

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2009

Hell Freezes Over

A little, anyway. It sounds as if the San Francisco Police Department may start enforcing decency laws.

From the **Bay Area Reporter** (Caution: obscene photo):

"SF police crackdown on Dore fair sex

San Francisco police are cracking down on public sex acts at this year's Dore Alley street fair in July and are warning organizers that if they do not control attendees, the event's longevity will be in doubt.

The stepped up enforcement against lewd behavior at the South of Market street party, officially known as the Up Your Alley Fair, comes after two individuals filed numerous complaints with the city's Office of Citizen Complaints against the 14 police officers assigned to patrol the 2008 event for not addressing the acts of public indecency.

Police also point to the Web site <http://www.zombietime.com/> that documented numerous photos of men performing oral sex, urinating in public, and masturbating from second floor windows overlooking the fair as another reason for their increased vigilance. The site, created by an anonymous local photographer, also questions why the police took no action against the public nudity and sexual behavior at the fair.

'The fair promoters are the ones who have to take charge; this is their event. If they don't run it properly, they will not be having it again,' said SFPD Lieutenant Nicole M. Greely, who oversees street closure issues for the police department's Southern Station.....

*The department's stance caught off guard officials with **Folsom Street Events, the nonprofit producer of both the Up Your Alley Fair and Folsom Street Fair....***

At the hearing, Greely said that the 'public sex last year was very blatant' at Up Your Alley and that people sent the police photos that 'were very demented.'

This is heartening. It's good to see that Lieutenant Greely has enough

sense and common decency to recognize perverted behavior when she sees it, and that she knows it must not be "tolerated." I'd acted on this issue before, but it had not occurred to me to try and address the issue via the Office of Citizen Complaints. God bless whoever did!

In 2007, I sent **letters** to Paul Pelosi (son of Nancy Pelosi) who at that time was the President of San Francisco's Commission on the Environment (which gave the Folsom Street Events \$19,000 in taxpayers money) and to Kary Schulmann, the Director of "Grants for the Arts" (which gave Folsom Street events \$22,000 in taxpayers money). The letter was CC'd to the Mayor, the Police Chief, the DA, the US Attorney, and the City Controller. Also CC'd were: Archbishop Niederauer, Bishop Benjamin of the Orthodox Church; the Verey Reverend Alan Jones of the Episcopal Church, and Rabbi Stephen Pearce of Temple Emanu-El.

The only response was from Ms. Schulmann, who said our beef was with the SFPD (despite the fact that the bylaws of her own organization prohibit funding events that violate local law) and Reverend Jones, who was disturbed by the event, and agreed that it was a degradation of the human person.

On September 12, 2008, we sent a similar letter to the same authorities. We received a response from Deputy Chief Kevin Cashman, which said, in part:

"Inquiries were made with the Captain of the Southern district and several officers familiar with the event in order to best prepare a response to your concerns. We have also reviewed the website you mentioned."

So maybe our letters did have some small effect in preparing the ground when the complaints to the OCC were made. Let's hope this first step back towards sanity is followed up!

Posted by Gibbons J. Cooney