’ look like after all this?” asked Mariann Costello of Scoma’s, a waterfront restaurant that has been an anchor of the Fisherman’s Wharf community since it opened in 1965. “Realistically, business is going to be slow for a while,” she said.

Scoma’s, like most other restaurants in the City, now offers to-go dining only; Costello said it’s exploring ways to expand that business. “This is our new world, I’m afraid; so we’re looking and thinking, ‘How do we adapt our business model?’”

The short-term goal, she said, is to expand the to-go business so that Scoma’s can hire back some of its employees. The

restaurant was forced to lay off nearly 90 percent of its staff, some of whom had worked there for 40 years.

The consensus among business owners is that even once governments give residents the go-ahead to venture back out into the world, some social distancing guidelines are likely to remain in place to help prevent new clusters of the virus in coming months. And even if those guidelines are eliminated, it could be some time before consumers feel comfortable again being in enclosed spaces with strangers and around groups of any size.

“How long before people want to take—and can afford to take—a trip, or even just eat out in a local restaurant?”

asked Taylor Safford, Pier 39’s president and CEO. “We’re all trying to look into our crystal balls for the answer to that question but all signs point to it being a long runway to normalization, or what ‘normal’ used to be.”

To compare what Pier 39’s tenants and its fellow visitor-serving businesses across the City are experiencing now versus what they endured in the 2008 recession is, to speak in maritime metaphors, like comparing an oil tanker to a tugboat.

“Imagine trying to stop a passing container ship dead in its tracks,” said Safford. “A sailor would tell you, ‘That’s impossible!’ But that’s exactly what this virus did to the economy. The shelter-in-

COVER STORY

place order came down on Monday, and by midnight we'd shut down the entire property. We've closed temporarily to host private events before, but we've never shut it down completely."

Pier 39 and its sister company Blue & Gold Fleet, which services several ferry routes and operates Bay cruises, were forced to reduce staffing by nearly a third. Blue & Gold continues to operate San Francisco Bay Ferry service for the Vallejo and Alameda/Oakland routes, but on a greatly reduced scale. Only one vessel is used per route for two trips in the morning and two in the evening on weekdays with weekend service being eliminated altogether. Ridership on these remaining routes has decreased more than by 96 percent though.

Blue & Gold services to Tiburon, Sausalito and Angel Island have been suspended, as have all Bay cruises. Combined, these suspended routes account for roughly half of Blue & Gold's business. This is the first time since the company's founding in 1979 that it has had to suspend service. "I was a captain during the time of 9/11, and we didn't stop even then," said Blue &

Gold President Patrick Murphy.

Murphy said some of his furloughed employees have been with the company for 30-plus years. "So this is heartbreaking," he said. "They're family to us."

Locals only

Louise Winsnes, director of sales and marketing for Red & White Fleet, is confident the travel industry will bounce back. "Tourism will be one of the slower industries to bounce back, but it will happen," she said.

Winsnes agreed with her peers that the coming summer season will be a lot leaner. But she also believes the scene will look much different. "At least 40 percent of our business is international," she said. "Those guests will be the slowest to return. The more immediate bounce-back will be the local market, so we need to come up with strategies that will help us capture the local stay-cation market."

Winsnes conceded it's not going to be easy. "It's very hard to convince someone to be a tourist in their own city," she said. "But it's a beautiful city to



Photo courtesy of Scoma's SF

Like many restaurants, Scoma's in Fisherman's Wharf is now offering to-go options during the shelter-in-place order that includes curbside pickup or delivery options.

rediscover, so we're going to get creative."

Key to ensuring stability for their businesses, say the owners we spoke with, is avoiding dipping so far into the red right now that debt eventually engulfs the business. "Even if you've taken the necessary steps to reduce payroll, rent still has to be paid; and most businesses have debt obligations," Safford said.

