

The Society Page

By Gene Mahoney

Russian Hill Upholstery & Décor is still located in Nob Hill, not Russian Hill.

Some guy on Market and Fifth was walking around holding a sign that had his website on it (freedom4a.com). I didn't visit it, but he handed me a pamphlet called "Freedom." It mentions microwave attacks on U.S. personnel in Cuba and Russia and "code languages." It looks a little out-there for me, but hey, maybe it's your thing.

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After a six year hiatus, Live 105 is back on the air! I guess that "Dave FM" format didn't work out with playing an ABBA song then a KISS song, etc. It's back to being called Live 105, too – not Alt 105, which is what it was called before the switch to Dave FM. *Ah, the memories* – my friend and I waking up early in 1987 and seeing the Alex Bennett show live and meeting Laurie Thompson, his sidekick, and Tom Kenny, the funny comic who went on to become the voice of SpongeBob SquarePants. One time my then girlfriend waited in front of their building until Bryan Ferry arrived for an interview there. She squealed as he entered the place and signed an autograph for her.

The Quake – San Francisco's "Modern Rock" station in the mid-1980s. Anyone out there remember it? I remember not being able to hear any new "Modern Rock" from the summer of '84 to the summer of '85 because I moved from New York to Oklahoma. Then when I was driving around San Francisco looking for a place to live - in the summer of '85 - I came across The Quake on the dial and looked forward to listening to it once I moved here. I went back to Oklahoma, got my stuff, headed west, and The Quake changed formats to something awful the week after I got here. I had to wait around for 2 years until Live 105 was born for my up-to-date "Modern Rock" fixes.

I quit listening to Live 105 sometime after grunge died in the 1990s, and it really has no effect on my life now that I'm middle-aged and bitter, but hey – welcome back, guys! San Francisco wasn't the same without you.

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Another great, though disturbing article from Susan Dyer Reynolds in the May issue of Marina Times titled "They All Knew" (look it up at marinatimes.com). Apparently the city's lovely Marina district is slowly becoming like Sixth and Mission.

Reynolds writes about how one time last year as she was parking her car a man came running at her with a long stick screaming, "I'll kill you, bitch!" She managed to shut



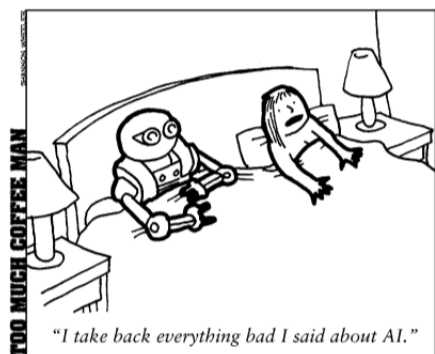
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and lock the door just in time. A few days before that happened, the guy and his sometimes girlfriend were having sex and smoking meth across from Reynolds' window at around 3 A.M. She told them to leave, the guy flipped her off and the gal screamed something Reynolds claimed she couldn't repeat in the Marina Times. A new guy joined the couple's encampment and Reynolds writes the three of them are belligerent to neighbors and visitors, block sidewalks with their tents, urinate and defecate on the streets, and take drugs until they pass out. They often lounge in a pile of garbage by the Shell gas station on Lombard and Laguna or one by the Walgreens on Divisadero and Lombard. Numerous residents have seen the two men "sharpening weapons" – like the stick one of them came at Reynolds with. She goes on to write that the couple have used drugs and engaged in sex acts in public near local schools.

So there you have it – another heartwarming story from "progressive" San Francisco. I remember when I moved here in 1985, everyone back east was telling me how lucky I was to be here. Now when I tell people I live in the San Francisco Bay Area, they ask if it's really as bad as they've heard.###



The Gypsy Run – A true story

By James Dylan

Once upon a time, I was a soldier in the US Army, stationed in Bamberg, Germany. It

was 1986, and I lived in the barracks with my friends and coworkers. The barracks were old German military buildings from the Nazi days, many of which are still standing.

One Saturday afternoon, some friends of mine said they were going to Coburg to hang out, which was a few hours away by train, and asked if I wanted to go with them. We took a taxi down to the Bahnhof, and climbed aboard one of those slow local trains that stopped at every flyspeck of a Stadt, where only one or two people ever got on.

My friends were dressed like typical GIs, which in the '80s (and likely today) meant blue jeans, Nikes, t-shirts and backwards baseball caps. I myself, was a wannabe punk/new waver, so I was wearing ripped black jeans, a leather jacket, spiked hair, eyeliner, and combat boots.

