

# Tax-break committee regroups

## Postpones review of long-awaited reports of benefits

By MARK HEDIN AND GEOFF LINK

**T**HE NEWLY reconstituted Citizens Advisory Committee — the central city communities' connection to the largesse from the Twitter tax-break firms — met in mid-July for the first time after being out of action for 3½ months.

The city attorney's office was there to give the members a lesson in the strict do's and don'ts of their committee work, pointing out potential problem areas like the procedural technicality that put the CAC out of commission in early April.

The resuscitated panel, preoccupied with procedural matters, put off dealing with the tax-break companies' first quarterly reports, which were all in hand, but the committee decided not to discuss them.

Nine days before the meeting, on July 9, the Board of Supervisors rubber-stamped its Rules Committee's nominations for the CAC — reinstating Steve Suzuki and Brad Paul and seating Peter Masiak, Julian Dash, Jeff Kositsky, Antoinetta Stadlman and Stephen Tennis.

The eight members present elected Seat 2 newcomer Masiak to be chairman and set the committee's next meeting, date: Sept. 5. Dash was nominated vice chair, but Masiak, the rookie, said having two newcomers as officers was not a good idea. The panel agreed and moved on.

Vice Chair Mara Blitzer led the meeting. A key item on the agenda was to finally review the first-quarter reports on the benefits the firms had agreed to provide.

"These are the first written reports that we've received, so it's really exciting," Blitzer said. "But I'd like to make a comment: There's no possible way we can have a discussion on the quarterly reports when we just got the reports at this meeting."

Tim Ho, recently hired by the city administrator to coordinate with the CAC, was making his first appearance at an official CAC meeting. He begged to differ. He said he had emailed the reports within the 72-hour notification rule, a point Kositsky confirmed after the meeting. Nonetheless, reviewing the six companies' reports of benefits contributed from February through April will wait until the September meeting.

The city attorney's office — whose interpretation of the rules triggered the decimation of the CAC over some members' unexcused absences — sent Joshua White and Marie Blits to brief the committee on some particularly stringent regulations, such as the Sunshine Ordinance mandating that all activities or contact involving a majority of the committee be done in public. Blits later clarified that even an email from one member to the rest of the group is forbidden.

The group also operates under super-strict conflict-of-interest rules. White said that panel members cannot serve if

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# CENTRAL CITY

# EXTRA!

SAN FRANCISCO

## INCENTIVES TO CHANGE



PHOTO BY BRIAN RINKER

**Irfan Ali**, who has owned Cadillac Market for six years, hadn't heard of the city's fresh food program, but doesn't think it will pay off in his store at the rough corner of Eddy and Hyde.

## Fresh, but not easy

### City puts up \$60,000 for healthy fare in TL mom-and-pops

By MARJORIE BEGGS

**B**Y YEAR'S END, the Tenderloin will have one model corner store that highlights inexpensive, healthy food instead of tobacco, alcohol and snacks high in salt, fat and sugar. A year from now, up to three more stores will join the transformative program.

Each participating store will get \$16,000 worth of technical assistance and tangible products like display cases and coolers. Of the total, \$12,000 is an outright grant and \$4,000 a loan at 3% interest that may be forgiven if the merchant meets program criteria for three years.

It's taken a while to get the Healthy Food Retailer Incentives Program going. Almost a year ago, Supervisor Eric Mar introduced it, but the legislation languished. City elections were imminent and Mar and his staff hadn't the time to muster support, says his aide Nick Pagonlatos.

A critical part of that support came from the 450-member Arab American Grocers Association. "We had some issues at first, but we worked them out," President Kamel Karajah said. "Look, it's a voluntary program. It's not like we have to [join]. If a store owner believes some of the help the city can give will improve his business, he's free to take it."

The Land Use Committee finally heard the ordinance July 22 and took public testimony, all overwhelmingly supportive. With no opposition, committee members sent the legislation on to the full board.

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The Tenderloin, which still has no full-service grocery, often is portrayed as an arid food wasteland. "It's a food desert," said Stephen Tennis, a TL activist working on the model corner store effort.

The reality is that the Tenderloin has ready access to affordable fresh produce in one of the city's largest outlets, the three-times-a-week Heart of the City Farmers Market. Also, the neighborhood has almost three dozen food pantries serving thousands of residents with fresh produce and other healthy foods supplied by the San Francisco Food Bank.

What the Tenderloin lacks, however, is what San Franciscans in most other neighborhoods take for granted: They can walk a block or two to a corner store and pick up some fresh food for a snack or quick meal filler.

The TL has 70 corner stores, according to a recent survey by the 10-member Tenderloin Healthy Corner Store Coalition. While all but eight sell alcohol and cigarettes, more than half carry no fresh produce.

Certainly, the availability of alcohol in the neighborhood is ubiquitous — a representative of Southern Wine and Spirits, the nation's largest liquor wholesaler, calls the Tenderloin "one of the most competitive retail liquor markets in Northern California."

Mar's ordinance tries to encourage the mom-and-pops to adjust the ratio of healthy to unhealthy products they sell. "Encourage" is key: The program sweetens the transition. Store owners can get help learning how to make a profit selling healthy eats, store redesign to enhance product appeal, and grants and loans for façade improvement, equipment and a redesign consultant. And the city will assign a staffer to the program full time.

To get that help, corner stores must agree to devote 35% of their selling space to healthy foods and limit square footage for tobacco and alcohol to 20%. They don't have to stop



# Nice turnout to say so long to the captain

## Tenderloin shows up in force for Garrity's heartfelt farewell bash at Farmer Brown

By Mark Hedin

A CROSS-SECTION of the community — police, politicians, merchants, friends, family and residents — came out to Farmer Brown restaurant the second Tuesday in July to congratulate Tenderloin police Capt. Joe Garrity on getting promoted to commander. He'll be overseeing half of the city's 10 police districts from an office in the Hall of Justice.

"It was pretty much a unanimous decision among the deputy chiefs to bring him over. He's got tremendous respect, as he does in the community," Deputy Chief of Operations John Loftus, Garrity's new supervisor, told The Extra. "He was a natural."

District 6 Supervisor Jane Kim sponsored the event with U.C. Hastings Law School, Farmer Brown and Tenderloin Station, according to flyers.

"Everyone is here because they know how Joe has touched our lives," Kim said. "Someone who walks the beat, knows our names ... is so important."

Kim also introduced the new Tenderloin captain, Jason Cherniss, Garrity's successor. Cherniss worked undercover narcotics when the station was in the basement of the Hibernia Bank.

Sunny Angulo, Kim's aide, had procured a small 49ers helmet mounted on a stand. She had placed a "TL" logo over the Niners' and invited the guests to sign. Kim presented Garrity with the helmet and a bottle of Lagavulin single-malt scotch, the supervisor's favorite. "It tastes like pig," she announced. "That's why I like it — bacon!"

Tenants' rights advocate Latonya Jones, of the SRO Collaborative and Sisters Rize Working Group, serenaded the captain and his wife, Elizabeth, with a cappella verses of "Summertime."

And, as the July 9 date also marked the occasion of Kim's birthday, red velvet cake was served along with the hors d'oeuvres — strips of chicken and sweet potatoes and more exotic tidbits from the Farmer Brown kitchen.

Newly minted Citizens Advisory Committee member Julian Dash, whose

Holy Stitch haberdashery a few doors down, arrived in the company of some of his crew, including the artist Apex 1, whose artwork adorns the Turk Street wall across from Farmer Brown's.

Supervisor David Campos, former Supervisor Aaron Peskin, attorney Mark Rennie, TEDP interim Director Suse Nakata, and Chancellor and Dean Frank Wu and CFO David Seward of Hastings also showed up. Terrance Alan, who first worked with Garrity when former Entertainment Commissioner Alan owned the site of the Power Exchange sex club on Jones Street, was there, too.

