

October, 2013

Board of Directors, Presidio Trust
103 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94129

Dear Members of the Presidio Trust Board:

The *William Kent Society* is a vital community of hundreds of donors who give \$1,000 or more annually and provide more than 70 percent of the total contributed income to the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, an organization that has provided more than \$325 million in support to the Golden Gate National Parks, including \$125 million in the Presidio.

Named for William Kent who began a legacy of selfless philanthropy to parks and public spaces, the *William Kent Society* is fortunate to follow in his footsteps in the Golden Gate National Parks. Mr. Kent made the first private donation of land to the federal government, which then declared the land a National Monument. When Theodore Roosevelt suggested to Mr. Kent that the forest be named "Kent Monument," he replied, "So many millions of better people have died forgotten, that to stencil one's own name on a benefaction seems to carry with it an implication of mandated immortality, as being something purchasable." Instead, he recommended the name for what we now know and love as Muir Woods. Since then, our community has carried forward this spirit to create, protect, and restore an array of national park sites for the benefit of millions of visitors every year.

In the Presidio, WKS gifts have proudly supported environmental education and leadership programs for youth, volunteer programs, the native plant nursery, habitat restoration, trails, overlooks, and more. These projects and programs, along with the terrific efforts of the Presidio Trust and National Park Service, have laid the foundation for the public's enjoyment of this national treasure. We commend the Presidio Trust for its self-sufficiency, and the numerous new initiatives it is undertaking to make the Presidio an more welcoming and relevant public space.

Among all the plans for the future of the Presidio, perhaps the most pivotal decision is what cultural institution to select for the Mid-Crissy site. A cultural institution at this location will have a significant presence and effect on the experience of park visitors to Crissy Field, the Main Post, and the new Tunnel Top parklands. In considering how a cultural institution can help the Presidio realize its full potential as a public asset and international destination, we strongly urge you to select the proposal that best embraces national park values and elevates the very things that define the Presidio as a National Park: its nature, its history, and the vibrant Bay Area community. The Presidio Exchange promises to do exactly that with both its design and its place-based, participatory, and cross-disciplinary programs.

As members of the *William Kent Society* Advisory Council, we have every confidence that the PX, like the Presidio itself, will be a place for people of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy for generations to come. By responding to trends in forward thinking parks and cultural institutions, the programs will redefine how people engage with national parks. Representing the dedicated hundreds of major donors to these parks, we believe in the Parks Conservancy's vision for the PX. We strongly recommend your selection of the Presidio Exchange.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Hoenigman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Amanda Hoenigman
Chair, *William Kent Society* Advisory Council