Pier 39 has already initiated a conversation with its lenders about forbearance to allow some flexibility with tenants who themselves are struggling to survive. "Our goal is to reopen with all of our tenants intact," he said.

Costello said she nervously awaits more details regarding the recent federal stimulus package. Under the CARES Act's paycheck protection program, loans to businesses like Scoma's would be forgiven if by June 30, the business is able to hire back 80 percent of its original staff. Otherwise, the loan has to be paid back.

"If we can't even open our doors until May 1 and we need to accommodate some kind of social distancing requirement, which I expect will be the case, will there be enough customers and business to support that size staff?" she asked.

"Will people immediately come back to Fisherman's Wharf when the order is lifted? I'd be suspect of anyone who tells you they can predict that,"

Costello said. "And most businesses can't afford to take on more debt. Just taking into consideration the money we've lost to date, I already expect we'll be in the red through the end of the year at least."

"For a business like ours, finding a way to stay open wasn't even an option," said Winsnes of Red & White Fleet. "But we also couldn't just close up and walk away. We have vessels that require a minimum level of ongoing maintenance to make sure they're operable. The minute we get the go-ahead to resume operations, we need to be ready."

A representative for a major tour operator, who asked that he and his company not be named, said his company's size affords it a bit more resilience than mom-and-pop type businesses. The company operates tours in over 20 cities worldwide.

"Were the shelter-in-place orders to be extended again, that wouldn't necessarily be a death sentence for us like it could be for a smaller company," he said. "But we're hoping and praying that it doesn't happen. We told our staff that the layoffs were temporary; and we meant it. Things may look a little different on the other side of the curve, but we need to look at it as an opportunity. 'How can we be better and stronger?' You have to be adaptable to survive, and we will survive."



Photo by Frazer Thompson PhD

The most visited attraction in San Francisco, Pier 39, was closed down completely on March 16 when Mayor London Breed issued the shelter-in-place order.

Bill Picture is a veteran journalist, but also produces events for some of the world's most recognized brands (Billpicture.com). A former SF Examiner staff reporter and SF Chronicle contributor, Bill now calls both Southern California and the Bay Area "home." That said, you're most likely to find Bill holed up at an airport bar, en route to somewhere.



WORKING WATERFRONT NEWS

Port of Oakland Steps Up to New Global Challenge

BY PATRICK BURNSON

Unlike many major U.S. ocean cargo gateways, the Port of Oakland has not succumbed to the temptation of diversifying its operations to accommodate the global cruise industry. This has always been a working port; up until recently, it had never even hosted a guest mega-cruise ship into its harbor.

All that changed rather dramatically in March as the *Grand Princess*—enroute to the Port of San Francisco—was diverted across the Bay when COVID-19 was discovered to have infected many of its passengers.

After being guided into Oakland by the San Francisco Bar Pilots with a U.S. Coast Guard escort, 2,400 passengers and 500 crewmembers exited the ship during its stay once it was docked. They all underwent medical checks for COVID-19 as they departed, and if no sign of the disease was found, they were allowed to depart to quarantines.

According to spokespeople, the Americans were then spread out over four military bases—including Travis Air Force Base—for federally mandated 14-day secure quarantines. Foreign travelers were flown by charter flights to their native countries.

The Bay Area maritime community was properly impressed by the performance of the bar pilots taking

charge of this unusual navigational challenge. Equally impressive was the close collaboration between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and the Pacific Maritime Association during this crisis.

Throughout this pandemic, labor and terminal management have been working cooperatively and maintaining close communication with the relevant federal, state and local government agencies as this situation continues to unfold. This includes the United States Coast Guard, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, local port authorities and city governments.

Port Celebrates Dockworkers for Continued Operations

The Port of Oakland has also praised dockworkers and their waterfront brethren for sustaining international trade. The port's recognition preceded the annual Western Hemisphere Ports Day held on April 5. It carried added weight in the face of a coronavirus pandemic that has killed thousands and roiled economies worldwide.