So were Paul McCann and Will Thacher of the Ritchie Commercial real estate firm. Thacher said his family since 1937 has owned the Market Street properties across Turk from the restaurant that are to include TEDP's 950 Center for Art and Education.

Sa'adi Nasim, outreach coordinator for the Al Sabeel mosque at 48 Golden Gate Ave., said Garrity "will be really missed. He came to the community center after a spike in crime," Nasim said, and because of Garrity's efforts, "We feel safer."

Also present was Dariush Kayhan, formerly the mayor's director of Homeless Policy, now director of DPW's Bureau of Street and Environmental Services and Urban Forestry, and Showdogs co-owner David Addington, who Garrity had flagged in through the window as Addington was walking by on Turk. Ellen Parker represented the mayor's office and the ubiquitous Nulty twins, Michael and John, made their presence felt.

Dina Hilliard, TL CBD director, recalled working most closely with Garrity on Safe Passages, escorting kids through rough blocks. "He's so in touch," she said, "you forget that he's a police officer."

Alan Kregge and Kevin Stull, Thuy Marie Nguyen, a teacher at Tenderloin Elementary who with her husband has developed programs teaching kids to make and use skateboards, were there too, as well as neighborhood watchdog M.J. Isabel and Del Seymour, the Tenderloin tour guide.

Bill Palmi, Hastings' chief public safety officer, apologized to Garrity for arriving in full uniform as if he was

there on business. Palmi has famously appeared dressed as "the Elvis cop" to enliven a variety of traffic safety messages. But, on this occasion, there was no "Jailhouse Rock" to be heard. ■



PHOTO BY MARK HEDIN

**New Cmdr. Joe Garrity** was given a modified, mini Niners helmet, signed by his Tenderloin faithful.



PHOTO BY MARK HEDIN

**Gathering for Garrity:** Front row, from left: Sunny Angulo, District 6 legislative aide; Supervisor Jane Kim; Cmdr. Joe Garrity and wife Elizabeth. Back row: Christine Huynh, District 6 youth commission; John Nulty, activist; Supervisor David Campos; TL Capt. Jason Cherniss; Michael Nulty, activist; Byron Yee, former Renoir Hotel owner.

# Top Tenderloin forum seeks new leader

By Marjorie Beggs

THE TENDERLOIN Futures Collaborative launched in September 2001 as a reliable monthly forum for neighborhood news and concerns, big or not.

Dwindling attendance almost shut it down three years ago. A new coordinator, Susie Wong, S.F. Network Ministries' director of operations, breathed life into it, and 20 to 30 people attending again is the norm.

Now another challenge looms. Network Ministries' executive director, Rev. Glenda Hope, Collaborative moderator since its founding, is retiring Oct. 1 and the organization she's directed for 40 years is closing its doors. When it does, the Collaborative also loses Wong.

To keep the forum going, a nonpartisan organization or individual volunteer will have to take over the reins — and soon. Sept. 18 will be Hope's and Wong's last meeting.

The Collaborative was intended to foster understanding of changes taking place in the neighborhood. Presentations are made, questions asked, clarifications given, but it's not a place for arguing sides of a contentious problem, and it's not a membership organization.

The group takes no votes or positions. Meetings last only an hour and the agenda is strictly followed. People attending come away with solid information about their environs.

The moderator's and coordinator's positions are voluntary, supported by an organization's in-kind contribution to the community. TNDC did the honors before Network Ministries.

Hope's role is to keep agenda topics moving and discourage extraneous, confrontational discussion. Wong listed her responsibilities:

- Keep an ear to the ground for emerging concerns and TL news.
- Contact knowledgeable people to present the topic.
- Create the agenda, assigning times to topics. Summarize each topic. Include name and contact info of presenter.
- A week before the meeting, email the agenda and confirm attendance with presenters.
- Arrive 15 minutes before the meeting to open the Police Community Room. Set up tables and chairs. Distribute copies of the agenda and circulate attendance sheet.

Wong figures she spends about three days a month on Collaborative

business. She can be contacted at: 928-6209 or Susie@sfnetworkministries.org.

When the Collaborative was faltering in 2010, an informal poll of regular attendees found most wanted it to hang on. "The issues are still out there," Hope said at the time. "Things haven't gotten

much better in the neighborhood, even if there are more organizations."

"Still true," she says today. "It's good to have people from all different points of view and backgrounds sharing. It's an important gathering." ■

# Central Market CBD doubles in size

By Jonathan Newman

CENTRAL MARKET CBD's 16-month effort to expand ended successfully July 23 when the Board of Supervisors got the results from the ballot mailed to property owners in June. The ballot in favor sailed home a winner with 67%.

More than half the owners in the business district — 56% — did not vote, and the combined assessments of those owners in favor was less than one-third of the total assessments of \$1.18 million. Yet, with a majority of voters approving the ballot and that majority responsible for paying more than 50% of the voted assessments, the system of weighted voting carried the day. The

supes unanimously adopted the approved ballot.

The renewed and expanded Central Market CBD officially begins its 15-year span Jan. 1, but can begin collecting the assessments on 806 parcels this fiscal year. New assessment notices will be sent to property owners in a few weeks with the first installment payment due Nov. 1, just like property taxes.

Now that it's twice its original size with a budget bigger by \$450,000, the CBD must hire a new leader. Executive Director Daniel Hurtado announced his retirement, effective Aug. 30. Hurtado has been the CEO since the CBD's inception in 2006. The Extra's calls to him about his future plans were not returned. ■



# Longing for a lucrative liquor license

## Grand Liquors lost its permit, was reinvented as Tip Top grocery

BY TOM CARTER

Tip Top Grocery Market at Taylor and Turk doesn't sell alcohol, but the owner would like to.

"Beer and wine would be nice," Karim Rantisi says. He's standing near his store's well-kept deli. "Everybody's selling beer and wine. But I'm not pushing."

It's something he thinks the neighborhood, or at least his average customer, wants. "You know, a six-pack." He's been a grocer in the immediate vicinity for 24 years, and he knows the business.

"I wake up every morning and think, 'What can I do for the neighborhood?'"

Rantisi's eyes, almost expressionless, seem to verge on sadness — or anger. He looks blankly in the direction of his old store that he lost four years ago, Grand Liquors, on the intersection's southwest corner at 67 Taylor St. It's still empty. But he figures that when the inevitable gentrification of that Turk Street block happens, which City Hall encourages, some new merchant will get a beer and wine license, just like the one he lost.

Pretty ironic.

### HOW HE LOST HIS LICENSE

In June 2009, Rantisi lost his month-to-month lease for Grand Liquors when the landlord shed him after 20 years. The sidewalk in front of the store was a notorious hangout for street toughs, widely considered a neighborhood nuisance.

The mayor's office was hot to offer property owners rehab incentives not just to perk up the seedy block, but to make it a fashionable art corridor, not a thing to interest the shifty, loud crowd forever idling around Grand Liquors' door, too often a headache for TL cops.

But the crammed, 1,200-square-foot store was iconic in the way it had endured this truly rough and scuzzy corner. Grand Liquors had the usual mom-and-pop fare plus a variety of fresh meat. In its last days it added a perk to its package liquor line: Just inside the door, a half-barrel full of little plastic bottles of vodka, two for \$3.

Rantisi lost his store but landed on his feet — sort of. He secured the 2,700-square-foot space at 90 Turk St., catty-corner from Grand but in the special use district that limited liquor licenses in about half of the Tenderloin.

City agencies wrote him that they liked the "positive" effect his planned enlarged grocery with veggies and meat would have in the neighborhood. Only 1 in 4 small Tenderloin stores sold produce then, the letter said. But its authors, the Department of Public Health and the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, disdained his plan to relocate his booze operation — transfer his license — given "the oversaturation of liquor stores in the Tenderloin."