We arrived early in the evening, and at the first bar, we had a beer or two and were just hanging out, when one of my buddies pulled me aside and told me that one of the locals told him they didn't like "my type" in there, and that I should leave. My wannabe rebellious punk temper flared up and I assumed they didn't like punk rockers or whatever, but then my buddy said, "They told me to tell you this isn't a fag bar". Huh? Now I was more pissed, as I wasn't even gay! My friend said he told them that, but they still wanted me to leave, or they were going to kick my ass. I looked around and saw a table of fat, unsmiling Düsseldorfers glaring at me.

So now, in my experience from movies, this is where my buddies would all tell the Germans to fuck off and we would all stick together, maybe start a bar fight and then all sit down and get drunk together with the Germans, but my so-called friends and "Army Buddies" all nodded that perhaps it would be wise for me to just leave. Well, now I didn't even want to be with them anymore, so I DID take off. My wannabe, lonely, punk mentality was suddenly feeling a lot more real.

I wandered around Coburg for a while and came across a bar that was playing rock music, so I paid my 5 Deutsch Marks, went inside and was shocked to see a live band, and they were pretty good. I was also shocked to see some other friends from my unit, so I joined them. It turned out that the singer was the brother of someone in the German rock band the Scorpions, but I can't remember names. It was a great show, and we headed off to the Gasthaus my friends booked, which was right downtown, in the Altstadt. It was an old building, several hundred years old by the look of it, with red roof tiles, right out of a Brother's Grimm tale.

We walked in the door, and in the lobby/bar area we found a group of men playing guitar and some women in skirts dancing, and they welcomed us and we all sat down to drink. It

turns out they were Gypsies, and they actually owned the place!

Anyway, we hung out there awhile, enjoying the free entertainment, which was totally unexpected in this little backwater town near the East German border. Then, one of my buddies pulled me aside (here we go again) and said the boss in the group told me that they only allow two people per room, and that if I wanted to stay the night, I would have to get my own room. I was piss broke, and this was way before I had a credit card. Again, my "Army Buddies" abandoned me and declined my requests to lend me money to get a room.

One of my friends felt pity for me, however, and said, "Dude, we are in room 325, if you can sneak up without getting caught, you can sleep on the floor, and try and sneak out later."

I nodded at him and took a sip of beer. After a few minutes, I got up and said I had to go home, loud enough for other people to hear, but would hit the restroom first. I snuck away, found the stairs and went up to the third floor. I found room 325, but didn't hang out there; I went down around the corner and waited.

I was there awhile, but eventually I heard people talking and I peeked around the corner and saw my friends go into the room. I tapped on the door and they let me in, and we all crashed. I slept on the floor, which was fine.

In the morning, my buddies told me "We'll go out first, and just wait about 15 minutes before you leave, so that if you get caught, we'll already be gone and it's all on you."

Gee, thanks. They left, and I stayed in the room, and was waiting to sneak out, but I could hear Gypsy ladies talking in the hallway, cleaning the rooms. I knew they would come to my room soon, so I had to get out.

I went to the window and thought maybe I could open it and find a way down, but when I tried to open it, there was a screen! I couldn't remove it, it was nailed to the frame. (Remember, this was a very old building made of wood and plaster, they didn't have modern windows.)

I knew I only had a few minutes before the women came to my room, so I had to make a decision. I took out a pocket knife I carried and cut one side of the screen and crawled out onto the roof, and pulled the window shut behind me.

Yes, I know this was stupid. In hindsight, I should have simply walked out of the room and down the hall, past the women, and out through the lobby. If someone remembered

me, I could have just ran. But I was a young, dumb 19-year-old.

Ok, so now me - the genius, was out on the roof, covered with slippery wet roof tiles, three stories up, in the morning drizzle. This was an old building, probably several hundred years old, and the roof had many nooks and crannies and a few chimneys sticking up.

Luckily, most of these older German buildings had snow guards - basically, little fences above the gutter, along the edge of the roof, to stop snow from sliding off onto people below, so I had a place on which to put my feet while crawling along the edge, with my hands on the tiles. I crawled like this until I found a large water pipe in a corner, and lowered myself down to the second floor. Eventually I made it down to the first floor.

Ok, so now I'm just 12 feet above the ground. I just needed to find a place to drop down. One side had a building next to it, with no space in-between. The front was out, as there were people on the street and the owners could see me. I crawled around to the back and was in luck, it looked like an empty alley, with no one around. Hoping the gutter was strong enough to hold me, I grabbed onto it and swung my legs over, then lowered myself down so that I was just hanging there, by my arms, and found myself looking face-to-face with a large Gypsy woman, though an open door, and she was holding a large knife.

She was in the kitchen cooking, and when she saw me hanging there - a goth weirdo with eyeliner all smeared around - she started yelling and I let go and dropped down to the cobblestones and fell on my ass. I could hear a commotion inside, so I got up and took off hauling ass down the street, heading towards the train station. I looked back and could see a group of men chasing me. It was a Sunday morning, so no shops were open, limiting my places to hide.