"Ports, including Oakland, have been declared essential infrastructure and must keep operating for the public good and the future of trade," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "That couldn't happen without the waterfront workforce that keeps cargo moving. Dockworkers,



Photo courtesy of Port of Oakland

The *Grand Princess*' arrival at the Port of Oakland due to COVID-19 positive passengers marked the first time a mega-cruise ship docked at the commercial cargo port.

truckers, all of those on the front line of the supply chain have earned our sincerest gratitude."

The port was operating normally despite a shelter-in-place order issued by Alameda County last month. It gave the following status update at the time:

- Marine terminals continue full vessel and cargo operations, though they've curtailed operating hours for preventative cleaning;
- Supplies of equipment required to transport cargo—containers and chassis—are plentiful;
- Vessel schedules have stabilized after shipping lines cut 20 voyages to Oakland between February and April.

Port of Oakland Dockworker Dies After Fall; Driscoll Headed to Alabama

The Port of Oakland expressed its condolences following the death of a dockworker last month.

According to reports, a longshore laborer fell to his death from the deck of a container ship at berth. The port said the

fatal accident was under investigation by local authorities.

"This is a tragedy that strikes everyone very deeply," said Driscoll. "The waterfront is a tightly knit community and if a member of that community succumbs, we all share the grief."

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union confirmed that the accident victim was one of its members. Longshore workers are hired by marine terminals to load and unload ships and move cargo containers.

"All of those on the front line of the supply chain have our heartfelt gratitude under these trying circumstances," said Driscoll. "They're keeping the economy going and doing their best to maintain some semblance of normalcy for all of us."

Finally, news broke recently that Driscoll is moving on from the Port of Oakland to the Port of Mobile, Alabama in the coming months. While Oakland has yet to announce this development, it is likely that it will conduct an international search for a new maritime director soon.

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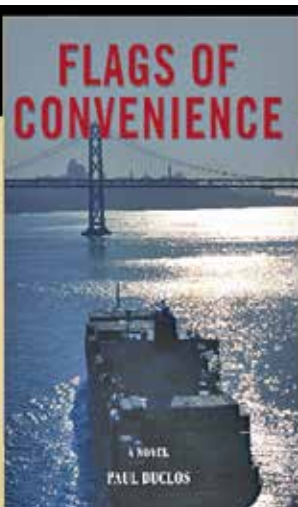
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Patrick Burnson is a widely-published business writer with a special affinity for ocean-borne cargo and seaports. A logistics and supply chain specialist, he is a past president of the Pacific Transportation Association and is presently on its Board of Directors. pacifictrans.org



Golden Gate Ferry Service Update Featuring Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz

BY MATT LARSON

For our usual “Who’s” column we had planned to get to know Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz, the new public affairs manager for the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District (GGBHTD). However, along with everything else in the world, our plans have changed because of COVID-19.

We still plan to get to know Cosulich-Schwartz the person, but considering these crazy times, we’re going to focus on Cosulich-Schwartz the public affairs manager. As you could imagine, he’s quite busy these days, so we’re grateful he was able to sit down and answer some questions for us. As we relax, or work, in the comfort of our own homes, Cosulich-Schwartz and the team at the GGBHTD are still pretty busy.

Here’s a Q&A with Cosulich-Schwartz to provide you with some behind-the-scenes insight of how one of the nation’s most prominent transportation authorities has been handling this crisis. Keep in mind that GGBHTD’s responsibilities include managing transportation via ferry boats, buses and traffic on the Golden Gate Bridge.

Bay Crossings: How have the shelter-in-place orders affected ridership?

Cosulich-Schwartz: Golden Gate Transit ridership is down 91 percent, Golden Gate Ferry ridership is down 99 percent, and Golden Gate Bridge traffic is down 70 percent since the orders went into effect in mid-March. So the orders are having the desired effect and people are staying home, which we continue to encourage and applaud.

