

CALIFORNIA TODAY

Feinstein's Name Could Soon Grace an Airport Terminal and a Navy Ship

Since Senator Dianne Feinstein died in September, her admirers have looked for ways to honor her legacy.



By Heather Knight

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It's Monday. A trail near you may soon be named for Dianne Feinstein. Plus, a state agency withdrew allegations against the video game maker Activision Blizzard in a \$54 million settlement.



A bust of Senator Dianne Feinstein at San Francisco City Hall. Jim Wilson/The New York Times

Senator Dianne Feinstein's final years were marred by her deteriorating health, the loss of her husband and a bitter family dispute over money.

But since her death in September at age 90, her admirers have moved quickly to honor her accomplishments as the first woman to serve as mayor of San Francisco and the first woman to become a U.S. senator from California.

Soon, numerous parts of Feinstein's home state could be named in her honor: a bicycle trail along Lake Tahoe where she pedaled as a youngster; Diamond Valley Lake in Southern California; the Elk River Trail in Humboldt County.

"There were things we thought needed to be done to honor her," said Jim Lazarus, who worked for Ms. Feinstein in various capacities, including as her deputy mayor in the 1980s. "I just would have preferred some of this be done while she was alive."

Her former aides in Washington are discussing with the secretary of the Navy the possibility of naming a ship after her, said Jim Gonzalez, a special assistant to Feinstein in the 1980s.

But the priority for a group of local luminaries who call themselves the Dianne Feinstein 100-Plus Committee — because the group already had 117 members six weeks after her death — is the international terminal at the San Francisco International Airport. The group has submitted a renaming application to the Airport Commission, which will hold a public hearing on the matter next month.

"I'm fighting for this to be the first, instead of a trail in Humboldt County," Gonzalez said with a laugh.

John Martin, the retired longtime director of the San Francisco International Airport, said he first had the idea 25 years ago, but airport rules allow such honors only for people who have died or have been retired from public service for at least two years. Feinstein kept working until the end, casting a vote in the Senate to keep the government funded about 12 hours before she died.

Martin said that Feinstein, as mayor, helped settle a dispute between airlines and the city, a deal that contributed to the airport's expansion and long-term financial success.

She used the airport regularly for business and personal travel and, as she did around the city, regularly pointed out what needed to be fixed. In one instance, Martin said, he changed the custodial schedule after she noted that the airport looked dirty in the middle of the afternoon.

As campaigns to pay tribute to Feinstein gain traction, her family has started to resolve parts of a dispute over her estate. A vacation home in Stinson Beach that caused a disagreement this past summer sold last month for \$9.1 million, \$600,000 above the asking price — an eye-popping figure even in the exorbitant world of Northern California's coastal real estate. The family remains in mediation as it sorts out the rest of the assets that belonged to Feinstein and her husband, Richard Blum, a wealthy financier who died in 2022.

Efforts are also underway to preserve Feinstein's papers. After Feinstein's death, under congressional rules, her aides had 60 days to clear out her offices in Washington, San Francisco, Fresno, Los Angeles and San Diego.

Joanne Hayes-White, a former San Francisco fire chief who served as Feinstein's Northern California director for her final 18 months in the Senate, said that aides sent 100 boxes of Feinstein's papers and other items to Stanford University, where Feinstein graduated in 1955. Whatever Stanford does not take will be given to the San Francisco Historical Society.

The university did not respond to a request for comment, but it has posted several job listings for archivists to work on the Feinstein Papers Project. Hayes-White said the senator and Stanford entered an archival agreement several years ago.

"She was a huge inspiration to me," Hayes-White said. "I know naming an airport or an institution should not be taken lightly, but I think it's a no-brainer."



On Friday, a California state agency withdrew its allegations against the video game maker Activision Blizzard of fostering a culture of sexual harassment against women.
Etienne Laurent/EPA, via Shutterstock

The rest of the news

- The California Civil Rights Department, which had accused the video game maker Activision Blizzard of fostering a culture of sexual harassment against women, withdrew those allegations in a \$54 million settlement with the company.
- Max Whittaker, a New York Times photographer, writes about his long-term assignment following California wildland firefighters.
- Gov. Gavin Newsom is publicly pressing local governments to take action on the state's new conservatorship law, CalMatters reports.

Southern California

- Matthew Perry died from the “acute effects” of ketamine, an anesthetic with psychedelic properties, the Los Angeles County medical examiner's office said in an autopsy report.
- Local leaders want to create what could be San Diego's largest shelter in the abandoned H Barracks near the airport, The San Diego Union-Tribune reports.
- Eric Chen, a Taiwanese pastor, helped survivors of the Monterey Park mass shooting gain access to necessary resources, such as mental health counseling, The Los Angeles Times reports.

Central California

- Inyo County Search and Rescue led a daring operation this month to free a hiker who had become pinned under a boulder in the Inyo Mountains in California.

Northern California

- A new study from the University of California, San Francisco, found that Black people who had heart attacks were less likely than their white counterparts to receive specialized cardiac care and services, The San Francisco Examiner reports.
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Barker Dam Trail in Joshua Tree National Park. Nate Abbott for The New York Times

Where we're traveling

How to spend 36 hours in Joshua Tree National Park.

Tell us

As 2023 comes to a close, tell us what the best part of your year was. Did you have a big birthday, start a new job or adopt a pet? Email us at CAtoday@nytimes.com. Please include your name and the city in which you live.

And before you go, some good news

Seniors in eastern Los Angeles this fall celebrated the reopening of a local senior center — a milestone for the community — after the center was shuttered for more than three years because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The senior center, in Lincoln Heights, has long been a vital part of daily life for older residents. After the pandemic forced the center to close for an extended period, those who missed it rallied their council members to get it up and running again. Many noted the importance of the center's trips, classes and social services.

Three years after the initial closure, that dream came true: The Lincoln Heights Senior Center officially reopened in October with a celebration that drew more than 100 and included a ribbon-cutting ceremony, balloons and plenty of merrymaking.

“This is what it was about before Covid,” Vera Padilla, a community member, told KABC-TV of the senior center's value. “Now they have a place where they can come and express and talk.”

Thanks for reading. We'll be back tomorrow.

P.S. Here's today's Mini Crossword.

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