

Exploring Writing

by Maddie Felder



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Lemon Tree Article

Posted on [May 25, 2012](#)



Glen Park only has two registered lemon trees, a number that seems exceptionally low.

"It's a perfect weather neighborhood for Meyer lemons," says Dr. Isabel Wade, Chief Lemon Ambassador of Just One Tree. Glen Park is one of the sunniest areas in San Francisco, which is why it is ideal for growing lemon trees. Just One Tree's mission is to provide cities, like San Francisco, the ability to rely on residents to source local produce. Just One Tree wants people to share their home-grown produce with others, which will benefit the environment since it means fruits and vegetables will not have to be shipped in from other regions, or even other countries. It will also allow more people to have access to healthy food, since it will be cheaper and local.

Just One Tree isn't just stopping with the sharing of produce. It wants to establish community gardens that will teach children responsibility and other work skills they can use. But before Just One Tree can do any of this, they need to find more local trees.

Lemon trees are good because, according to their website, San Francisco consumes "over 25,000 tons of citrus a year" (<http://justonetree.org/got-a-tree/>). That's a lot of citrus, and a lot of lemons being imported each year, especially when there are so many lemon trees in San Francisco, 234 to be exact, and the number keeps growing as more and more people register their trees. Just One Tree is starting with lemons, but they could move onto other produce. Their goal is to have everybody sharing their local produce so it's cheaper and doesn't have to be imported. Glen Park residents need to register their trees, there are definitely more than two lemon trees in this neighborhood, so register and eventually you'll be rewarded by having access to other, locally grown, inexpensive, produce.

Just One Tree is focusing on lemons rights now, but Glen Park has lots of other plant life registered on www.urbanforestmap.org such as the Brisbane Box, the Evergreen Pear, Red Flowering Gum and many, many more trees, registered and unregistered. Glen Park residents need to take advantage of the healthy climate in this neighborhood and plant more lemon trees.

To register your lemon tree, go to www.justonetree.org. Not only can you register your lemon tree you will also get helpful tips on how to take care of it and delicious lemon recipes to try out.

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Golden Gate Bridge Article – Zyzzyva

Posted on [May 25, 2012](#)



Contemporary books like those in the Harry Potter series and *The Hunger Games* are known far and wide, dominating today's literary market; they've been made into movies and top *The New York Times* bestsellers list. But what were the bestsellers that people were reading in the 1930s? The San Francisco Public Library can tell you. This year, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the opening of the

Golden Gate Bridge, the Library is displaying an exhibition, [Bridging Minds: San Francisco Reads, 1933-1937](#).

The Golden Gate Bridge is the icon of San Francisco, featured in movies and T.V. shows, an instant reminder that a story is set in the foggy city. However, what most people don't think of when they think of the Golden Gate Bridge is that it was built during the Great Depression, which lasted throughout the 1930s. People were losing their homes and their jobs while this massive bridge, signifying a promised grandeur for San Francisco, was being built over them. The Golden Gate Bridge, while ostentatious, gave people jobs. Someone had to build it, after all.

The exhibition at the library gives a little history of the bridge being built, but also highlights the books, booksellers and bookmakers that were popular at the time. Despite the Depression, or perhaps because of it, books were being read a lot, and not just the kind of quick paperbacks sold in airports, easily disposed after a flight. People read deeply intellectual books like *An American Doctor's Odyssey* by Victor Heiser, an autobiography of a doctor who traveled the globe. They also read books that remain literary classics today, like *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. Sure, there were also romance novels being read. (Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* is also on display.) But many of the books were very serious, such as *Grim Journey: The Adventures of the Emigrating Company Known as the Donner Party* by Hoffman Birney, or *In the Second Year* by Storm Jameson, about a British fascist regime. Other books that were major successes in their day and were made into movies, like *Anthony Adverse* by Hervey Allen, are now all but forgotten.

First and early editions of these books are on display on the 6th floor of the Main Library, just outside the San Francisco History Center. The exhibition also gives information about where people bought the books, as well as the printers and publishers. Jonck & Seeger were among the local publishers of the time, and booksellers included the Gelber-Lilienthal Bookshop, Newbegins and Paul Elder & Company.

The Great Depression was hard; books provided people with cheap (or free, if using the San Francisco Public Library) entertainment at a time when spirits were low. It also resulted in a large increase in library use in San Francisco, with circulation nearly doubling during this period and libraries staying open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. most days. In addition, several neighborhood libraries and "deposit stations" opened during this period, recognizing the city's need for literary diversions.

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What I did on Wednesday

Posted on [May 18, 2012](#)



On Wednesday I went to ModCloth. Does the name sound familiar? It might, its one of the fastest growing online retailers, selling vintage clothing, and adorable accessories. I saw their ads everywhere, with the cute dresses on display so I clicked the link and fell in love with the website. I was so excited to hear that they were going to teach a fashion writing class at 826 Valencia, so of course I signed up. We each wrote our own fashion blog pieces in the class so it was really cool and I learned a lot just from that class. I also got to shadow a blogger for the modcloth website, which is what I did on Wednesday. I got to see how different departments were run, and what it takes to operate a fashion website like modcloth. They treat it like an online magazine, with lookbooks to showcase their fashion, incorporating different themes and telling a story. They have the blog as well, which has interviews with up and coming designers and interesting people. Even the products tell a story, with a little blurb about the outfit and what to wear with it. I even got a free CD from the day! I got to see everything happen and it was an awesome experience and I wish I could go back.