BC: So what does this mean for the services you provide?

PCS: Transit is considered an essential service under the orders, so we are maintaining transit operations, but reducing the frequency of service. Per the orders,

most people should be staying at home and only taking transit for essential trips. Our mission at the district is to provide mobility to communities in the Golden Gate corridor by bridge, bus and ferry, and we remain committed to providing essential service to our communities during this crisis.

BC: What precautions are in effect to protect those who still need your essential services?

PCS: In order to keep our passengers safe during COVID-19 we are wiping down interior surfaces on our buses and ferries with disinfectant every day. This includes disinfecting handrails, armrests, grab bars, loops and handles, and fare boxes on all buses and ferries at least once per day, and deep cleaning our ferries twice per week. We have also instituted social distancing protocols to ensure the public and employees are able to maintain the mandated six feet of distance on our buses and ferries.

BC: With the decrease in demand, how exactly have your services changed?

PCS: In response to the shelter-in-place orders, we have made the following changes to our Golden Gate Transit and Golden Gate Ferry service as of April 3:

- Weekend ferry service has been suspended until further notice.
- Weekday ferry service between Larkspur and San Francisco is operating under reduced schedules.
- Weekday ferry service between Tiburon/Sausalito and San Francisco is operating in triangle service under reduced schedules. (This means all ferry trips between Tiburon / Sausalito and San Francisco will stop at all three locations in both directions.)
- Weekday and weekend bus service is operating under reduced schedules.

For the latest schedule information, please visit goldengate.org.

BC: What about the bridge?

PCS: At the Golden Gate Bridge we are maintaining essential functions, such as bridge security and maintenance staff, and monitoring traffic closely. As I said, we have seen a 70 percent decrease in bridge traffic since the orders went into effect,

but the good news is that the public is largely obeying the shelter-in-place orders, helping our communities stay healthy and safe during this crisis.

BC: How has this decrease in traffic affected managing the bridge?

PCS: We are no longer performing median barrier moves for the morning and evening commutes, and the bridge will remain in a 3:3 lane configuration throughout the day. Per the orders, public works projects are exempt from travel restrictions, so we will move the barrier into a 4:2 lane configuration overnight on weekdays to allow suicide deterrent system construction to continue. All electric tolling remains in effect at the Golden Gate Bridge during the orders.

BC: Certainly this must be impacting the district’s general fund.

PCS: This does pose some unique challenges for the region’s public transit and toll agencies, but we’re unique in that toll dollars are our single-largest subsidy for transit operations and bridge maintenance. We’re losing about \$3 million in lost fares and tolls every week, representing about 85 percent of our fee-based revenue. We’re working hard to ensure we can continue essential transit operations and stand to see some relief, along



Frequently touched areas are regularly disinfected by Golden Gate Ferry staff. Photo courtesy of GGBHTD

with our sister Bay Area transit agencies, in the federal CARES stimulus package, but the future remains uncertain.

BC: So have things slowed down for you personally, or just the opposite?

PCS: We’re busier than ever as we monitor and evaluate our service and coordinate with our local, regional, state and federal partners on our response to COVID-19. Our staff are in daily communications with public health officials and are working tirelessly to ensure we’re able to provide essential transportation service while keeping the public and employees safe.

BC: Do you anticipate any long-term changes taking effect once all this is over?

PCS: It’s too early to tell what the long-term impacts will be on our services and for regional transportation in general. We’re in uncharted territory and things are changing on a daily basis, but we’re working hard to make sure we can continue to provide essential transit service and bridge maintenance. We certainly look forward to the day when we can welcome our customers back on our bridge, buses, and ferries. But for now—please stay home!

Matt Larson has written for a variety of publications throughout the Bay Area for the past decade. He specializes on highlighting our region’s amazing people, life-changing nonprofits and one-of-a-kind events. He’s also an actor, comedian and filmmaker. See his full body of work at www.marslegstrong.com.





