



COURTESY OF JAPAN SOCIETY

Events Around the Bay

By Lina Broydo

Japan Society of Northern California Celebration

Oct. 17

In honor of its 110th anniversary, the Japan Society of Northern California is presenting a gala concert featuring Van Cliburn International Piano Competition gold medalist Nobuyuki Tsujii at the newly renovated Herbst Theatre in San Francisco. Blind since birth, Tsujii has learned his repertoire largely by ear and has garnered worldwide acclaim playing classical music with renowned symphony orchestras. Tsujii's program will include compositions by Frederic Chopin and Franz Liszt. Founded in 1905, the Japan Society pursues its

strategic mission to advance U.S.-Japan collaboration and understanding in a global context. Visit www.USAJapan.org or call 415-392-4400.

Harvest Festival at Fort Ross

Oct. 17

Russian, Alaskan, and Native American history come together at a harvest festival at Sonoma Coast's Fort Ross State Historic Park. The festival is a tribute to the heritage and rich ethnic cultures of this beautiful setting. Taste local heirloom fruit, cider, baked goods, cheeses, and wines produced from the original orchards and vineyards planted by the region's first Russian settlers in 1817. Vintage horse and buggy rides, apple picking, Russian dances and songs, living history demonstrations, and explorations of the restored fort compound are on the festival's schedule throughout the day. Call 707-847-3437 or visit www.fortross.org.

COURTESY OF THE FORT ROSS HISTORIC PARK



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COURTESY OF SVJFF

October Flashlight Tours

Get ready for the spook-tacular Flashlight Tours at the Winchester Mystery House in San Jose. These special 55-minute tours are given on selected nights in October. Explore the maze of halls, rooms, staircases, and mysterious dead ends with only a souvenir flashlight and your imagination to light the way. Beware of the ghost of Sarah Winchester, who might be lurking around any corner. Due to the tour's popularity, an early purchase of tickets is recommended. Visit www.WinchesterMysteryHouse.com.

COURTESY OF WINCHESTER MYSTERY HOUSE



Silicon Valley Jewish Film Festival

Oct. 10-Nov. 8

This year's Silicon Valley Jewish Film Festival will begin with a screening of "East Jerusalem West Jerusalem" and will feature an appearance by Israeli superstar recording artist David Broza, who will perform several songs and speak about the film. Broza is considered one of the most dynamic and vibrant singers and songwriters in the world. His music is a fusion of the three countries in which he was raised: Israel, Spain, and England. Broza is also known for his commitment to humanitarian causes, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A reception and opportunity to meet Broza will follow. For tickets and a detailed schedule of the festival's screenings and special events, call 408-498-0904 or visit www.svjff.org.

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California Governor Signs Law Targeting Gender Wage Gap

By Juliet Williams

SACRAMENTO—Female workers in California will get new tools to challenge gender-based wage gaps under legislation signed into law Tuesday that supporters say offers the strongest equal-pay protection in the nation.

Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown signed the measure while surrounded by women and girls at an event at Rosie the Riveter National Historical Park in Richmond, northeast of San Francisco.

"The stratification and the pay disparities in California and in America, probably in the world, are something that really eats away at our whole society," Brown said. He called the legislation a "milestone."

The bill by Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson, a Santa Barbara Democrat, expands California's existing equal pay law and goes further than federal law by placing the burden on the employer to prove a man's higher pay is based on factors other than gender.

It also protects workers from discrimination and retaliation if they ask questions about how much other people earn, though it doesn't require that employers provide that information. Workers also will gain the right to sue if they are paid less than someone with a different job title who does "substantially similar" work.

The Fair Pay Act stipulates employers can justify higher wages for men only if the pay is based on seniority, a merit system, quantity or quality of production or any other "bona fide factor other than sex." It cleared the Legislature with bipartisan support and backing from the state Chamber of Commerce.

Senate Minority Leader Jean Fuller, R-Bakersfield, said the legislation strikes a balance between the interests of employers and women in the workforce.

Some state lawmakers say they were motivated to pursue equal pay legislation by heartfelt pleas from high-profile Hollywood actresses at this year's Academy Awards. Lawyer Ellen Pao also made national waves when she filed a gender discrimination lawsuit against a prestigious venture capital firm in Silicon Valley.

While she lost, the publicity prompted embarrassed soul-searching in an industry dominated by male managers.

Women often do not know they are being paid less



AP PHOTO/RICH PEDRONCELLI

Checker Britney Bounds bags groceries for customer Esther Franklin (L) at Compton's Market in Sacramento on Oct. 6. Gov. Jerry Brown signed an equal pay measure, SB358, by state Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson, D-Santa Barbara, Tuesday, that lets female employees challenge pay discrimination based on the wages a company pays to other employees who do similar work.

than their male co-workers, said Jennifer Reisch, Equal Rights Advocates's legal director. The San Francisco-based civil rights group sponsored the legislation.

"By closing loopholes in California's equal pay law and expanding protections against retaliation, the Fair Pay Act will encourage more women to ask questions and demand fair compensation," she said in a statement.

The new law takes effect Jan. 1.

Later Tuesday, Brown announced he vetoed separate legislation intended to ensure medical problems that primarily affect women—such as pregnancy, breast cancer, menopause, and osteoporosis—would no longer be considered preexisting conditions when permanent disability compensation is calculated.

Brown said the bill by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, D-San Diego, relied on a misunderstanding of the evidence-based rules used to calculate compensation, and would replace that system with an "ill-defined and unscientific standard."

Gonzalez said the veto made her more committed to addressing what she called a loophole in state law. "A woman's breasts are worth as much as the prostate of a male co-worker, and they should be valued as such if they were lost in a workplace injury," she said.

From The Associated Press