

Fitness SF signs up for Twitter tax break

CBA contrarian One Kings Lane severs ties to CAC

By *MARK HEDIN*

THERE'S A NEWCOMER at the tax-break trough. Fitness SF, a 22,000-square-foot gym on the ground floor of the building behind Twitter headquarters, joined the dating site Zoosk and the music pirate Spotify in December in getting community benefit agreements endorsed by the neighborhood's only voice in the process, the short-staffed Citizens Advisory Committee of volunteers.

The CBAs have been a disappointment to those who expected Twitter, Microsoft, Zendesk and other companies to fully deliver on expectations of benefits accruing from the 2011 legislation — that each would return a third of the value of its tax break to the community under these agreements. But Twitter, Yammer and Zendesk's CBAs are no longer up for annual review, as they locked in multiyear pacts in 2014.

Some of the companies have not experienced the growth that they had hoped

for either. Twitter community liaison Carolyn Barlerin, for one, noted that the company let many workers go this fall, as did its downstairs neighbor Yammer once Microsoft took it over. And One Kings Lane, which had largely boycotted communi-

"We'll offer discounts to anybody who needs it, but we don't advertise it."

Donald Emmerich
COMMUNITY LIAISON,
FITNESS SF

ty reviews of its benefits activity, will no longer take the tax break or provide CBA benefits, its liaison told the Advisory Committee at the CAC's December meeting.

The CAC, too, is not what it once was. At least six of its 11 members must be present for a quorum. There was no quorum in November, and hence no community advocacy occurred.

The panel has three vacant seats. The one reserved for a person with commercial real estate and lending experience in the neighborhood has been unfilled for two full years. The seat for low-income Tenderloin families has been unfilled since Eva Perring's four-year term expired in August. The same is true for Steven Suzuki's seat, intended for a job developer.

But at Fitness SF, things are looking up. Don Emmerich, its representative, described it as a family-owned business with six locations in the Bay Area. It used to be the Gold's Gym franchise operation, he said.

"Business is very good," he told The Extra. "We're still growing and expect 2016 to be better." They've hired new trainers, he told the CAC, and payroll for the 46 people working at 1 10th St. tops \$1 million, which triggers the requirement for creating a community benefit agreement so that the firm gets the tax break. The gym opened in late 2014 and has been working with the community even without a for-

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2015 — 16



THE EXTRA WINS 5 AWARDS

Press Club honors
news, features,
art

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SINGLE FAMILY HOMES?

Last one of wood
in its last days

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TRAGIC STREET KILLING

Memorial in TL
for Nancy Tynan

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CENTRAL CITY



SAN FRANCISCO

TENDERLOIN'S VIETNAMESE



Thanh Nguyen, who prefers to be called John, and wife, Van, kneel in prayer at St. Boniface Catholic Church, where they attend Mass and work for Franciscan Charity.

The second wave

Those in wake of boat people trapped in hood

By *TOM CARTER*, PHOTOS *PAUL DUNN*

JOHAN NGUYEN has just returned from his massive mailing project in San Jose and slips into a seat at Mangosteen restaurant on Larkin Street, which has a granite pillar outside that holds a marble, mythical lion welcoming all to Little Saigon.

It's not a spot he'd normally pick for a late lunch. He likes things a little higher end, places that speak more to his aspirations, like the Bistro Cafe in the Westfield mall overlooking Market Street or the Samovar Tea Lounge in Yerba Buena Gardens with global cuisine and tea pairings and a grand view of the glittering cityscape.

"I don't want to be reminded of what my parents went through," he says, ordering banana blossom salad and a large vegetable dish. "But they loved this area and kept coming back to eat at the restaurant where they worked. I don't know why."

They were dishwashers at Them Ky, a restaurant around the corner on Ellis Street. It was hard work, long hours, little pay.

John and his parents arrived from Vietnam in 1992. It was a struggle to find work, nearly impossible to learn the language and a daunting daily ordeal to face Tenderloin street life. John was 15. They lived at Leavenworth and Ellis, near the restaurant. Now, they and John's wife, Van, live at TNDC's Curran House on Taylor Street, marking 23 years in the hood.

"I remember my grandfather standing in

line at Glide for free food, and it was pretty good. He was happy. But I remember him as a powerful man — we always thought he could move the Earth."

In Saigon, the grandfather had his own business, selling refrigerators and refrigeration systems. But the city fell in 1975, and the Communists jailed him for three years as "a capitalist pig," for "being a businessman," John says.

