

# THE KING

B Y T A L I W O O D W A R D

## THE BUILDERS

**\$246,025 to Newsom, \$61,850 to Care Not Cash**

Whether they're retrofitting the Bay Bridge, laying track for Muni's Third Street Light Rail, or designing San Francisco's police stations, architecture, engineering, and construction firms are supporting Gavin Newsom.

Having a mayor friendly to their interests can be helpful if they're angling for city contracts or seeking permit approvals — the mayor appoints commissioners and department heads. And Newsom's campaign-finance reports for the mayor's race reveal dozens of companies that have, or once had, city contracts. Many have made only one donation, but the widespread participation suggests word is out among contractors and architects to pony up for Newsom. Two of the more prominent companies are:

### Nibbi Brothers

The Potrero Hill-based Nibbi Brothers construction firm has its hands in projects all over the Bay Area and has done a ton of work for the city.

This year Nibbi is working on two of the largest construction projects in the state, according to *California Construction Link* magazine. One of those is San Francisco's \$70.5 million North Beach Place public housing project. Prior projects include building the Mission Police Station and upgrading the Richmond District cop shop in the early 1990s. Last year Nibbi was awarded a \$10.7 million contract to construct the African Savanna project at the San Francisco Zoo.

Nibbi and its employees have given \$1,500 to support Newsom's mayoral

bid. Vice president Robert Nibbi gave \$500 to Newsom's 2002 reelection bid, and the company donated \$5,500 to the Care Not Cash campaign.

President Larry Nibbi told us he's not supporting Newsom for mayor and pointed out that he has also donated to Angela Alioto, Susan Leal, and Tony Ribera. "I donated because they're friends of mine," Nibbi said. "There is no way of getting any kind of preference from a mayor."

### Gensler Architecture Design and Planning Worldwide

During the past four years, Gensler has worked on a range of city projects worth at least \$9,021,171, including some at the San Francisco International Airport.

For this well-respected architecture firm, which also has offices in Europe and Asia, that may be small change. But Gensler has been generous to Newsom. Seventeen Gensler employees, including board chair Arthur Gensler, contributed a total of \$3,550 to Newsom's mayoral campaign. Since 1998 they have given \$6,550 to the candidate.

Company president Ed Friedrichs told us it's up to individual employees whether they want to contribute to candidates. He admitted the company hosted a fundraiser for the Newsom for Mayor camp late last year, but said, "Gensler has made our offices available for a variety of meetings [related to causes for which] individuals in the firm advocate," and said that the company is not taking a position in the mayor's race.

## HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

**\$134,650 to Newsom, \$74,113 to Care Not Cash**

Gavin Newsom, who is a lead investor in two restaurants and one nightclub in San Francisco, has always enjoyed the backing of the hospitality industry. But that support increased significantly when he drafted and campaigned for Care Not Cash.

Restaurants and hotels, which had donated about \$5,000 and \$9,000, respectively, to his previous two campaigns, shelled out more than \$70,000 for that campaign. The industry, catering to tourists and the city's well-heeled, has a direct interest in "cleaning up" the streets of San Francisco, which is precisely how Care Not Cash was marketed.

Goodwill from the hospitality industry seems to be persisting. Hotels, restaurants, and their owners and managers have donated about \$100,000 to Newsom's mayoral treasure chest. And while they may be supporting Newsom because he's one of them, hotel and restaurant owners also have an interest in holding down the hotel tax, maintaining city programs to promote tourism, and ensuring health inspections don't get more burdensome.

Bimbo's 365 Club, seafood stalwart Scoma's, North Beach landmark Tosca, and the Hotel Nikko have been consistent Newsom supporters, as have as the following:

### The Golden Gate

#### Restaurant Association

The 65-year-old lobbying arm of the city's food-service industry represents many — though not all — of the city's restaurants, bars, and caterers. The Golden Gate Restaurant Association has historically used its political action committee to promote candidates who are receptive to its general political platform, and at no time was its political muscle more apparent than during Mayor Willie Brown's reelection campaign.

The GGRA raised tens of thousands in soft money for Brown. It also gave to each of Newsom's supervisorial campaigns and directed \$15,478 to Care Not Cash in monetary and non-monetary donations. Since the measure's passage, it funded an extensive billboard campaign thanking Newsom and urging the measure's implementation by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

The GGRA, which did not return calls, has some policy objectives it's sure to communicate to Newsom if he wins the election. It has come out against a living-wage requirement that would increase wait-staff wages, generally opposes higher business taxes, and would like the streets of San Francisco to be as clean as possible —

