

Green movement champion grew up in Jamestown

By Sam Bari

Ross Mirkarimi, who grew up in Jamestown, made a major coup for the green movement by writing legislation to outlaw the use of plastic shopping bags in San Francisco, where he now lives.

The law went into effect last December with much fanfare. According to People Magazine and other publications that have spread the word about Mirkarimi and the legislation, cities, towns and countries around the globe are eager to follow suit and ban the ubiquitous plastic that has caused so much damage.

Mirkarimi, 46, is an elected representative on the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco where he has lived for 24 years. He is in charge of District 5, which encompasses the famed Haight-Ashbury area of the Golden Gate city.

"I totally credit my childhood in Jamestown for my green views," Mirkarimi said. "I'll never forget living near Ft. Getty and exploring the unspoiled island with my dog Oscar when I was a boy."

He said that he knew the statistics about the ecological damage that can and have occurred when plastic bags are not disposed of properly, and he thought it was time to do something. "It can take a thousand years for the things to decompose, and if statistics are correct, each year Americans use somewhere between 30 and 100 billion bags, few of which ever see the recycling bins," he said.

A number of issues influenced his decision to write the legisla-



Ross Mirkarimi

tion and initiate efforts to preserve the environment, Mirkarimi said. He added that he has been displeased with the federal government on many issues, particularly their lack of environmental responsibility, citing the refusal to sign the Kyoto Accord in Japan as one of them.

"I'm surprised, but delighted that the legislation got so much attention," Mirkarimi noted. "I'm kind of shy about the personal publicity because that's sometimes difficult to handle. I expected some opposition from grocery and drug stores, but I never thought I'd be the target of the O'Reilly Factor, Rush Limbaugh and all those extreme conservatives. But the national attention in People Magazine, and Forbes recently called, is good for the green movement."

Mirkarimi said that since the legislation went into effect it has worked out well. The people of San Francisco, who are environ-

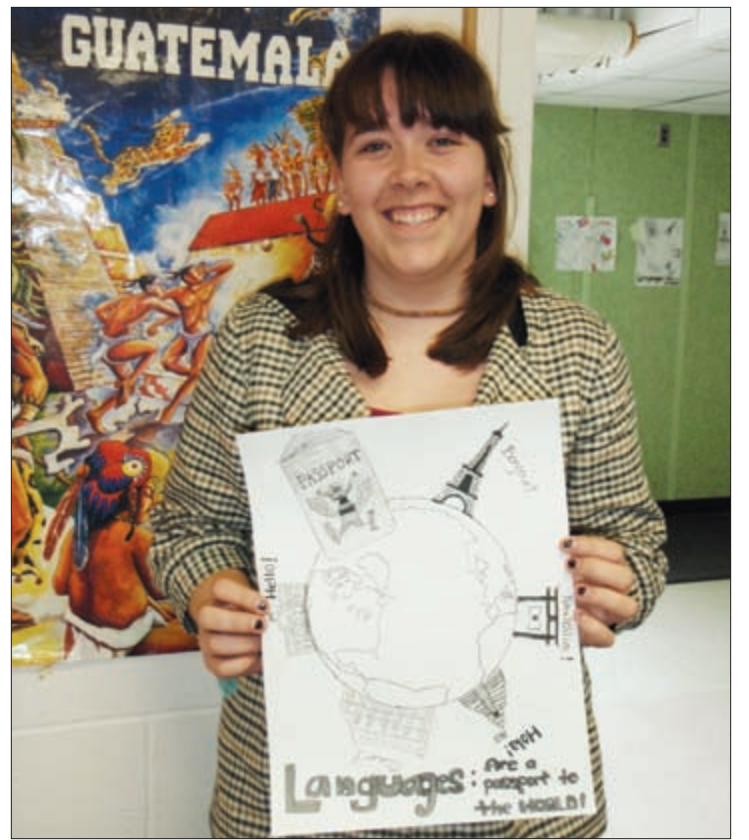
mentally responsible anyway, supported the idea, and seem to be comfortable with doing whatever they can to help the ecology, he said. He also recommended that Jamestown consider a similar ban. He said that island residents are very environmentally conscious and he believes the idea would be well received.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency and other research sources, less than one percent of plastic bags used by Americans ever make the recycling bins. China recently banned the use of the bags, and Ireland is soon to follow.