Warring in Vietnam continued after the U.S. left. There were shortages of everything and long lines for the government-controlled rations, the only food available. The battered populace fled by sea by the thousands in flimsy, leaky boats, many drowning. John's grandfather was one of the "boat people" survivors who made it to San Francisco in 1980. But he couldn't tame the language, was getting old and didn't find the success he'd had in Vietnam.

"It's sad," John says. "He died a broken man."

Even so, his grandfather put in the paperwork to get the family to San Francisco and succeeded. It took 10 years.

Not that much has changed in the Tenderloin over his 23 years here, John says. "A lot more building," he says with a shrug, but "it doesn't seem to be affecting those (street) people. The world is moving on without them. I see them every day, and I did as a teenager — the same blank looks back at me." The soup kitchen lines too, just as long, if not longer.

"So many," John says. "There should be a place for them. Why are they suffering like this? This is one of the richest nations, and people are lying in the street — and they speak perfect English and have the ability to work — and they don't have a house. I don't see it as much wherever I travel."

Moreover, he thinks the TL's Vietnamese population, an estimated 3,500, is dwindling.

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WINNER

Extra writers, artists snag 5 journalism awards

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA earned five awards at the San Francisco Peninsula Press Club's annual event in early December honoring regional journalists for excellence in their craft. Three of the awards were for news and features and two for compelling imagery — all were published in 2014.

A first-place award went to page designer Lise Stampfli-Torme for her "Shadow of tech" graphic and layout, illustrating Jonathan Newman and Editor and Publisher Geoff Link's report on how the tech industry has renewed central Market Street, but to date has left the Tenderloin largely unchanged except for forcing out the nonprofits that provide a safety net for the needy.

The Extra took second place in three story categories for nondaily newspapers: news, feature/specialty and business/tech. All of the stories examined aspects of tech's effects in the hood.

And Paul Dunn's photos of youth in the Tenderloin received third-place honors for photography illustrating Tom Carter's report, "1,100 kids missing," that investigated the "disappearance" of hundreds of neighborhood young people who had been counted in the census as living in the Tenderloin, but were under-reported in city services calculations after gentrification hit.

Marjorie Beggs' "Homeless to healthy" piece about Project Senior Vitality, a program at Curry Senior Center that gives elders high-tech equipment to help them stay on top of their well-being, received a second place and ap-

peared in the October issue.

In the same issue, Mark Hedin's "Disabled snubbed by Uber, Sidecar, Lyft" was another red-ribbon winner. It exposed how app-based ride services that have gutted the taxi industry refuse to serve disabled people, which is illegal under federal law but goes unpunished by fawning local authorities.

Another second-place winner by Hedin, "Tax-break tech hiring a bust in the Tenderloin," published in September, showed how, despite city-extracted pledges by Twitter and other tech companies to partially fuel their growing startups by hiring from the hood, that hasn't happened.

Thirty-five news organizations from 11 counties competed in the contest. Their nearly 400 entries were judged by press clubs in New Orleans, Cleveland, Florida and Southern California.

The San Francisco Peninsula Press Club is a professional organization that includes journalists, artists and others working in newspapers, television, radio, magazines, public relations and on the Internet. The Dec. 5 event in Redwood City was its 38th Greater Bay Area Awards program.

For 15 years, The Extra has been covering the central city. It is the only newspaper that regularly reports on the multimillion-dollar Twitter tax break and its ensuing gentrification of the lowest-income neighborhood in San Francisco, where economic inequality in the city is most obvious. ■

— Mark Hedin and Geoff Link

Top right, Lise Stampfli Torme's "Shadow of tech" graphic and layout won her an S.F. Peninsula Press Club blue ribbon. Paul Dunn's photos of eighth-grade artist Jaeya Bayani, right, and Kimberly Romero, below, a fifth-grade athlete at Bessie Carmichael, were among nine published a year ago in a story about faulty TL demographic data.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

This is a double issue of The Extra, for December and January. We will be back to our regular monthly publishing in February.

Meantime, Central City Extra and San Francisco Study Center wish our readers happy holidays and a joyful new year.



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NO. 2 / COIT TOWER COUTURE

Earthquake-era home in Tenderloin sells to developer who hopes to tear it down

By *BRITTANY HOPKINS*

BACK IN 2001, Central City Extra stumbled upon a little-known fact: There were only four single-family homes left in the Tenderloin. Soon, however, the count may drop to three.

After purchasing the property at 611 Jones St. for \$3 million in August (nearly 20% more than the original asking price), the new owner has submitted plans to raze the existing single-family home and construct a 13-story residential development with 17 units.