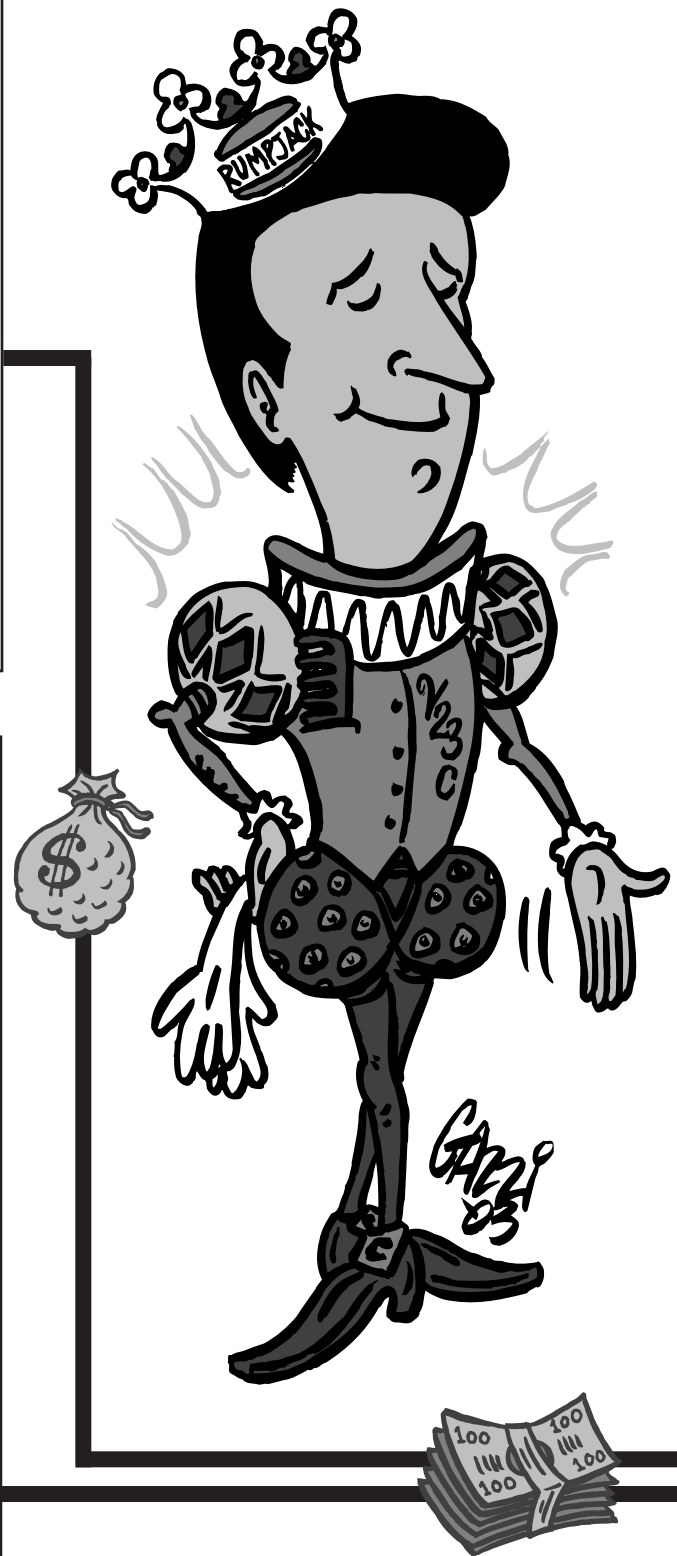
even if that means using draconian tactics against the homeless.

### The Kimpton Hotel and Restaurant Group

This San Francisco-based company pioneered a strategy, now adopted by several others, of buying run-down but conveniently located properties and converting them into fashionable boutique hotels. And it tested this approach in San Francisco, frequently with residential hotels where it forced out tenants. The Villa Florence, for example, was once home to some of San Francisco's poorest residents. Now the Powell Street property is instead "a celebration of Italy on Union Square."

One tenant activist told us Kimpton did more to reduce residential hotel space in San Francisco than any other entity — and was a major reason such conversions were eventually banned. Kimpton now owns 16 hotels here, including the Hotel Monaco, the Sir Francisco Drake, and the Hotel Triton. Among its 12 S.F. restaurants are Postrio, Kuleto's, and the Grand Café.

Kimpton divisions and employees donated \$4,500 to Newsom's 1998 supervisorial campaign and \$2,900 to Care Not Cash. Only one employee has so far donated to the mayoral campaign.



## POWER BROKERS, SOCIALITES, AND CELEBRITIES

This list shows how much some notable donors have given to Gavin Newsom's campaigns. The first number is the total amount given to his personal campaigns, the second number, in parentheses, is the amount given to the Care Not Cash campaign. Totals for companies include donations by employees and their spouses.

Academy of Art College: \$600. Barnes Mosher Whitehurst Lauter and Partners, high-powered lobbying firm: \$2,200 (\$250). Duane Baughman, polit-

ical consultant now working for Angela Alioto: \$550. Stephen Besser, retired lobbyist: \$500. Michael Bozzini, assistant controller of the Bohemian Club: \$100. Willie Brown, mayor of San Francisco: \$500. Ron Burkle, president of the Yucaipa companies and a major Democratic Party donor: (\$5,000). Building Owners and Managers Association, San Francisco PAC: \$600. John and Frances Bowes, chair of toy manufacturer Kransco, and his wife: \$2,950 (\$500). Susie Tompkins Buell, Esprit founder: \$2,000 (\$1,500).

James Campen, Green Bay Packers player: \$500. Ann Moller Caen, San Francisco public utilities commissioner: \$2,000. Catholic Healthcare West: \$2,200. San Francisco Chamber of Commerce: \$1,199 (\$100). Chevron Texaco: \$2,500 (\$20,000). Committee on Jobs: \$500 (\$220,100). Anne Marie Conroy, Treasure Island administrator: \$300. M. Denise DeBartolo York and John C. York II, owners of the San Francisco 49ers and DeBartolo Corp.: \$800. Erin Moore, Edison Schools' vice president of sales: \$500. Shawn Estes, Chicago Cubs player: \$500. Paul B. Fay, former undersecretary of the Navy: \$2,100 (\$200). William Ferguson, CEO of Washington, D.C., lobbying firm the