Luckily, I was an excellent runner, and broke several records on my escape, and when I reached the station, I saw there was a train sitting there, so I jumped aboard and went to a restroom and locked myself in.

I sat there for a bit, and didn't hear anyone outside, and after a while I heard a conductor's whistle, and then the train lurched and started moving. I had no idea where I was headed, but since we were near the East German border, I assumed we were headed south to Bamberg. I sneaked out of the restroom and saw I was the only person in the car.

I had a monthly rail pass, so it wasn't a big deal when a conductor entered the car and asked for my ticket. He asked me something in German, which I didn't speak at that time, so I replied in English that I was an

American. "Oh? American? I think you are on der wrong train, Junge! This train is going to DDR, East Germany! Do you have papers? Are you soldier? Es ist verboten!"

Oh, shit. As a soldier, we had always been warned about accidentally entering East Germany and creating an international incident. Even being on a train, they stop before actually going in, but being caught by the East German border guards or passport control is enough for a soldier to get court martialed, kicked out, or worse, taken prisoner by the East Germans. Panicking, I told the conductor that I would just get off at the next station, but he told me there was no next station - the next stop was the East German border. He told me if I didn't want to get in trouble, I would have to jump off the train as it slowed down before crossing over. He said he would help me.

He walked me over to the end of the car, where the door was. This was a slower "local" train, and the cars were probably manufactured in the 1960s, and you could open the windows and even the doors while the train was in motion. He told me we had about 5 minutes, and he would tell me where to jump, but he couldn't be seen helping me, as he would get fired, so he would tell me and then leave the car.

We sat there looking out the door, and I thanked him for his help, and told him I had just been chased by a band of Gypsies and he looked at me as if I was on drugs, and nodded politely. Eventually, the train started slowing down, and he told me to get ready. He said, "Just jump off into the grassy area, and don't try to run - just drop and roll. It's all grass and weeds in that area. You'll be alright. Well, tschüss! Good luck!" and he quickly took off to another car.

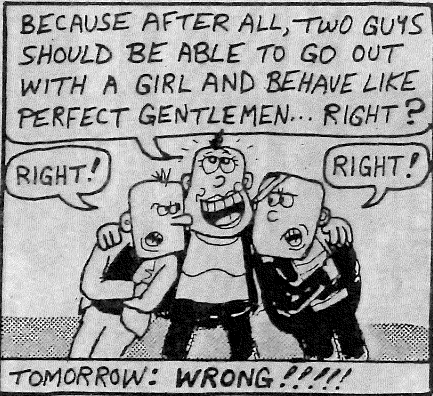
The train was really slowing down, and I could see the grassy area coming up.

I stood outside the train, on the bottom step, hanging onto the handrail, and when the grass was below me, I pushed off and hit the ground and rolled, hoping I was far enough away to avoid being sliced and diced by train wheels. I quickly stood up and walked away, not wanting to be seen, ignoring any scrapes or bruises. I looked around and didn't see anyone, so I just kept walking across the field. The train rolled past and soon I was alone - a sad, wannabe goth punk covered with mud in an isolated wheat field in the rain.

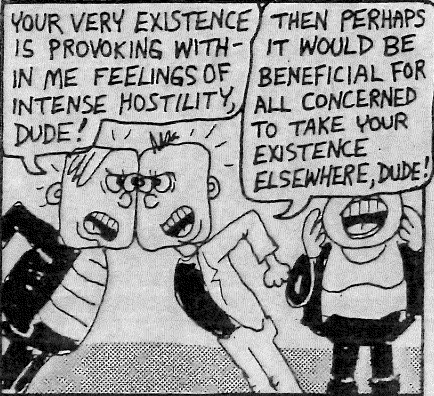
It was a long walk back to Coburg, where I hid out in a little restaurant at the train station. At this point I didn't care if the Gypsies found me, I just wanted to go home. Eventually a train to Bamberg arrived and I jumped aboard and I was soon headed back to the barracks.###

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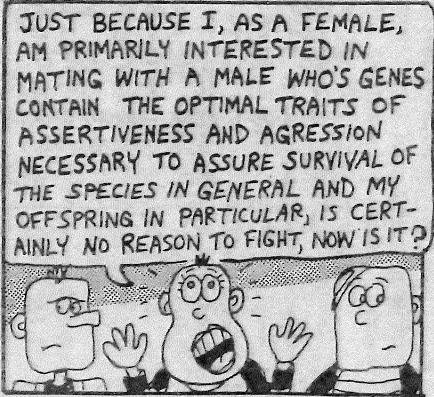
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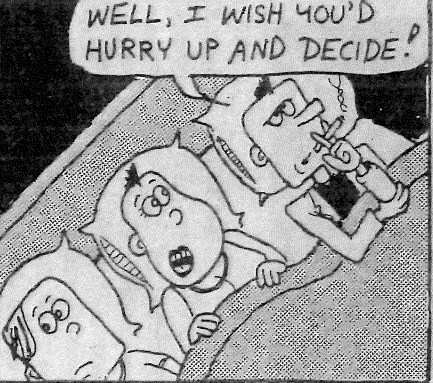
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Good Clean Fun