While the Preliminary Project Assessment application offers few clues as to the site's proposed future, the accompanying site plans by Kotas/Pantaleoni Architects include a rear yard, gym and bicycle parking on the first floor; eight floors of one-bedroom apartments ranging from 673 to 727 square feet; two two-story lofts with three bedrooms each; and a roof deck.

The property is located within an RC-4 District, which prioritizes high-density residential space supported by commercial use. However, the initial plans do not include commercial space. It also sits within the 80-T-130-T Height

& Bulk District, meaning the Planning Commission will need to approve the proposed 130-foot height.

This is not the first time redevelopment plans have threatened the future of this single-family home. Central City Extra reported in 2007 that the previous owner of 611 Jones St., which also happens to be the only wood-frame single-family home in the neighborhood, had drawn up plans to demolish the building and construct a 10-story condo building with nine units.

While the project received the Planning Commission's approval, the combination of issues regarding its rear yard and the financial aftermath of 9/11 and the dot-com bust led to its abandonment.

The 109-year-old home's days may be numbered, but there's still time to spend the night inside a piece of Tenderloin history — if you have a bit of cash to spare. The home has been available as a vacation rental for years, and is still listed on Flipkey for \$590/night, which is up from \$450/night three years ago.

Brittany Hopkins, Neighborhood Editor for Hoodline, posted this story December 14, 2015. Hoodline is Central City Extra's online partner. ■



TOM CARTER, 2007



KOTAS/PANTALEONI ARCHITECTS

611 Jones St., top, one of just four single-family homes still left in the TL, sold for \$3 million in August and may soon be razed to make way for the 13-story apartment building proposed in the architect's elevation.

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Tax-break newcomer offers discount gym use

▶ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

mal agreement, Emmerich said.

On Dec. 13, the company partnered with the Salvation Army to distribute 325 meals and six pizzas to homeless at Civic Center Plaza and is discounting memberships to \$49.95 per month to Mercy Housing residents and waiving their \$100 or more enrollment fee. Mercy has 136 units of family housing a block away on Mission and 10th streets.

"We'll offer discounts to anybody who needs it," Emmerich said at the CAC meeting, "but we don't advertise it."

The gym features a yoga studio with a tea room and fireplace, spinning machines positioned in front of a giant screen to give users the illusion that they are biking through pastoral vistas such as mountain trails, forests and more, treadmills, step mills, elliptical and rowing machines, and stationary bikes that variously feature high-speed Internet connections, cable TV and Bluetooth capacity.

The company has also offered discounts to Lighthouse School for the Blind, he said, and has trained its staff on working with those clients. The Arc, Conard House, Salvation Army, arts organizations Frameline and Center for Asian American Media and others also work out for less, Emmerich said.

Among its expected CBA activities, Emmerich said, are continuing its partnership with TNDC for the big nonprofit housing developer's annual Celebrity Pool Toss fundraiser at the Phoenix Hotel, to which Fitness SF donated \$2,000 and paid eight to 10 trainers minimum wage to jump in the pool and get the crowd excited to perk up the bidding.

Emmerich said the company gave Salvation Army a \$5,000 donation and will do that annually.

Additionally, its staff and maintenance workers plan to visit the Kroc Center on Turk Street to assess maintenance needs for the swimming pool and take care of the basketball court's hardwood floor.

Emmerich, a longtime member of



MARK HEDIN

Fitness SF, in a former government building that also houses Twitter offices, is 22,000 square feet of state-of-the-art exercise equipment. It opens at 5 a.m. every weekday and gets a break on payroll taxes for its \$1 million staff of 46.

the St. Boniface congregation, said Fitness SF also plans to help the Gubbio Project, which allows homeless to sleep in church pews, and hopes to partner with Hospitality House somehow.

"I just want to applaud you," said Rob Gitin, the recently installed chair of the CAC. "I feel that for a first agreement, this is pretty strong. The community engagement is plain to see."

Less plain to see these days are the millions the city gave away to lure the firms to the central city. In 2012, the Twitter tax break cost the city \$1.9 million in forgone payroll taxes. In 2013, that amount more than doubled to \$4.2

million. By 2014, the number had skyrocketed to \$33,672,584, according to a city treasurer's report.

Mayor Lee's October statement on "2014 tax exclusion reports for Central Market, stock compensation, biotech, cleantech & net new payroll" doesn't mention this at all. It does say that there have been \$40 million more "taxable sales" along central Market since 2010,

and a 17% increase in sales tax revenues.