Embracing the Spirit of Earth Day While Sheltering in Place

BY SEJAL CHOKSI-CHUGH

Did you know this year marks the 50th anniversary of the first Earth Day?

My staff would normally be tabling at festivals around the Bay Area, organizing volunteers at shoreline trash cleanups and hosting happy hours at local restaurants to toast the Bay we love. Yet here we are instead, celebrating the Earth inside our homes.

The first Earth Day was organized in 1970 as outrage mounted over the devastating 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill. The momentum triggered the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and important environmental laws, including the Clean Water Act.

Two decades later, on a body of water a few hundred miles north of Santa Barbara, a research scientist named Mike Herz was worried about the declining health of San Francisco Bay. From the bow of his boat, he could see that



Photo by Ben Botkin

A happy memory of bonding with the Baykeeper team on kayak patrol, October 31, 2017. We can't wait to be out enjoying the Bay again! #beautifulSFBay #imabaykeeper @sfbaykeeper

even though the country had new anti-pollution laws, no one was enforcing them.

He had recently heard about Hudson River fishermen who formed a Riverkeeper group to stop industries from dumping toxic pollution and killing the fish, which were their livelihood. From his vantage point on the Bay, Mike could see that a similar type of citizen watchdog was needed here. His idea was to hold polluters accountable using the Clean Water Act—and a patrol boat.

And for Baykeeper, the rest is history. For the past 30 years, we've been a fierce champion for the health of the Bay and the people who depend on it. We've protected the Bay from oil tankers and dirty coal terminals, failing municipal sewer and stormwater systems, and been a constant deterrent to polluters on the water.

Now, it's painful not to be out on the water! Because of the COVID-19 crisis, our skippers are holding back on patrols, and we had to cancel several special events including a Bay tour on the historic USS *Potomac*, a kayak flotilla and a Bay paddleboard trash cleanup.

The next best thing, in this time of sheltering in place, might be to come

together virtually and celebrate. We can stay connected to each other and be inspired by the Bay we love. In that spirit, Baykeeper is posting beautiful photos of everything we love about San Francisco Bay, and Baykeeper staff and supporters are sharing favorite Bay stories on Twitter and Instagram.

We invite you to share your photos and stories as well. Please join us in honoring San Francisco Bay. It's the unique natural feature that connects all of us as residents of the Bay Area—and in the spirit of Earth Day, we're all in this together.

Here's what you can do:

- Pick a favorite old photo of the Bay. Write a brief caption that describes how you feel about the Bay: what do love about the Bay, or what is a favorite memory?
- Post the photo with caption on Twitter or Instagram, with the hashtags: #beautifulSFBay and #imabaykeeper and tag @sfbaykeeper. Baykeeper will like and repost your photos, and select some to feature in our emails and on our website.

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Sejal Choksi-Chugh is the executive director of San Francisco Baykeeper. Since 1989, Baykeeper has been defending San Francisco Bay from the biggest threats and holding polluters accountable. To report pollution in the Bay, call Baykeeper's hotline at 1-800-KEEP-BAY (1-800-533-7229), e-mail hotline@baykeeper.org, or click "Report Pollution" at baykeeper.org.





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Perfect Read for COVID-19: *Journey Round My Room*

BY PAUL DUCLOS

Journey Round My Room, published by San Francisco's Arion Press, is a travelogue by Xavier de Maistre.

The story in a nutshell: In 1790, as a young officer in the Piedmontese army, Xavier de Maistre participated in a duel. It is not known whether his opponent perished or was wounded; de Maistre records no injury to himself. As punishment for the duel, he was confined to his own quarters in Turin for 42 days.

During his house arrest, he wrote this short book. The conceit is that although the author is incarcerated, he is free to travel in his imagination. Confined to his room, waited upon by his servant and accompanied by his dog, he counts the 36 paces of the room's periphery and crisscrosses the space haphazardly, encountering objects that trigger imaginary journeys.