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What I did Today

Posted on [May 16, 2012](#)



Today, I went to 826 Valencia and helped out there. I helped Justin put together the chapbook for James Lick school and I helped out in the pirate store, I got shirts down from the attic and folded them. I also tutored at the end of the day with a kid named Giuseppe. It was really cool because I got to see a bunch of different sides of writing. I want to be a writer but it was cool to be able to see a different side of it. I'm also going to be writing an article for the Glen Park News about parking meters. On Wednesday I'm going to modcloth. On Thursday and Friday I'll be going back to Zzyzva to help out again. I'm nervous about talking to strangers, but I'll figure it out.

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What I did yesterday

Posted on [May 16, 2012](#)



Yesterday I worked on my lemon tree story. I'm writing a story about lemon trees and their impact on San Francisco (mainly, Glen Park) and how San Francisco can be self sustainable on lemons if everyone registers their lemon tree, then it can be shared with the entire city. Glen Park only has 2 lemon trees, which seems low, so the purpose of the article is to educate people on how to register their tree and why they should register. Besides working on that and editing it and re-editing it I also went to 826 Valencia for my Monday Night writing class. I'm working on a story about the end of being a high school student and these kids break into an elementary school where they hung out on weekends but now has a fence around it. The kids don't break into the building, but to where the playground is and eat cookies and chill out. I hope it will turn out great.

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Last day at Zyzzyva

Posted on [May 12, 2012](#)



Today was my last day at Zyzzyva 😞 I made Oscar and Laura cookies, but Laura was sick so now they're in the snack room. Today I addressed envelopes again (although only 20, not 65) and I got to run them through the stamp machine. I'm not sure what its called, but its a scale on one part and then you push a button and slide the envelopes through a slot and they come out stamped. It kept getting jammed but I fixed it. I edited my piece more and read other submissions. Oscar took us out for Thai food for lunch and it was delicious. It was weird eating lunch at a normal time, usually I eat breakfast at 9 or 10 and I eat lunch when I get off work. It was super nice and when we got back I formatted and archived another piece. I kept messing up but I figured it out. I'm not related to an IT guy for nothing. I'm going to miss Zyzzyva, next week is Glen Park News and Modcloth. I'm doing an article about lemon trees and an article about parking meters, which means that I have to talk to strangers *gulp* I'm still really excited to see how different types of writing works because I'm interested in all of them.

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4th day at Zyzzyva

Posted on [May 12, 2012](#)



Thursday was my 4th day at Zyzzyva. There was a new intern there and she was super, super nice. I got to Zyzzyva in the afternoon because I had my AP English test. The test was hard, but I'm glad I took it. Hopefully I got a good score but you never know. Anyways, at Zyzzyva I read submissions and logged them and I worked on my piece. I'm writing a review about an exhibit at the library. The exhibit is in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge being built and it's about what people were reading in the 1930s, during the building of the bridge and the great depression. There were well-known books like Gone with the Wind and Of Mice and Men as well as romance novels and books about the history of California. Its a really cool exhibit. I looked at it on Tuesday when I went to the library. After all the writing I did on Thursday my hand hurt so much, 3 essays on a test and then more writing.

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3rd day at Zyzzyva

Posted on [May 11, 2012](#)



Wednesday was my third day at Zyzzyva. I addressed and mailed 65 envelopes. I have dysgraphia so it was a lot of writing and it was hard, but I did it. I rely on my LD to get me out of things sometimes, things I can't do, but this was something I had to do, I couldn't get out of it. I also read a lot of submissions and there were some really great stories. I had so much fun. Thursday is my 4th day and I have my AP test.

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2nd Day at Zyzzyva

Posted on [May 9, 2012](#)



Today was my second day at Zyzzyva. I worked from 10 am to 3pm. Here is a breakdown of my schedule for the day:

10:00 am: Enter Zyzzyva. Say hi to Laura and her intern. Oscar isn't here yet

10:05 – 10:30ish: Open envelopes and log the authors work

10:30ish to 12:30ish: Read submissions and talk to Laura about my project

12:30 to 2:00: Archive work. This means copy and pasting poems, stories, essays and plays (all writing no art) from text edit to word and formatting them so they look like they did in the book

2:00 to 2:30: Oscar gets the mail so I log more pieces and organize them

2:30 to 3:00: Address envelopes to subscribers about how they are going to stop getting their subscription to Zyzzyva.

After my day at Zyzzyva I head over to the library for some lunch and research. Laura and Oscar want me to do a review piece and I think I'm going to do it on the exhibit in the library about what San Franciscans were reading when the Golden Gate Bridge was open. It might be featured on their website.

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826 Valencia



Posted on [May 8, 2012](#)

Today I also had my usual class at 826 Valencia, however, today was different than usual. Today we had a guest speaker, the hilarious and talented Beth Lisick. She wrote: Everyone into the pool, a memoir-y piece. She was very nice in person and talked about how she got published. She used to be a baker, but after doing spoken word she was encouraged to turn it into poems and she made writing her full time job. She told us about making it in the literary world and how it can be hard to stray true to your views. She laughed at herself and did not take herself too seriously and she was a brilliant writer when I read a short story from her. I love 826 Valencia and I hope they will have more guest speakers coming in.

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