The family-run Grand Liquors had been one of 74 liquor licenses in the 28-block special use district created by 1999 legislation aimed at banning new TL liquor stores.

City Hall and a large contingent of neighborhood antiliquor activists opposed Rantisi. They said liquor sales endangered public health and safety. The Planning Commission denied his request to transfer his Type 21 off-sale li-



PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

**Karim Rantisi, 46, sells no alcohol at Tip Top because he lost his liquor license when he moved his store across the street.**

cense to his new store across the street.

Rantisi's family and his brother Jack's family — 14 men, women and children in all — took a 50% drop in income from lost liquor sales. "But we had no choice," he says. Plus, they had to pay for the Tip Top build-out.

"We have bad neighborhood," he concedes. "Maybe too much crime and drugs." And that's the real problem, he says, not booze.

Rantisi sells cigarettes. He pulls out a pocket calculator, taps in some figures, "Yes," he says, "about a 14% or 15% markup." More, and they wouldn't sell. "People would go somewhere else."

Cigarettes sell well. They're one of his top five items. The others are hot food, deli fare, cereal and, surprisingly, clothes. People buy a lot of T-shirts, underwear and jackets.

### ON THE JOB EVERY DAY

Working a seven-day week he takes either Saturday or Sunday morning off. Rantisi, 46, has made Tip Top a bountiful store with a full line of groceries and with aisles, sections and more than 20 glassed refrigeration cases. It has a variety of fresh meat, frozen dinners, bottled waters and sodas, canned and boxed foods, peanut butter, cold cuts, sunglasses, Raid, Liquid-Plumr, yogurt, milk, paper towels, hot coffee just inside the door, packaged donuts, candy, batteries, hundreds of items.

"Got any flour?" a man in a rush asks breathlessly. Rantisi points him in the right direction.

The Tenderloin Neighborhood Healthy Shopping Guide gives Tip Top a 56.3% score, 12th highest on the 56-store list. The report says Tip Top's highlights are: low-fat milk, lactose-free milk, fresh eggs, whole grain bread, whole grain tortillas, frozen fruit and vegetables, fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh and frozen meat and poultry and fresh and frozen fish. Also, it accepts EBT and credit cards.

In back are cucumbers, plums, apples, lettuce, bananas, tomatoes, and more on two three-tiered stands and in a 20-foot three-tiered bin. They occupy way less than 5% of the floor area.

"I buy everything fresh in South City, even if I lose money," Rantisi says.

"But customers want hot food and deli items. Food to go. They don't have kitchens. I have 60 kinds of cereal."

The hot food to-go counter and deli are side-by-side — corn dogs, lasagna, macaroni and cheese, kebobs, buffalo wings and more, all competitively priced. A small burrito is \$1.29, a cheeseburger with fries, \$6.

He's told about the healthy food legislation and program, the \$16,000 each participating store would receive from the city, \$4,000 of it a loan at 3% interest, forgiven in three years if a store stays with the criteria of redesign, consulting and education.

Rantisi's eyes look upward. He says 16 grand "is nothing today." He looks around. He needs a hood for his hot food operation, he says, not cheap under city codes. And, yes, he could move items around for efficiency and better sales, suggesting a design consultant could be helpful.

"It's a nice chance for the city," he says. "Nothing wrong with it. For me, if

I want new design, I don't know how this works. But I'm willing to try.

"But the problem is still no kitchens in SROs. No kitchens, no buyers." He adds: "Fruit is okay."

Rantisi knows well the caveats that come with City Hall incentives.

The city offered to help him four years ago during his move to Tip Top. OEWD talked of PG&E energy rebates on Rantisi's sky-high electric bills. Rebates didn't work out.

They offered consultation, too. What Rantisi got were a poster touting fruits and vegetables and another for dairy products, both obscured now by his necessary protective metal gate. Outside he got an 8-by-6-foot mural on the wall next to the door; it's signed JACE. Rantisi can't remember which city agency helped provide these three years ago.

The mural shows a lovely tan woman in a sleeveless gown holding a basket of fruit. But someone has scratched out her eyes. ■

### CENTRAL CITY

# EXTRA

NEWS IS A COMMUNITY SERVICE  
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# What mom-and-pops say about keeping it fresh

**T**here's a corner store on almost every street in the Tenderloin, sometimes more than one, some not on a corner. They're also called mom-and-pops because many to most are owned and operated by family members.

Unlike Bayview-Hunters Point, the Tenderloin is lower income, more densely populated and has no supermarket (Bayview has at least three).

Tenderloin corner stores are small in a grocery business where size matters. A study Ventura Partners conducted for TNDC in 2007 concluded that even a grocery as large as 17,000 square feet "isn't warranted financially."

Since few TL corner stores are even 2,000 square feet, the shortage of floor space may become an obstacle to the success of the Healthy Food Retailer Incentives Program, which requires

that 35% of selling area be devoted to fresh fare.

Central City Extra reporters Brian Rinker and Mark Hedin conducted an informal survey of about 30 mom-and-pops to learn how the owners feel about Supervisor Eric Mar's incentives program for retailers. Some had not heard of it, others didn't know how it would work.

But many had some comment about offering more fresh foods, and most said their decision would be all about economics. They were in business to make money, all said, and will stock what pays the bills.

Here's a sampling of their views.

— Geoff Link



**Mohammed Meftah, 12,** poses in front of the produce at his father's no-alcohol Green Valley market on Ellis Street, next door to the Red Sea Market that does sell liquor and cigarettes as No. 2 in the Tenderloin. Baalouach Ali poses down the sidewalk in front of his halal butcher shop on Geary Street, which is a destination for Muslims from around the world.

## CALIFORNIA PRODUCE

### No. 1 in the neighborhood

California Produce is the only four-star corner store in the Tenderloin. It has 300 square feet and stocks mostly fresh fruit and vegetables, maybe the closest to a supermarket selection this side of Market Street. It's in the prosperous northwest corner of the neighborhood. It displays its wares attractively on the sidewalk in front of the store with colorfully scalloped awnings over clean boxes brimming with apples, tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbage and more.

The Corner Store Coalition awarded California Produce an 82% rating, its highest among the 56 mom-and-pops the group surveyed. It has a wide selection of whole grains and fresh meat and poultry along with the many fruits and veggies. The store even has WIC pending. But those healthy features stem from the owner's Muslim faith, according to Abraham, working the register on a recent day.

"It's religious preference for us," he said. "We don't believe in it (alcohol). It breaks up families."

## K&S PRODUCE MARKET

### Red-ribbon winner

A distant second in the ratings is K&S Produce Market located about a block from No. 1-ranked California Produce. The coalition rated K&S at 70%. The store is owned by Qais, who also has the Halal Market at 1000 Howard St., which also snubs cigarettes and booze.

"I don't like to deal with alcohol and tobacco," Qais said. "It's a headache. You can't sell healthy food outside and inside you have alcohol. It's more safe for the customer. I want to bring families in."

## CADILLAC MARKET

### 'People don't want organic'

The Cadillac Market is located on a particular stretch of Hyde Street notorious for public displays of smoking crack, consuming alcohol, urinating, defecating and drug dealing. People hang out on the sidewalks 24 hours a day like it was their living room. Such behaviors are not unusual in the Tenderloin, but markets located in the more extreme areas have great incentive to sell liquor and junk food.

Irfan Ali, who's owned the Cadillac Market for six years, hadn't heard about the Healthy Food Retailers Incentive Program, but doesn't think it will work in his store.

"People around here don't want organics," said Ali as a customer leaned over the counter and rattled off which lottery scratchers he wanted to buy. Four people waited in line, each holding either a tall can or 40-ounce bottle of Old English malt liquor.