Architect Ross Anderson took 16 photographs with a cellphone camera of models of the room, its furnishings and the author's traveling coat. These low-resolution pictures are printed on translucent paper; the result is an elusive evocation of an interior that reflects the interior of the mind.

Cocktails with a Twist May Bring Some Relief for Shelter-in-Place

COVID-19 episode making you nervous, tense and out of sorts? The pandemic shutdown of all our bars and nightclubs has motivated many of us to restock our liquor cabinets and entertain ourselves quietly at home.

Going through our library recently, we came across *Cocktails with a Twist*, published some time ago by Chronicle Book, but still available online—which is your best bet because most book shops are shuttered as well. Each chapter is based on a classic, but inside the unique

gatefolds, readers will discover numerous riffs, like swapping Irish whiskey for rye to make a Blackthorn, or substituting amaro for vermouth to make a Black Manhattan.

More than 100 variations on 21 modern classic cocktail recipes are accompanied by helpful tips on keeping a well-stocked bar, garnishing drinks, and throwing a party.

Leland Stanford Bio a Study in Disruption

"Disruption" as a concept goes back further than Steve Jobs in Silicon Valley. To hear author Roland de Wolk tell it, staid Stanford University has a dark and shady past. "Given the nature of its founder, we shouldn't be surprised," de Wolk told an audience recently convened at the Book Club of California.

American Disruptor (UC Press) is the untold story of Leland Stanford—from his birth in a backwoods bar to the

founding of the world-class university that became and remains the nucleus of regional innovation.

The life of this robber baron, politician and historic influencer is the astonishing tale of how one supremely ambitious man became this country's original disruptor—reshaping industry and engineering one of the greatest raids on the public treasury for America's transcontinental railroad, all while living more opulently than maharajas, kings and emperors.

It is also the saga of how Stanford, once a serial failure, overcame all obstacles to become one of America's most powerful and wealthiest men, using his high elective office to enrich himself before losing the one thing that mattered most to him—his only child. Richly detailed and deeply researched, *American Disruptor* restores Leland Stanford's rightful place as a revolutionary force and architect of modern America.