People Magazine claimed that 12 million barrels of oil are required to manufacture 100 billion plastic bags. They clog landfills, kill thousands of sea turtles and other marine life every year, and the seemingly indestructible bags have even been found in Antarctica, arriving on ocean currents.

Mirkarimi is modest about his accomplishment and downplays the significance of what he says is a small victory. However, because of his efforts, the first major city in the U. S. has taken a big step to fight the status quo and oppose corporate giants who have supported a serious source of pollution.

Ross Mirkarimi's mother, Nancy Kolman Ventrone, still lives in Jamestown with her husband Richard Ventrone. Both are actively involved in civic affairs. She said that Ross attended Jamestown schools after they moved to the island in 1973. "He graduated from Bishop Hen-



Roberts wins poster contest

Emily Roberts, a grade 8 student from Jamestown, was the winner of the Rhode Island Foreign Language Association Middle School Poster Contest. The RIFLA 2008 Poster Contest Theme was "Languages: A Passport to the World". Roberts was awarded \$50 for her winning poster design.

dricken High School before leaving to attend St. Louis University where he earned a degree in Political Science and studied Russian literature," she said.

Mirkarimi said he also studied at San Francisco University. Afterwards he worked under Ralph Nader and spent nine years working for the San Francisco District Attorney on white-collar crime.

He co-founded the California chapter of the Green Party over 14 years ago and has been involved in many civic and community service activities ever since. He was elected to office in 2004 and has been heavily involved in making progressive reforms in local government. Mirkarimi is single and lives with his pets, a dog and a cat.

JAMESTOWN JEWELS

STUNNING WATERFRONT GEM



Sweeping water views mesmerize you from this graceful, 4,857 sq. ft. custom home. On .70 acres, with 106 ft. of beach frontage, a dock and moorings, the three-bedroom, six-bathroom home has dramatic living spaces, a fabulous curved window wall, chef's kitchen, library, gorgeous master suite with his and her bathrooms and, a downstairs media/game room that opens to the water. \$3,650,000

GORGEOUS HIGHLAND MEADOW MANOR



Close to town and Mackerel Cove, this handsome 4,500 sq. ft. shingle-style home has lovely exterior detail, beautiful interior finishes, a fabulous kitchen, wonderful sun room, three fireplaces and, a master bedroom suite with a deck. A lower level living area has a bedroom, bath and media room. A detached two-car garage has a separate office. \$1,795,000

CLASSIC WESTWIND COTTAGE



Just steps from a deeded right-of-way to the beach, this distinctive 5,000 sq. ft. shingle-style, four-bedroom home, including a guest suite above the garage, has nine foot ceilings, beautiful millwork, a wonderful sunroom/porch and lovely hardwood floors. \$1,599,000

WATERFRONT SHORES CONTEMPORARY



Beautiful water and Jamestown Bridge views delight you from this seaside home with 75 ft. of beach frontage, an open floor plan, wonderful kitchen, expansive windows and decks. A lower level family room opens to the yard. An dock application is in process. Rights to two moorings. \$1,375,000

WATERFRONT BUILDING SITE



Engineering for a new ISDS is in process for this .57 acre waterfront parcel with about 65 ft. of frontage on the East Passage just north of the Newport bridge. The vacant land has a freestanding garage. A new well is also in process. \$1,195,000

HARBORVIEW CONDOMINIUM



This stylishly renovated two-bedroom, two-bath, one-level unit with a gourmet kitchen, waterside deck and lush gardens is perfectly sited across from the water with spectacular views of the Newport Bridge and scenic Jamestown Harbor. \$850,000

CHARMING PEMBERTON TWO-FAMILY RANCH



On almost .50 acre, this, 2,152 sq. ft. home has a fenced back-yard and 2-car garage. The unique investment opportunity has a two-bedroom, two-bath front unit and a one-bedroom rear unit with cathedral ceilings, skylights and a woodstove. \$650,000

BEAUTIFUL BUILDING SITE Top O' The Mark



This private 1.46 acre lot is bordered on two sides by a stone wall. Protected by a deeded natural buffer from neighboring properties to the east and south, it has a well on-site. ISDS approvals are needed. \$375,000

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