But you have to go to the city treasurer's Oct. 16 "2014 Tax Year Exclusion and Credit" report to the Board of Supervisors, available online, <http://sftreasurer.org/2014-tax-year-exclusion-and-credit-reports>, to learn that the "taxable payroll" exempted last year alone by his 2011 measure was \$2,494,265,518. ■

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- January 12
- January 26

There will be no scheduled meetings on January 5 and January 19.

The City and County of San Francisco encourage public outreach. Articles are translated into several languages to provide better public access. The newspaper makes every effort to translate the articles of general interest correctly. No liability is assumed by the City and County of San Francisco or the newspapers for errors and omissions.

CNS#2827280

Vietnamese couple break cultural mold

They're politically active, plus work for a charity

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People long to get out of the crowded, messy conditions, he says, and he does, too.

"Yes, I want to. If I could, I would have been gone a long time ago."

John's mailing in San Jose went out to 35,000 Vietnamese Americans and supporters, a holiday plea for donations to the relief work in Vietnam that his employer, Franciscan Charity, does. It's a high-ceiling space beneath de Marillac Academy in the St. Boniface building on Golden Gate Avenue. John, its office manager, is also the charity's chief fundraiser.

He reorganized and revitalized the charity a few years ago, taking it from a one-man program — founded in 2004 by a Franciscan priest — into a \$3 million annual operation with a staff of eight. Its mission is to help disadvantaged Vietnamese children, and has 20 projects in place. A rate card in the office shows what earmarked donations provide: \$100 buys a wheelchair or eye surgery, \$3,000 pays for heart surgery, \$5,000 builds a water-purifying system.

"We make a big impact in Vietnam," John says. He's motivated by the thought that "there might be a boy out there like me."

His wife is project manager for outreach, which can mean assisting flood victims who lost their homes or grants for women to learn sewing skills. They work also with Catholic-run orphanages. One of the longest-running programs is aiding pregnant Vietnamese girls. Franciscan Charity supports their decision to keep the baby or give it to an orphanage.

"When they hold the baby, most keep them," John says. Then the charity helps them get on their feet financially. "But some don't and give it up. They don't want to face the shame" of being an unwed mother.

Charity is foreign to the Vietnamese, making John and Van's choice of employer a bit unusual. Philip Nguyen (no relation), director of Southwest Asian Community Center on O'Farrell Street, explains:

"There is no charitable consciousness (in Vietnam)," he says. "It's the thing we learn from this country. That's why a lot of Vietnamese go back to help out. Any charity in Vietnam comes mainly from the U.S."

John was born in Saigon the year after the North Vietnamese took over. Now, it's Ho Chi Minh City, but to those who have left, it's forever Saigon.

"It was a mess over there," John says, speaking rapidly, sometimes tripping over words. His parents had quickly married because his mother feared the Communists would make her marry someone she didn't even know.

"There was a lot of uncertainty and fear, but people thought the Communist regime would fall — a big mistake."

Party control made John's youth oppressive and barren. He was an only child, but there were shortages of everything. His family wasn't destitute, but nearly so. He describes his youth like scenes out of "Slumdog Millionaire."

"I remember standing on a pile of garbage looking up at the planes going overhead hoping for a miracle to get out of there. That was my childhood."

The Vietnamese and other Southeast Asians were the last of the immigrating ethnicities to come to the Tenderloin in significant numbers. As the city's cheapest neighborhood, it had the added attraction of being close to Chinatown

with its similar cultural roots.

The 2010 census showed 12,971 Vietnamese living in San Francisco. Philip Nguyen says it's higher. The Southeast Asian Community Center he runs was founded in the 1980s by Vietnamese refugees and immigrants to help their countrymen assimilate. Philip served on the committee overseeing the 2010 U.S. Census in San Francisco and Alameda counties.

"It's more like 14,000," he says, citing reasons for the disparity. A number of the immigrants are monolingual and reclusive. Still others identified as Chinese. The census doesn't call out the Tenderloin, but Philip estimates its Vietnamese population is around 3,500. The biggest community in the U.S., however, is in San Jose: 100,000.

When Vietnamese Americans in the TL hit a financial sweet spot, sometimes after years of living eight to 10 in a room, all adults working two, sometimes three jobs, they move out of the city to where "they think their social status will be better off. And they understandably want a larger house for an expanding family," says Philip. The choice three decades ago was Oakland, Philip says, then it shifted to San Jose, which was near Silicon Valley where "jobs were abundant."

