



— Bringing The Community Together —

K E N S I N G T O N O U T L O O K

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Flyer Author Steps Forward

When I delivered the following statement at the KPPCSD meeting on August 9th, I had become deeply angry with the way Director Toombs had treated my wife Dairlyn, on top of the basic issues being addressed. I want my thoughts below to be available without any distortions due to my expressions of anger.

I, Leonard Schwartzburd, am the principle author of the flyer Directors Lloyd and Lipscomb correctly criticized as anonymous. Unfortunately my capitalization of Kensington residents for fiscal responsibility incorrectly suggested that we are an organization rather than the group of individuals who have come together around our shared values, in the present case around fiscal responsibility. I have distributed a corrected version of the flyer here which I stand by (sic).

I am alarmed by changes in the culture of our community.

People I know are afraid of the Chief and you can read in the *Outlook* about neighbors being nasty to one another in the meetings of this Board, another manifestation of how fear has the effect of intimidating those who would oppose the way this Board operates. I personally have witnessed this and at the last meeting of the Board its President engaged in conduct that I regard to be disqualifying for the position given the responsibility for the well being of our community that the office requires.

Actually I'm scared too, but as a law abiding citizen of the United States of America, I refuse to let my fear drive me into helplessness. I won't betray the values of the family that created me. I thank G-d that I live in the United States. A little of my personal history going back to my father and grandfather in The Ukraine under the Czar will help folks to understand where

I'm coming from with respect to our own community.

When I was about 21, having dropped out of school, a serious felony for a Jewish kid I was casting about for something to justify my existence and I decided to become a Los Angeles Police officer.

That was one of the two times in my life I thought my father might actually kill me, but he calmed down when I backed off from my desire for that direction of what I saw as an honorable and interesting life.

I did eventually become an LA County Deputy Probation Officer, a sworn peace officer in California, authorized to carry a gun though we didn't. Probation Officer is how I found the path to becoming a clinical psychologist. And I've always been comfortable around and tended to like police officers and I have treated many of them. The only former officer I continue to treat was shot in the head while on duty in Oakland. To me they are people.

So I found out why my father became enraged with me when I told him I was going to apply to the Police Department. When my father was 11 he greatly admired his father, a builder who worked directly for the Duke as a sort of contractor building infrastructure. My grandfather's brother was arrested for making wine in his cellar. The official family story was that it was for his own use, but my other Ph.D. cousin, the not always reliable daughter of my father's older sister said he was a wine moonshiner. I prefer the moonshiner version.

My grandfather, a man of substance went to get his brother out of jail and was beaten so badly that he died just after dragging himself home. He was a proud Jew and it cost him his life and until recently I didn't know it but my father's police traumatized amygdala though previously unactivated was passed onto me.

That's why I'm thankful that I'm an American right now instead of a Ukrainian.

I feel proud to have been part of a process with my fellow Americans who, as I see it, want to take back the control of our local culture. I am grateful for the legal advice available to help me remove anything that could give anyone the ability to use any of it to harass me unless they were somehow blinded to their vulnerability were they to do so.

The nature of the governance of our Kensington community by this Board has permitted and more basically shared responsibility for the creation of a highly dysfunctional system. While the Chief bears his responsibility, the dysfunction goes back at least to the former chief, suggesting to me that as other individuals were involved on the Board that we have a structural problem. So in every sense we the people and tax payers of Kensington own the problem and it is our responsibility and ours alone to cure it through our actions to promote responsible government and to elect officials who will act with the interests of the community as their primary concern.

Leonard Schwartzburd, Ph.D.

Overfunding Government Services?

Dear Editor:

We think that Kensington should give a vote of thanks to C.R. Wood and the crew who has been working so hard and long to improve the Kensington School Path. They have made the path more usable and beautiful, as well as decreasing the fire hazard to the Kensington community.

Sincerely yours,
Barbara & Henry Nelson

Overfunding Government Services?

At a recent board meeting, I suggested that next year's Measure G assessment be reduced from the current level of \$179 per household. Current economics being what they are, it is prudent to encourage the same 'belt-tightening' attitude that many of us are no doubt imposing on our own households. My suggestion was to reduce the assessment to an even \$100 per household.

Unfortunately, Board candidate Pat Gillette saw that suggestion as an opportunity to personally insult me, sneering as she labeled my suggestion 'irresponsible.'

We have now learned that there is a \$143,000 surplus for next year's budget, and by refunding this to the taxpayers (something our excellent Fire Board did with their own tax levy when it was appropriate), the assessment on a per household basis should go down to \$114. Another budget line item ripe for reduction is the amount we spend on legal fees. With just a bit more restraint, we could easily reduce the assessment to \$100 per household. Just this month, our current Board President saw fit to utilize our attorneys to craft a legal "opinion" that would justify a violation of the Board's Policies and Procedures Manual – is this the kind of expenditure that Kensington residents envisioned when Measure G was passed?

Kensington residents have a clear choice this year: do we want to elect board members who think we should overfund government services and use fear tactics to intimidate those who dare suggest otherwise, or elect those of us who are focused on fiscal responsibility? I urge you to vote for Jim Hausken and Cathie Kosel.

Sincerely,
Mari Metcalf, KPPCSD Director

This month was the first time in at least three years that we received more letters than we could accommodate in our print edition, and so we've posted the overflow here on our website. These were the last three letters received for the September edition. – Ed.