Ali does offer some healthy food options. In a refrigerator just right of the counter, he has heads of lettuce, which he said sell "all right." He gets five or six heads at a time, any more would go to waste, he said. Bags of chopped-up lettuce sell better, he added. Near the store entrance is where Ali keeps fruit, such as bananas, apples and oranges, in cardboard boxes on a shelf. At one time he even tried to sell tofu, but it went bad because no one bought it.

The Tenderloin Healthy Corner Store Coalition gave the Cadillac a two-star rating out of five, almost 54 percent.

Ali feigned interest in the city's proposed healthy foods program, shrugged his shoulders and said he needed to think about it. A moment later he admitted that he likes his store the way it is. Just then a man stumbled into the market to buy alcohol. He barked at the

owner Ali, telling him to quit talking and tend to business.

## HYDE & O'FARRELL MARKET

### Fresh food 'moving very well'

Moe, the owner, proudly points to a tidy display of healthy-looking melons and other fresh fruit, crediting his participation in the WIC program for a recent upswing in his fresh food sales. "It's moving very well," he said. However, that display and the other space he has devoted to produce is plainly less than 35% of retail space, and Moe said it would be unrealistic to expect that he would do more. "I don't think any liquor store around here has more vegetables and fruit than I do."

## NEW PRINCESS MARKET 'Up their asses'

Woel Masarweh, owner of the New Princess Market at Eddy and Hyde streets, received a call from the Arab American Grocers Association asking him to attend a meeting about a new city program to encourage corner stores to sell healthier foods.

Masarweh couldn't make the meeting, but he really wanted to go. Not because he was interested in the program, he just wanted to give the city a piece of his mind.

Masarweh's corner store has been in the Tenderloin for more than 20 years. It's located right in the thick of it, surrounded, he said, by alcoholics, drug addicts and dealers. Many patrons are low-income people who live off government assistance, who come here to take advantage of the many services offered. His store profits from the sales of cheap malt liquor and junk food.

"I sell 30 cases of King Cobra in a week, but I can't sell a single case of lettuce in a month," Masarweh said.

People in the Tenderloin just don't

buy healthy, he said. He knows; he tried selling healthier foods about 1½ years ago.

"Every store has the same shit," he said. "I wanted my store to be different."

He started stocking more produce and dedicated a row of shelves to high-fiber cereals and fancy organic cookies, crackers and sauces. He even stocked organic, gluten-free, milled grain products.

"When I sell organics and healthy food it makes me feel better," Masarweh said. "Yet it doesn't work."

No one bought them. The grains still sit on the shelf untouched, collecting dust. Customers preferred the cheaper cereals, and much of the produce rotted.

Masarweh would only try to sell healthier foods if the city paid him what he normally makes — or more. Or, the city could remove all his current patrons and replace them with higher-income, healthier ones. That, too, would work, he said.

Otherwise, the city "can shove their incentives up their asses," Masarweh said. "I'm not in business to please the city, unless it makes me money."

## EMPIRE MARKET

### 'Throw more than half away'

Owner Alex Alhaj: "We have produce. The most important things they need, we have it. Oranges, potatoes, lemons, avocados, bananas..." But, he said, "Not so many people buy it. We throw more than half away."

## DALDAS

### 'The issue is delivery'

Owner Bill Multani says of the proposed ordinance: "I'm aware of it. It's a good thing." He said produce distribution is a challenge. "I wish there was a



# 2007: The Extra and Leno both ahead of the curve

Fresh food in the Tenderloin has long been a topic in Central City Extra, from soup kitchen coverage to stories about the farmers' market and neighborhood food pantries.

In July 2007, we surveyed the Tenderloin for stores carrying fresh food. As I walked every block I noted which mom-and-pops stocked a dozen or more varieties of fruits and produce, counting 24 such niches of neighborhood nutrition but leaving out the two dozen that had only onions, potatoes, apples and bananas and such minimal staples.

At the time, then-Assemblyman Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, had an interesting piece of legislation that would have created a pilot program that would give incentives to mom-and-pop grocers in poor neighborhoods to stock fresh fruits and vegetables. It also would have given rebates to food stamp holders who bought fresh.

The Legislature passed AB2384 and Gov. Schwarzenegger signed it, but then he pulled a fast one. He didn't provide for the \$500,000 in his budget that the pilot called for, and the program went dormant. Ken Hecht of California Food Policy Advocates in Berkeley was incensed. He called the paltry sum less than small peanuts — "chump

change." He said the governor should have ponied up after publicly supporting the measure.

I called now-state Sen. Leno to see if, after six years, there was any new development regarding AB2384, or its ideas.

One positive fallout from his bill, Leno said, was that it had appealed to the federal government because it addressed affordability in low-income communities and accessibility to fresh food. It was a strike against Type II diabetes, too.

"The federal government liked the idea and provided funding for a program," Leno said. "It sent an RFP to all the states. Massachusetts was chosen. It was in 2008 or 2009, I think."

But he has not resurrected his bill and it didn't seem now to be on a front burner. Even with the state's coffers brimming for the first time in recent years, a bill would have a rough time because major efforts will try to refund programs that were deeply cut, he said. "I realize, though, that's no reason not to try. And I'd consider reintroducing it."

He didn't know the details of Supervisor Eric Mar's bill, but said he supports action that promotes healthy food. ■

— Tom Carter



PHOTOS BY MARK HEDIN

ettes, which Khalid Meftab also owns. K&S Produce Market is ranked by the Healthy Corner and the Bay Area.

distributor out there. The issue is delivery. To sell produce, you have to have an image of freshness. And you have to have somebody deliver it."

He said that for a distributor to deliver to a market, there's a minimum order, which may be more than the store can sell. "In the beginning, you're not going to sell that much."

"My opinion is they (program organizers) should have a line of vendors lined up. For the first six months, three months, then after we see how they're going. If you want me to expand, I'm gonna have to cut down other stuff. We'd love to do it, but we're here to make money. Anything for the community, we're willing to do it. The community's always first."

## STARLIGHT MARKET 'You're stuck with it'

Part-owner and manager J.J. simply said, "We cannot sell everything. We like to sell good stuff, of course." He buys his produce at the produce market under the highway on Jerrold Street "when I have a chance." As for Mar's proposal, "It sounds good to me, we'll see what happens." Echoing Daldas owner Multani, he said that distribution is an obstacle. "Sometimes you don't have time" to go to the market, he said, but if it gets delivered, you have to take what the distributor brings, you can't pick and choose, "You're stuck with it."

## SUPERETTE MARKET 'It's good news'

Wahid, working the counter, when asked of Mar's bid to improve small-market fare, said: "I wish. It's good news. Alcohol always bring you all the bullshit," he said, as a client staggered to the counter, change and a can of Olde English 800 malt liquor in hand. As neighborhood demographics change, he said, the market might change as

well, to accommodate families and students, but for now, "People don't buy too much."

## J&E DELI 'Not interested'

Word about the new healthy food program hasn't yet spread to all the corner stores of the Tenderloin. J&E Deli owner Brian Panday said he's health-conscious, but has not heard of the Healthy Food Retailers Incentive Program.

"I don't eat junk food," Panday said pointing to the purple grapes he was eating behind the counter. Panday might treat his body like a temple, but his store is a different story. It has racks and racks of junk food with a steady stream of customers who make a beeline to the cold beer. He's not interested in carrying healthier foods. It's too costly, he said, and time-consuming. In fact, Panday doesn't carry any produce. He got those grapes across the street at Heip Thanh Food Market, a purveyor of produce that figured prominently in The Extra's 2007 survey (see sidebar).

Panday said neighborhood people use food stamps and WIC to purchase food. His store isn't authorized to accept either. The business was red-flagged years ago because of the previous owner, said Panday, who bought J&E Deli in 2007.