Over his 19 years in the northwest section of the Tenderloin, the neighborhood's prosperous quadrant, Philip has seen dramatic changes. Vietnamese businesses have surged with an estimated 300 — 75 in Little Saigon — amid escalating homelessness in the ever-filthy streets. The TL's Vietnamese population has leveled off, he says, predicting that Sacramento will see the next influx.

The Tenderloin will begin to draw more "middle-income people," and the new California Pacific Medical Center on Van Ness should become a significant employer, Philip believes.

John disagrees that the Tenderloin's Vietnamese population is stabilizing. He sees a serious decline at church where he and Van sing in the 20-member St. Boniface choir for the Sunday afternoon Mass said in Vietnamese. He's been in the choir since he was 16; she joined four years ago.

"Young people don't come to the Vietnamese service anymore. They want the English one as part of their assimilation," he says. "And the old people are dying off. I feel (the population) is shrinking. At least at my church, it's in crisis."

Even so, the smaller congregation of 200 today swells to 400 at Christmas-time with Vietnamese returning to the Tenderloin from all over the city.

A major stumbling block to the hood for the immigrants has been language. Even those here 10 or more years have trouble, Philip says.

In John's middle school in Saigon, where two-thirds of the students were named Nguyen, Russian or English was the foreign language option. If you didn't take Russian, like the politically correct majority did, "you were looked down on." John chose English, anyway. But it was the king's English and didn't help much here because it caused pronunciation confusion.

It didn't dampen his desire for things American, though. Some Saigon families, despite book bans and risking harsh punishments, kept secret libraries. When John had saved enough pennies, he could rent the Jack London stories his father had recommended. "I read them all," he says. In Vietnamese.

And he concedes he perhaps orders too much food when he eats out be-



Thanh Quoc Nguyen and his wife, Van Le, top, review donation documents recently at Franciscan Charity on Golden Gate Avenue and, below, chat with Curran House manager Tammy Walker, left.

"There is no charitable consciousness (in Vietnam). It's the thing we learn from this country. That's why a lot of Vietnamese go back to help out. Any charity in Vietnam comes mainly from the U.S."

Philip Nguyen

DIRECTOR, SOUTHWEST ASIAN COMMUNITY CENTER

cause of its scarcity in his youth, much like London's character in "Love of Life" who was starving in the subzero Yukon, finally got rescued, then afterward never seemed to get enough to eat.

John's path when he arrived in San Francisco was paved by his aunt and uncle. They had been translators for the CIA and got out with a U.S. attaché just before Saigon fell. Had they stayed, "they would have been condemned as spies."

The couple found jobs as restaurant dishwashers for three years. The aunt, who had better English, then became a bank teller. They sent money back so the rest of the family could come here and they became John's closest advisers in his assimilation.

John went to Newcomer High School in the Fillmore District. It was designed to improve immigrants' English speaking and understanding. He later graduated from Lincoln High.

His parents sent him after school to the Vietnamese Youth Development

Center on Eddy Street for two years. The Tenderloin nonprofit that now serves 500 mostly Vietnamese youth with a spectrum of language, job training and other support programs, was created in 1978 to serve the incoming Vietnamese youth.

"They wanted me to be a leader," John says. "But I was too shy, and my English wasn't that good."

John wrestled with nuances, too, like just saying no.

"(Vietnamese) people don't say 'no' to your face," he says. "It's disrespectful and considered uneducated. You have to find a way to let someone down easy. You're always looking to see that you don't offend the person you're talking to. It's so important in our culture."

He hasn't kept track of the teenagers who attended VYDC with him, but he knows some joined Vietnamese drug-selling gangs, some got married, and very few went on to college. His priorities were high, however, and he



John and Van Nguyen, regulars at Samovar Tea Lounge in Yerba Buena Gardens, love to sit at a window table and gaze across the street to St. Patrick's, enjoying the cityscape's 19th to 21st century contrast.

had role models from the church congregation and choir, the “well-to-do with a good moral compass,” about 30 of them, doctors, dentists, scientists, real estate agents. He stays in touch to learn from them. “Good habits,” he says, “rub off on me.”

John went to City College, then to San Francisco State University. Computer-smart, he wanted to be a doctor but found in a chemistry class he was color blind. He switched majors and got a degree in corporate finance in 2007. It was a huge year in which he started paying off a \$40,000 student loan and moved his wife here from Vietnam to live with him and his parents, and they moved into Curran House.

