It’s All About the Looks
Kaiser recently made a donation of $25 million to the California Governor’s Housing Fund. This would be a great thing if it didn’t contradict how Kaiser treats their employees.

They recently refused to give the workers a 4% raise which would not come close to covering the high cost of living in the Bay Area. So, while this $25 million looks good on paper, it is just that, a gesture meant to make Kaiser look good.

“Futuro Health” – Kaiser’s New Scam
Kaiser and SEIU-UHW have unveiled their new program called “Futuro Health,” which will be a $130 million-dollar organization devoted to providing training for new health-care workers.

Kaiser stated “SEIU-UHW’s nearly 100,000 members, who mostly work in hospitals, will collaborate with Futuro Health and Kaiser Permanente to scout, recruit, and coach students.”

There are many unclear things about this plan which should be enough to halt it and make sure the union membership understands it before it’s rolled out. But in the meantime, what seems clear is that this is another way for Kaiser to impose new roles on the already overworked and overextended staff.

A Waste of Time
This past week we got one last taste of the democratic nominees before the primaries begin. A number of topics were covered: whether or not the nominee supported the Green New Deal, if they would start a war without congressional approval, or if they voted in favor of the Iraq war.

What dominated the news afterward wasn’t the issues that affect all of us, like the future of the planet or the possibility of starting yet another decade-long war in the Middle East. The news that eclipsed the debate topics was the drama between Warren, Sanders, and the moderator.

This circus act clearly isn’t meant to help voters decide who the best candidate is, since voters themselves know what they need, without the help of CNN or the like. While the media and politicians waste our time rehashing sound bites, our time can be better used fighting for what really matters.

Kaiser is Full of Beans
Kaiser recently elected a new board member: Starbucks CMO (chief marketing officer) Matthew Ryan. CEO Greg Adams says he was added because of his "extensive experience in the areas of customer digital experience, innovation, product development, and brand management."

Basically, Ryan is responsible for selling the Starbucks brand to consumers, and it’s clear with this addition that they want him to do the same for Kaiser. But healthcare isn’t coffee, so how about instead of hiring a new six figure board member to make Kaiser look more appealing to ‘potential customers,’ Kaiser actually provides funding for what will help patients. This includes fully staffed departments, more full-time positions, and better paid staff.

Climate Disruption, Migration, and the Rise of Walls
Global warming is leading to the displacement of tens of millions of people globally, and governments are responding by constructing and expanding border walls, while criminalizing immigrants. Join us to discuss these important issues with Todd Miller, journalist and author.

Saturday, February 1st
7pm (doors open at 6:30pm)

South Berkeley Senior Center
2939 Ellis St, Berkeley

$5 admission (no one turned away for lack of funds)