Another reason the healthy foods program won't work for him, he said, is because he can't cut back on liquor. The program demands that a store dedicate 35% of its floor space to healthy foods, and no more than 20% to tobacco and liquor. He said a lot of his profit comes from selling booze.

Plus, he added, if people want fresh produce they can go to any number of stores nearby, like across the street at Heip Thanh. Or they could go a block up to K&S Produce Market or two blocks

over to California Produce. Both stores took the top two slots in the Tenderloin Neighborhood Healthy Shopping Guide, while J&E got two stars, ranking 30th of the 54 stores that participated.

## SALAMA HALAL MEAT

### 'We have our community'

Baalouach Ali said that his customers "come, like, 20 miles, 100 miles," to shop there. "It's a special place for them," he says. "Cause it's kosher, it's halal." The store also specializes in Mediterranean foods they offer that are hard to find elsewhere. Given that they cater to such a particular clientele, Ali said, stepping away from the meat-cutting board behind the cooling case in the small, dark and crowded store: "I don't drink, I don't smoke, I don't want it. We have our community."

## SERVE WELL MARKET

### 'Go to the farmers market'

Sam, working behind the register, animatedly pooh-poohed the notion of improved fare. "I've known for a long time," he said. "I heard about it." But the people who shop at his store, he said, "don't have money to buy the good stuff. They want to fill their stomach. They have the farmers market, they can go there."

## FOX LIQUOR AND DELI MARKET

### 'Do our best to get into it'

Jesse Dhillon, the new owner of Fox Liquor and Deli, first heard about the Healthy Food Retailer Incentive Program while listening to news radio. He got interested and began preparing the store for a healthier flair.

"We're going to do our best to get into it," he said, referring to the new program. His parents, co-owners of the store, agree, he said.

Fox Liquor and Deli, on the corner of Larkin and Eddy streets, is located near Little Saigon. Dhillon and his parents, who live in Benicia, began running the store just over a year ago. They opened up the back room, increasing the floor space, and started selling more produce, healthier grains and even included Indian and other ethnic foods.

"We're trying to be the neighborhood's mini Safeway," said Dhillon, who also admits it won't be an easy task to sell health food here. "It's hard being in the Tenderloin," he added. "Most people aren't here to go grocery shopping."

Still, Dhillon remains optimistic. He said the trends might be changing toward a healthier clientele.

"There's more diversity in the neighborhood now — not just alcoholics — more professional people," he said.

Ross Gell, the Fox's clerk, wasn't so sure about the push toward healthier.

"Certain neighborhoods, healthy food works for them," he said. "Our type is that of people who live off Social Security."

Gell wanted to know if the city meant organics when it said healthy food. Organic foods come with a much higher price tag.

"We live in a country where you can buy a pound of chicken for either \$1 or you can buy a pound of chicken for \$6," he said, pointing out the cost difference between free-range organic and cooped-up birds fed chemicals.

Dhillon said that because they are on the western edge of the Tenderloin, the transition to stocking healthier will be easier than for stores farther in. ■



# City will help 4 of Tenderloin's 70 mom-and-pops

▶ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

selling anything they do now, though Mar's hope is that gradually they will shift to healthier products.

Jorge Rivas, Office of Economic and Workforce Development project manager, told the Land Use Committee that \$60,000 from OEWD will be available for the first year "for an array of things like additional workshops, additional hand-holding for the merchants and also some major overhauls of current stores." Up to four stores might be part of the transformation, he said.

Rivas manages OEWD's Invest in Neighborhoods project, the source of the \$60,000, and he is likely to become the go-to city staffer for merchants, Pagonalos told The Extra.

The Public Health Department's Promotion and Prevention branch is the other major player in the incentives program. Involved for decades in discouraging tobacco use and championing better nutrition, it is staffing the new program's setup.

Programs similar to Mar's are operating in the East Bay and have a longer history on the East Coast. A 600-member nationwide Healthy Corner Stores Network grew from a 2004 initiative begun by the Food Trust in Philadelphia.

## KICKSTART FROM BAYVIEW

Mar's ordinance got a kickstart early this year from media coverage of the Bayview Healthy Stores Project, a push for healthier, reasonably priced food in 20 corner stores as well as in four larger grocery stores in the neighborhood like Fresh & Easy and Smart & Final.

The Tenderloin coalition has used the work in Bayview as a model for its version of what a corner store should look like — adapting it to fit the differences of neighborhood density, geography and demographics — and also as a demonstration of the project's viability, says Health Educator Susana Hennessey-Lavery, the Department of Public Health's point person on the incentives program. "It's a comprehensive model that shows how community and city government and business can work together for change," she says.

To create his legislation, Mar looked to Hennessey-Lavery's office for help, she told The Extra, primarily because of Promotion and Prevention's participation in the Bayview project and her longtime tenure in the city's Tobacco Free Project.

Here in the Tenderloin, the project is being implemented by the Tenderloin Healthy Corner Store Coalition. Members include the Vietnamese Youth Development Center, TNDC, North of Market/TL CBD, Youth Leadership Institute, Central City SRO Collaborative, DPH's Tobacco Free Project and Feeling Good nutrition program, National Council on Alcoholism Bay Area, Heart of the City Farmers Market, and A.A.I.M.S., a project of DPH Community Behavioral Health Services.

The behind-the-scenes work goes back to 2011 when the Vietnamese Youth Development Center, a breeding ground on Eddy Street for emerging neighborhood advocates, started a Team Let's Stop Tobacco project, funded by the Tobacco Free Project.

Eleven young people counted and mapped 46 TL tobacco outlets, checking to see if they were complying with city regulations about posting retail tobacco licenses and limiting tobacco and alcohol advertising to no more than a third of a storefront. They also checked each store for fresh fruits and vegetables.

When the Tenderloin coalition began meeting last year, the Vietnamese Youth Development Center joined and became an invaluable resource. The center was awarded two grants, \$30,000 from the San Francisco Foundation and \$25,000 from health care

provider Dignity Health, to survey residents, assess corner stores and transform the first store as a pilot project. Funding to redesign subsequent stores will come from OEWD. Jessica Estrada, the center's advocacy specialist, says Mar's ordinance wasn't on the table when her group applied for the grants.

The coalition hired five residents as Tenderloin Food Justice Leaders — Fred Dejamco, Stephen Tennis, Michelle Tran, Sheila Wheeler and Tammy Wong. With the help of DPH's Feeling Good project, they assessed corner stores using an 11-page form to track the type and quality of products sold in six food categories, product placement, cleanliness, physical accessibility, acceptance of food stamps and WIC, tobacco and alcohol sales, advertisements, consumer education, community investment and fair labor practices.

The resulting 12-page "Healthy Shopping Guide" is a multipurpose tool: Residents can see which stores carry the healthiest food, the Food Justice Leaders will use the guide to educate merchants about their scores, and the scores will help the coalition narrow the search for the first store to be redesigned under the program.

"We expect to choose that first one by early fall," Thayer told The Extra. "First, we'll get the stores down to 10, using steering committee-developed criteria and community feedback from the dot mapping."

The dot activity is what greeted the crowd at the coalition's July 11 coming-out party. Attendees were asked to place sticky dots on a Tenderloin map — blue ones where they felt safe shopping, yellow ones where they'd like a healthy store.

The 10 stores will be winnowed to three this month. Food Justice Leaders are returning to the stores they surveyed with feedback packets and asking merchants if they want to be part of the pilot. Sutti Associates, the redesign consultant, then will evaluate the three for adaptability and with the coalition select the one deemed most likely to succeed.