Written, Drawn, & ©2023

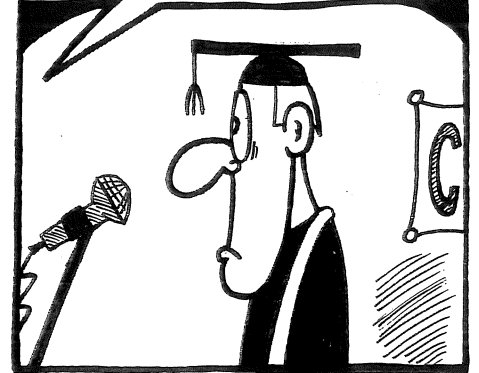
By Gene Mahoney

"KEEP
THE
CHANGE"

... AND IT'S AN HONOR TO BE
YOUR DEAN ON THIS GRADUATION DAY.
SO I IMPLOR YOU, THE CLASS OF 2023,
TO BECOME AGENTS OF CHANGE
FOR THIS NATION.



EXCUSE ME, DEAN...
BUT WHY DO ALL SPEAKERS
AT COLLEGE GRADUATIONS
ENCOURAGE GRADUATES TO
BECOME "AGENTS OF CHANGE
FOR THIS NATION"?



MAYBE THIS NATION ISN'T SO BAD.
I MEAN, ILLEGAL ALIENS ARE
FLOODING ACROSS THE BORDER,
RISKING THEIR LIVES TO GET HERE,
WHILE COLLEGE PROFESSORS ARE
ALWAYS LECTURING US ABOUT HOW
MUCH THE COUNTRY SUCKS.



GOOD POINT, SISTER! SAY IT!
HEY, DEAN... MAYBE ALL CHANGE
ISN'T PROGRESS. MAYBE SOME
NEW THINGS ARE JUST BAD IDEAS.
AS A MATTER OF FACT, ALL THIS
WEIRD "WOKE" CRAP ORIGINATED
ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES.



YOU SAID IT, BRO! COME TO
THINK OF IT, THINGS WERE BETTER
YEARS AGO THAN THEY ARE NOW.
IF YOU DISAGREED WITH PEOPLE
THEY DIDN'T FREAK OUT AND HARASS
YOU ON SOCIAL MEDIA. NOT EVERY
DISAGREEMENT WAS "HATE SPEECH."



UH... WHILE I DON'T AGREE
WITH WHAT YOU SAY, I
RECOGNIZE THIS IS AN ACADEMIC
INSTITUTION, AND I RESPECT
THE FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS.



HEY, DEAN - YOU WANT CHANGE?
WHY DON'T YOU CHANGE THE
SALARY FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S
VICE-PROVOST OF INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY
WHO'S PULLING IN \$200,000 A YEAR?
THAT DOESN'T SOUND VERY
EQUITABLE, DOES IT?



AND LET'S
CHANGE THE
EVEN HIGHER
SALARY FOR
THE DEAN.

NOW THAT'S
HATE SPEECH!
OKAY, THIS
CEREMONY
IS CANCELED!



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Emperor Norton's BoozeLand, 510 Larkin at Turk, (415) 926-8118. Great local bar; large back patio, billiards, shuffleboard, Pliny on draft. Open every day at 1pm. Happy Hour Monday - Friday 1PM - 7PM.

Happy Hour Special, 3PM - 6PM: Tecate \$3, Corona \$4, Modelo \$5, Bare Bottle \$6, Sangria \$8. **Chisme Cantina**, 882 Sutter. (415) 370-7070. Catering available.

Good Old Fashioned Values. Wide selection of beer and wine. Groceries and general merchandise. **Discount Grocers**, 1203 Polk (at Sutter). (415) 929-7385.

Gastroboteats, 1096 Union (at Leavenworth), www.gastroboteats.com, (415) 307-6141. Modern street food, new-style green salads, soups and stews. Delivery or take-out.

Pat's Café, 2330 Taylor (off Columbus). (415) 776-8735. Breakfast, lunch, & weekend brunch. Indoor & outdoor dining. 7:30 AM – 2 PM daily. Takeout, call directly or order online. PatsCafeSF.com.

Kennedy's Irish Pub & India Curry House, 1040 Columbus, (415) 441-8855. World class beer selection and Indian cuisine. Delivery available via GrubHub and Uber Eats.

Cozy café/laundromat combo. Artisan eats & espresso at integrated **Hideaway Café**, 850 Jones (at Bush). (925) 724-4464.