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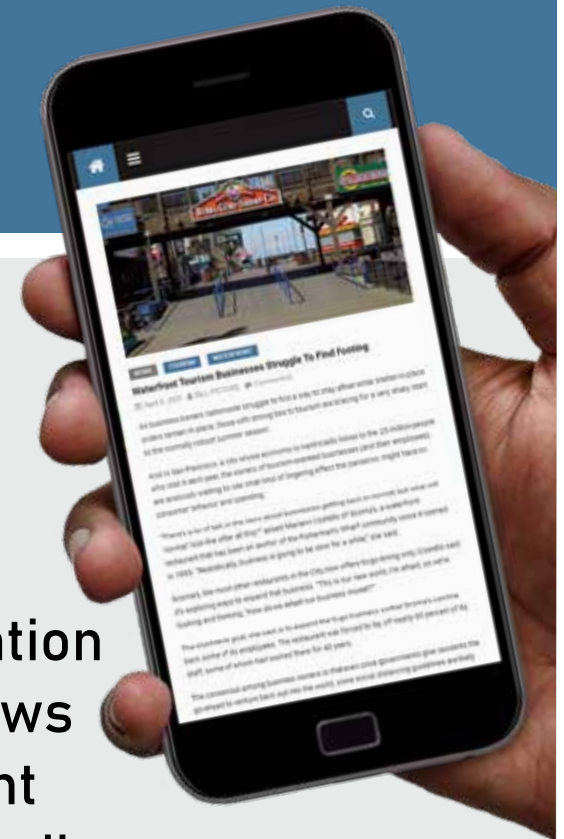
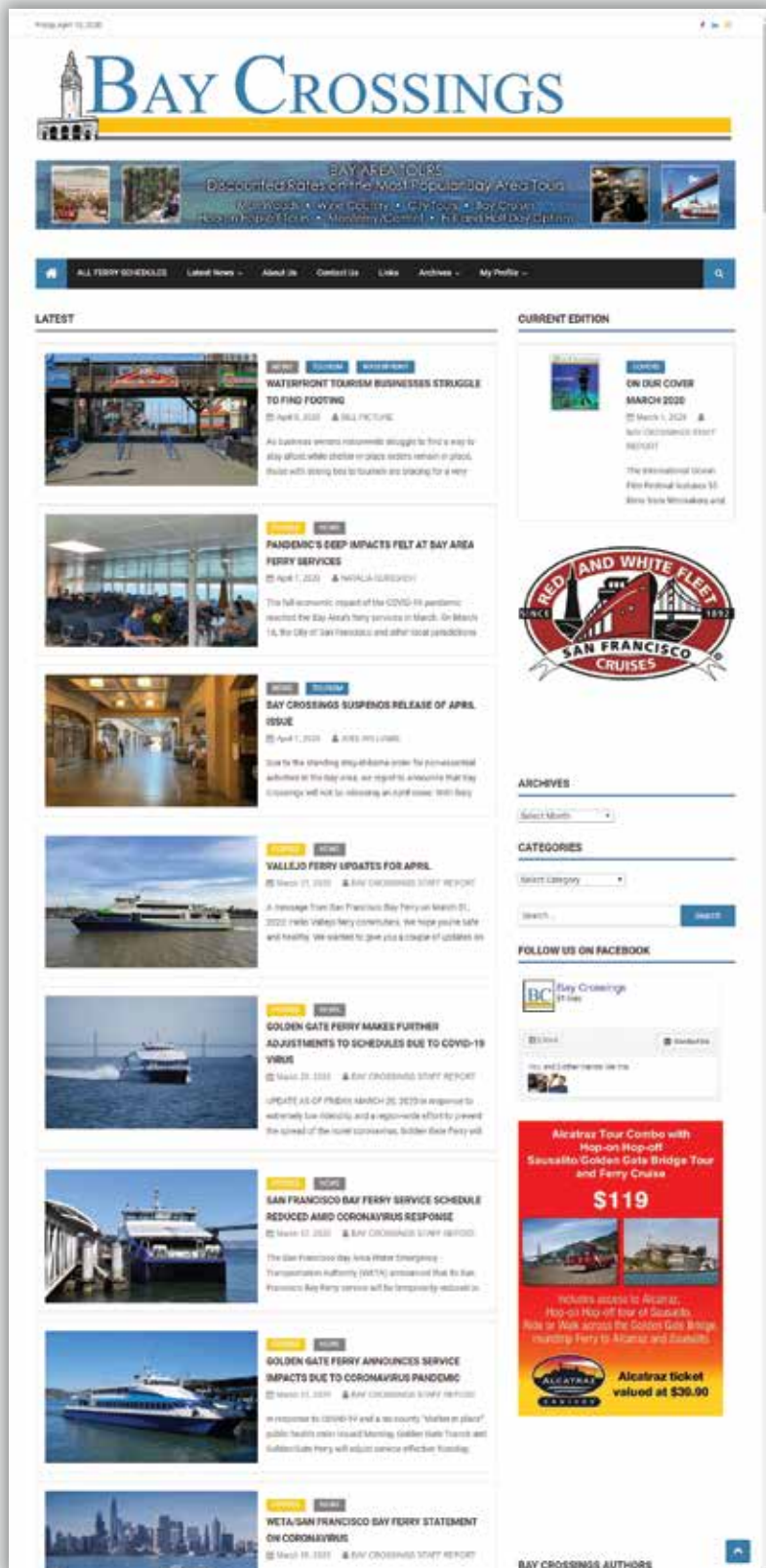


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