## HOW REDESIGN WORKS

"One of our biggest roles, and one of our greatest challenges, is to gain the small store owners' trust," said Larry Brucia, president and CEO of Sutti Associates, 30 years in the business. "Merchants fear change. They hear 'less alcohol and cigarettes and more produce,' and we have to give them comfort, assure them that we won't be talking about dropping any of their current inventory and that they won't lose money."

At least not in the long run, if the change succeeds.

While the Food Justice Leaders will help plan food selection with merchants, Brucia and his colleagues will "reschematize" the stores, he says. With the 35%/20% selling area requirements as a goal, they'll measure the space and existing shelving, suggest which items need to be rearranged, identify where new items will go and how best to display them. Once changes have been approved and storage units ordered, the physical transformation takes no more than two days, Brucia says.

Mar's program, the ordinance co-sponsored by Supervisors Jane Kim, Malia Cohen, and David Chiu, is getting under way at a time when an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables is available to TL residents. It may not be steps away from their homes, but it's not far.

The Heart of the City Farmers Market teems with produce — as well as fresh fish twice a week — and 88% of residents in the coalition's survey say they regularly shop there. And at the end of every market day, farmers donate hundreds of pounds of fresh stuff

to the neighborhood.

Food pantries are another ready source of healthy food. Of the SF Food Bank's 240 pantries citywide, 33 are in the Tenderloin, where annually, the pantries distribute 2.4 million pounds of food, enough for 2,769 people a week, most living in supportive or senior-only housing. Still, more good food can only benefit a neighborhood as needy as the Tenderloin.

"The presence of a large number

of stores selling low-quality foods in a community can undermine public efforts to promote health," states Mar's ordinance. "[It sends] a message that normalizes the use of unhealthy products in that neighborhood."

July 30, the full Board of Supervisors unanimously passed the legislation that will transform about 5% of the corner stores in the Tenderloin. ■

— Brian Rinker and Jon Newman contributed to this report.

## 120 hear report on big 1st year

The savory aroma of sweet potato and black bean chili filled the 201 Turk Community Room for the coalition's July 11 curtain-raiser — members "report back" to the community. Food was as much a highlight as the presentations.

Samples of healthy foods ringed the room: hummus for dipping raw vegetables and whole-grain tortilla chips, dates, strawberries and water flavored with masses of sliced citrus. A long line stretched out for the sweet potato and black bean chili, served up with brown rice and kale salad by A.A.I.M.S. volunteers Robert Harris, Vera Pittman and others.

Nearby was a table laden with the chili's ingredients — onions, garlic, spices, lime, tomatoes, corn and, of course, sweet potatoes and black beans — and behind these a white board listing what each ingredient would cost to make enough to feed four people. The total was an economical \$8.02, or \$2.19 per serving.

When the 120 people at the event settled down, coalition coordinators Jessica Estrada and Ryan Thayer, TNDC staff representative, described

how center youth and coalition members spent a month last year surveying clients' purchasing habits: where they bought most of their groceries, snacks, alcohol and tobacco; how much that cost them monthly; whether they would buy groceries in a corner store if they were affordable; if they shop in the TL and why; if they don't, the top three reasons; and what would make them "more likely" to shop close to home. The surveys, in English, Chinese, Vietnamese and Spanish, also were administered at community events.

Among the survey results from 640 residents: 88% buy most of their fresh produce from the Farmers Market. Less than a quarter buy dairy, protein and whole wheat products in the neighborhood. More than half those who shop in the Tenderloin do so because it's convenient. And they spend at least half their grocery money outside the TL. Expanding that stat to the Tenderloin's 17,000 households, the coalition estimates that residents spend almost \$1 million monthly elsewhere. ■

— Marjorie Beggs



## HOUSING APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED FOR SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY BUILDINGS (SRO'S)



Please go to 241 6th Street, San Francisco, CA for applications.

The TODCO Housing wait list is open for the BAYANIHAN HOUSE AND THE HOTEL ISABEL. If your name is currently on any TODCO Housing Waiting List and you would like information on your current status please call the TODCO Marketing Office at 415-957-0227 on Fridays only.

Building	Size/Occupancy Limit	Max./Min. Income Limit	Rent
Hotel Isabel 1095 Mission Street (Homeless Project Based Section 8) Open Wait List until March 29, 2013	SRO – 1 person In the unit there is a sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed, community kitchen, 24-hour staff & surveillance, laundry facility	1 person \$34,600 a year No Minimum Income	30% OF INCOME Requires a Certificate of Homelessness
Bayanihan House (Non-Assisted Units) Located at 88 – 6th Street & Mission OPEN WAITING LIST	SRO – 1 Person, Couple Shared Bath Single 10 ½ x 12 – Double 12x12 In the unit there is a sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed, community kitchen, 24-hour staff & surveillance, laundry facility	1 person \$30,275/a year  Couple \$34,580/a year Minimum income of \$866.40/month	Starting 1-2013 Move in Deposit \$545.00 Rent \$545.00 Utilities included

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## JAZZIE COLLINS Poverty hero

An uneasy black youngster born to a teenage mother in a poor Memphis family that grew to 10 ended his life of being shunted off to foster families by hopping on a bus to San Francisco, arriving alone at 19.

It was 1988. The high school dropout had wrestled for years with his sexual identity. As a Jobs Corps graduate he took construction jobs and worked as a hospital orderly before embracing a war against injustice as a social activist and becoming a new personality. In his late 40s, he finally transformed into a woman, gained great confidence, became a well-known advocate for transgender rights, the aged, the homeless and dispossessed in settings from community meetings to City Hall.

Ms. Jazzie Collins, a familiar sight in SoMa, had bright eyes, toothy smile and ropy hair. She lived for her work, was energized by it, then was honored for it at just the right place and time — on the floor of the California Legislature the month before she died at age 54.

Five publications, including the Chronicle, wrote obituaries. She was given three memorials.

The improbable achievements of Jazzie Collins, who touched hundreds of people, defined her — and the city of San Francisco. Here, at the edge of the continent, a permissive atmosphere of discovery is encouraged.

In declining health for a couple of weeks, Ms. Collins, who battled HIV/AIDS for years, died July 11 at Kaiser Permanente Hospital of undetermined causes. Friends surrounded her and sang to her as she passed.

For 10 years, Ms. Collins lived in one of the 88 SRO units at the 1190 Howard Apartments. On July 25, the residents held a memorial for her in the community room attended by two dozen people and conducted by Rev. Glenda Hope.

“Jazzie was a pagan,” Hope began, adding that the two had had interesting discussions about it over the years. Hope wore street clothes, absent her black suit and clerical collar with the small gold cross hanging from her neck.

“And she was one of the 10 most unforgettable characters I have known in my 40 years in the Tenderloin,” Hope said. “She and I both believed in the unity of life” with the goal of “being involved in compassion.”

“She was real,” a woman said, then read a poem that ended, “I am not afraid, remember me.”

A man who knew Ms. Collins for five years and lived three doors away on the third floor, said when he learned of her death he walked the streets restlessly for hours unable to get her out of his mind. “Her stars were bursting in the sky,” he said, fighting back tears, “and her colors are beautiful.”

“I didn’t kick it with Jazzie,” said Larry Freeman. But he recalled being in the elevator one day with her. She went on and on about various political actions and her life, a soliloquy that seemed to drag on for hours. “I could write a play, ‘Riding the Elevator with Miss Jazzie,’” he said with a smile. “I know she wasn’t a Christian, but I think she’s sitting now at the right hand of God.”

“Amen,” said a woman in the back.

One man said he was apprehensive about her until he finally talked to her and was inspired by her courage and achievements. He knew then the city that knows how was real, and he was relieved. “I knew I could fly my flag without being judged,” he said, not bothering to explain the metaphor.

Ms. Collins had that effect on people. She was a woman of action, a changed person, ready to confront injustice anywhere; causes were always foremost in her life and she encouraged others to join in.



PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER D. COOK

A friend reminisced on the Internet that one day James Collins showed up to work on tenants’ causes in the Mission wearing a dress, a wig and makeup. “She said in a deep voice, ‘Call me Jazzie, FROM NOW ON!’”

Her work began in earnest in 2002. She organized Plaza Hotel tenants to speak up for their rights and for keeping the hotel as affordable housing, as the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency wrecking ball drew near.

SRO tenants’ rights occupied her throughout her career as a community activist. She also helped in the food pantry system and became a regular, testifying at City Hall. In 2004, she was a staffer on South of Market Community Action Network organizing immigrant and low-income neighbors.

She had worked on Chris Daly’s successful campaign for supervisor and he appointed her to the SoMa Community Stabilization Fund Advisory Committee in 2006. It established a process to direct millions of dollars that the city, led by Daly’s negotiating, forced luxury SoMa condo builders to set aside for neighborhood enhancements, much like the community benefit agreements by the Twitter tax-break firms now. She chaired the committee for three years and helped create the West SoMa Plan to distribute the money.

She had worked at Senior and Disability Action (formerly Senior Action Network) for four years at the time of her death. “Her work, bettering people, was her life,” said a black man from the senior organization.

One of Ms. Collins’ personal victories was losing her fear of public speaking. Even if her words were sometimes indistinct, she spoke with confidence, a feeling that heightened when she stood up for transgender issues and other battles she was engaged in.

She had served five years on the board of the Trans March, which precedes the annual Gay Pride Parade, and was vice chair of the city’s LGBT Aging Policy Task Force.

The California Legislative Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Caucus honored her for her work in a ceremony on the Assembly floor in the Capitol during LGBT History Month in June.

Tony Robles, who also worked with her there, read a free-verse poem, “Sweet Tea,” that he wrote about the day she received her award in Sacramento. He called her a “poverty hero.”

“She volunteered to run monthly housing meetings,” Robles said, “and often knew more details about process than the staff. And recently she was taking GED classes.”

Canon Kip, where she knew scores of people, held a memorial for her and Senior & Disability Action held one Aug. 1 at Mission High School.

“Her total affirmation of all people,” Hope said, was her legacy. “Let us be empowered by her memory. We very

much loved Jazzie.”

Hope read a personal note from someone who had known Ms. Collins 10 years, and before the sex change. The writer, who will be anonymous, described watching a man approaching middle age, walking with a cane, angry, moving awkwardly, beginning to openly question his identity, seeking advice from friends, cautiously inching out.

“Who she ended up being was such a different person than who she was when I first met her,” Hope quoted the writer. “It was a huge lesson to me in how much it costs when we hold back or hide who we are and when I am with people how important it is to be open to whatever is presented so that no one should ever feel that they cannot be their whole self in my presence.”

“It was so wonderful to be part of Jazzie’s life and transition — both in life and to death, to have a whole community of folks there, caring, making decisions and being with her in a way that was uniquely Jazzie. There were at least a dozen of us in the room, young, old, trans, elected, every ethnicity — singing, holding hands, supporting each other and sending all our love with her as she passed.”

The writer was reminded, as others said they had been, of the Beatles song, “Blackbird”:

*Blackbird singing in the dead of night, take these broken wings and learn to fly, all your life you were only waiting for this moment to arrive.* ■

— Tom Carter

## PAUL PERNICE Books were large in his life

A handful of books in the Arlington Hotel’s beautifully renovated meeting room is likely to grow into a large, in-house lending library of eclectic selections dedicated to resident Paul Pernice, a passionate reader.

“Paul and I both loved music, good food and good books. He filled a part of my heart,” said George LaFrancis, a longtime friend and fellow resident. LaFrancis was among the more than 30 people at a July 10 memorial for Mr. Pernice, and his suggestion that everyone contribute books to expand the library was met with enthusiasm.

Mr. Pernice had died four days earlier, age 75, possibly of a heart attack, said Melissa Eaton, the hotel’s resident-services manager. Found July 2 in his room, in his wheelchair, disoriented and not fully responsive, he was rushed to the emergency room at S.F. General and died there July 6.

His reading and intellectual curiosity were recurring themes.

“Paul and I passed books back and forth all the time,” said neighbor Steven Hatch. “I’d read something I liked, and he would, too, and we’d trade. This morning, I was reading a book and thought, ‘I’ll have to tell Paul about this.’ I can’t anymore. It makes me so sad.”

LaFrancis said he didn’t think that Mr. Pernice was formally educated. “He was an autodidact but very well-read, even in classic literature.”

The memorial was officiated by Sister Katie O’Shea from St. Vincent de Paul Society, also a good friend of Mr. Pernice during his 12 years at the Arlington. He lived there in 2009 when Mercy Housing bought the building and took over resident services, formerly provided by St. Vincent’s. And he was there in 2011 when major renovations transformed the hotel from a somewhat decrepit 1908 structure into 154 units with kitchenettes, private bathrooms and extensive support services for its special-needs residents.

“Paul was so grateful for all that happened here,” Sister Katie said. “He had serious health issues, but he had good care and many friends in this hotel community, and he was buoyed by his faith. Sometimes we read horoscopes together, sometimes Scripture. We talked about forgiveness a lot. Once in a while he scowled — but rarely.”

When she asked people to share their memories of Mr. Pernice, resident Ron Hardesty held up his left hand, swaddled in bandages, which he said he’d broken a few days before. “I was putting on my tennis shoes this morning — hard to do with one hand — and there was Paul, standing in front of me laughing away at me trying to get it on.” Hardesty was sure Mr. Pernice was in the room for the memorial, too, watching all of them.

Kelly Blanford fondly remembered her former neighbor, reportedly a tall man of some girth. “He was a little devil inside in his own way. He loved to gossip, and he’d always catch me up on what was going on here at the hotel.”

Another recurring theme at the memorial: Mr. Pernice loved to talk about people, but always lovingly, without malice.

Joe Garvey, the Arlington’s former activities manager, recalled the first time he met Mr. Pernice. “He pulled me aside and said he’d give me a run-down of the hotel’s politics, who to avoid and whose good side to get on. He just savored the details of life” — the book club he was in, cooking classes, watching reruns of his favorite TV series, “Perry Mason,” and Bingo.

Bingo, a staple activity at the Arlington years ago, was brought back recently, due mostly to Mr. Pernice’s persistence, Eaton said. And he won twice before he died, a thrill for him and now a bittersweet memory for hotel staff and residents.

Little was known about his past life, but his accent gave away his roots in the Bronx. Sister Katie said he was Sicilian “on both sides of his family,” and a brother survives him in New York. A resident said Mr. Pernice told him he had moved to San Francisco in 1973.

Said some of his friends, he “brought cohesion and understanding to the Arlington,” “was gentle and kind and a person you could depend on,” “could be grouchy but mostly was fun-loving and incredibly generous,” and “read his horoscope every day.”

Frank Newsome, Arlington resident for 20 years, said he and Mr. Pernice “connected in a thousand different ways. I’ll miss him so much — he made me feel honored when he asked me to do things with him and for him.”

“Whenever you have a book, think of Paul,” Sister Katie said. ■

— Marjorie Beggs



# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**Sunday Streets in the Tenderloin**, Aug. 18, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Car-free day in the TL: live music, breakdance and skateboard lessons, arts and crafts, tennis information, parent resource table, and free bike repair, dog washing, phone calls, and social and legal aid. In the Postcard Project, fill out a postcard with a positive story about your neighborhood; it will be mailed to a random S.F. resident to connect people through storytelling. Activities take place in the area bounded by O'Farrell, Jones, Golden Gate and Larkin streets, plus Golden Gate to Grove between Hyde and Larkin streets. Info: [sundaystreetsf.com](http://sundaystreetsf.com).

