
Burlingame man fills his niche — town crier

By Sam Whiting

For 108 years Burlingame muddled through without a town crier. Then at 1 p.m. on Super Bowl Sunday, Richard Aptekar stood in front of the main library ringing a handbell so loud you could hear it

from Caltrain chugging by.

“Oyez, oyez, oyez,” he thundered in a voice that suggested he had been waiting all his life to do this. And he has, because the city of Burlingame, like cities and towns everywhere, did not know it needed a town crier

until Aptekar made the case for it.

“I suggested to the powers that be that they should have a town crier and that I would be the perfect candidate,” he said during a recent dress rehearsal he called for himself. “I just enjoy the idea of

being a spokesman.”

Before there were libraries and before there were newspapers, there was the town crier standing in a public crossroad ringing his bell to get the attention of the populace, before making an ur-

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