**Play Streets**, Aug. 24, noon-4 p.m., Ellis between Hyde and Larkin streets. Small-scale Sunday Streets with activities specifically for children and youth: group games, arts and crafts, dance and exercise classes, music, skateboard and bike ramps and equipment for them, 30-foot outdoor climbing wall and more. Info: Meaghan Mitchell, [meaghanmitchell@gmail.com](mailto:meaghanmitchell@gmail.com) or 218-3434.

**We Are All Organizers Summer School**, Tuesdays and Thursdays in August, 3-5 p.m. Richardson Apartments, 365 Fulton St. Four-week basic community organizing course, offered by Community Housing Organizing Project, focuses on the campaign to reform the use of background checks in hiring. Free to central city residents or leaders from organizations that have endorsed the Ban the Box legislation. Dinner provided, art table for children, translation upon request. Info: James Tracy, 563-3205 x115.

## ARTS EVENTS

**"Flower Shop Of Whore-Ers,"** EXIT Theatre, 156 Eddy St., Thu., Fri., Sat. through Aug. 17. Interactive Western murder mystery musical, written and directed by Molly Gazay, set in San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Info: [theexit.org](http://theexit.org).

**Free family day with the Cardboard Institute of Technology**, Aug. 18, SFAC Galleries, 155 Grove St., noon-3 p.m. Build imaginative cardboard cre-

ations, guided by a CIT collective member. See CIT's cardboard mastodon stomping through a cardboard Jurassic landscape. Info: 554-6080.

## REGULAR SCHEDULE HOUSING

**Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco**, 1st Wednesday of each month, noon, 201 Turk St., Community Room. Contact Michael Nulty, 339-8327. Resident unity, leadership training.

## HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

**CBHS Consumer Council**, 3rd Monday of month, 5-7 p.m., 1380 Howard St., room 537, 255-3695. Consumer advisers from self-help groups and mental health consumer advocates. Public welcome.

**Healthcare Action Team**, 2nd Wednesday of month, 1010 Mission St., Bayanihan Community Center, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home services, expanded eligibility for home care, improved discharge planning. Light lunch. Call James Chionsini, 703-0188 x304.

**Mental Health Board**, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., City Hall, room 278. CBHS advisory committee, open to the public. Call: 255-3474.

**Tenderloin Healthy Corner Store Coalition**, 4th Thursday of the month, 3 p.m., Kelly Cullen Community Building, 220 Golden Gate Ave., 2nd floor auditorium or 5th floor gym. Public meetings to discuss legislation that encourages corner stores to sell fresh food and reduce tobacco and alcohol sales. Info: Jessica Estrada, [jessica@vydc.org](mailto:jessica@vydc.org), 771-2600.

## SAFETY

**SoMa Police Community Relations Forum**, 4th Monday of each month, 6-7:30 p.m. Location varies. To receive monthly email info: 538-8100 x202.

Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting, last Tuesday of month, 6 p.m., police station Community Room, 301 Eddy St. Call Susa Black, 345-7300. Neighborhood safety.



PHOTO BY FRANK CHAN, 2011

**Last TL Sunday Streets** featured lots of space for budding chalk artists.

## NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

**Alliance for a Better District 6**, 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6 p.m., 230 Eddy St. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or [sf\\_district6@yahoo.com](mailto:sf_district6@yahoo.com), a districtwide improvement association.

**Central Market Community Benefit District**, board meets 2nd Tuesday of month, Hotel Whitcomb, 1231 Market St., 3 p.m. Info: 882-3088, <http://central-market.org>.

**Friends of Boeddeker Park**, 2nd Wednesday this month, 3 p.m., Police Station Community Room, 301 Eddy St. Plan park events, activities and improvements. Contact Betty Traynor, 931-1126.

**Gene Friend Recreation Center Advisory Board**, 3rd Thursday of month, 5 p.m. Works to protect SoMa resources for all residents. Gene Friend Rec Center, 270 Sixth St. Info: Tim Figueras, 554-9532.

**North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District**. Full board meets 3rd Monday at 4 p.m.. Call 292-4812 for location or check [nom-tlcbd.org](http://nom-tlcbd.org).

**Safe Haven Project**, 4th Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m., 519 Ellis St. (Senator Hotel). Contact: 563-3205, x115, or [centralcitysafehaven@gmail.com](mailto:centralcitysafehaven@gmail.com).

**SoMa Community Stabilization Fund Advisory Committee**, 3rd Thursday of month, 5:30 p.m., 1 South Van Ness, 2nd floor. Info: Claudine del Rosario, 701-5580.

**Tenderloin Futures Collaborative**, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 11 a.m.-noon, Tenderloin Police Community Room, 301 Eddy. Presentations on issues of interest to neighborhood residents, nonprofits and businesses. Info: 928-6209.

**Tenderloin Neighborhood Association**, 2nd Friday of month, 842 Geary St., 5 p.m. Nonprofit focuses on health and wellness activities to promote neighborly interactions. Info: [tenderloinneighborhood@yahoo.com](mailto:tenderloinneighborhood@yahoo.com).

## SENIORS AND DISABLED

**Mayor's Disability Council**, 3rd Friday of month, 1-3 p.m., City Hall, room 400. Call: 554-6789. Open to the public.

**Senior & Disability Action** (formerly Planning for Elders/Senior Action Network), general meeting, 2nd Thursday of month, 9 a.m.-noon, Universal Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St. SDA Housing Collaborative meeting, 3rd Wednesday, 1 p.m. HealthCare Action Team meeting, 2nd Wednesday, 1010 Mission St., (Bayanihan Community Center). For info about SDA's Survival School, University and computer class schedules: 546-1333, [www.sdaction.org](http://www.sdaction.org).

## DISTRICT 6 SUPERVISOR

**Jane Kim**, member, Land Use Committee; chair, City and School District Select Committee; Transportation Authority; chair, Transbay Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors; vice chair, Transportation Authority Plans & Programs Committee

**Legislative aides:** Sunny Angulo, Ivy Lee and Danny Yedegar  
[Jane.Kim@sfgov.org](mailto:Jane.Kim@sfgov.org) 554-7970

# Tax-break panel regroups, learns of city's strict rules

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

they stand to benefit from CBA activities in any way and at any time. White warned: "It is not sufficient for you to simply recuse yourself" on a case-by-case basis.

Stadlman spoke up to protest the ban on "future" benefits. "Seems like it requires a crystal ball," she said.

"There are some gray areas," White conceded.

The panel spent a not-inconsiderable portion of its meeting discussing new wording in its rules regarding attendance. The committee had been blindsided in early May when the city administrator announced, on city attorney advice, that four members were deemed to have resigned from the panel for unexcused absences even though they had notified colleagues or the city administrator that they would be unable to attend various meetings. The new language specifies that such absences must be discussed, voted on and then included in a meeting's minutes to be officially excused. The panel agreed to reduce the period of advance notice required from the recommended 72 hours to 24.

Jason Rodrigues, Yammer's community liaison, complaining of being made to wait so long to speak, told the panel he is no longer with the company and his replacement has yet to be decided upon.


"It's unfortunate that we spent the last hour going over rules and regulations," he said, unaware or unconcerned that it was CAC members' ignorance of the rule on excused absences that

led to the city's purge of the panel. "It would be better if the committee respected the liaisons' time better. That's really all I have to say."

21Tech liaison Deborah Trette said that although the company has been mentoring two firms, it is still looking for others. "We need your help. We are waiting to provide our services," she said. "We are small — less than 20 employees — but large in our desire to give back to this community."

Trette, however, has never returned a phone call from The Extra, replied to an email or responded when a reporter visited to inquire about the company's work with the community. ■

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