He had met Van on a trip back to Saigon in 2004. They kept communicating through “chat rooms and messaging programs to avoid the Communist government firewall.” He returned in 2006 to wed, but opened a can of worms. Van was a doctor, a liver disease specialist at one of Vietnam’s biggest hospitals, where it was common for three patients to occupy a single bed and for supporting family members to be sleeping on the floor. With a shortage of doctors, Vietnam didn’t want to lose any.

“They told me it would take three months (to get married),” John said. “I only had three weeks I could be away.”

He was poor then, working at the Pizza Hut on Geary and Leavenworth. But he got his boss to guarantee his job, and his parents to pledge to take care of Van if he couldn’t. Still, Vietnamese officials were reluctant to let her go. Then, ahead of a scheduled meeting between Van and officials from both countries, he wrote a letter explaining his difficulties. Van hid it in her clothing and it went undetected in a pre-meeting search. On the sly, she gave John’s letter to a U.S. Embassy official who then maneuvered the approval.

Van’s medical credentials are worthless in the U.S. She tried to obtain her records, which might have given her some credits toward a degree here. But

that, too, was a conundrum. Officials in Vietnam demanded \$3,500 just to locate the documents.

“Then it would be much more (in bribes) to get them — a problem in backward countries,” John says.

Still, Van has chosen a route back to medicine. She’s taking premed night courses at San Francisco City College. She’d have enrolled sooner, but missed two years recovering from being hit by a car in a crosswalk. There was no settlement. The driver, a student in a junker, was destitute and had no insurance.

“We couldn’t pursue that,” John says. “There was no money.”

Politics is dormant in San Francisco’s Vietnamese community. There are no elected Vietnamese American officials here. San Jose City Council has three, in a city with 100,000 Vietnamese. Philip Nguyen believes it will be another generation before a Vietnamese could be elected in San Francisco. John Nguyen sees a depressing stone wall when he tries to speak to Vietnamese members of the St. Boniface congregation about democratic power.

“Many come from a country (where) if you speak out you get arrested,” he says. “If they’re not distrustful, they are timid and unaccustomed to political freedom. They choke themselves off.”

“But we are part of the country. I say, ‘Speak out — nobody’s going to speak for you.’ But they are not listening. I see it right away when I talk to them.”

John’s own voice has grown in the community along with his political awareness. Sharen Hewitt, Curran House’s former building foreman who has suggested interview subjects for The Extra’s diversity series, earlier this year asked John to find residents to hear a political speech downstairs by former Supervisor David Chiu, then a state Senate candidate. About 20 showed up, but not many had been recruited by John.

Hewitt, who motivates Curran residents to get involved with neighborhood issues, lobbied the school board to create a Vietnamese language pathway

Maybe most popular name in the world



John Nguyen’s last name is far more common than Smith, Jones or any other culture’s most ordinary monikers — even Kim in Korea. And its popularity is growing — including in the U.S.

In John Nguyen’s middle school class more than 25 years ago in Saigon, two-thirds of his classmates shared his surname. Today, an estimated 40% of Vietnam’s population, 36 million — are named Nguyen.

In formal settings in Vietnam — unlike the American custom — people are addressed by their first name. “Use the last name,” John says with a laugh, “and nobody knows who you’re talking to. When I first came here (to the U.S.) it was confusing.”

Dating back to 1232, Vietnamese began taking the family name of royalty to show their favor and loyalty, and sometimes for self-protection against discrimination or worse. Over generations, the names stuck. Nguyen, the most common, is likely a translation derived from a Chinese surname.

Nguyen is the seventh most common family name in Australia, 54th in France. In the U.S., it is the 57th most common, according to the 2000 census, a major leap from its 229th place in 1990, according to Wikipedia.

In Vietnamese, Nguyen is sometimes abbreviated Ng.

Trying to pronounce Nguyen, English speakers usually say it as “win.” Pretty close, but devoid of nuance.

According to Wikipedia, “The voice first drops from a mid-level to the bottom of the speaker’s range of pitch, then rises back to mid.”

—Tom Carter

K-12. The board passed a resolution in May to begin that initiative in 2017. Currently, 1,100 SFUSD students of more than 60,000 speak Vietnamese.

She persuaded John to apply for a vacant seat on the Tenderloin Community Benefits District board. He applied as John Nguyen, forgoing his Vietnamese name, Thanh, though that appears on the CBD website.

“I don’t think of myself as Vietnamese anymore,” he explains. “I’m an American. I don’t want to go back. It’s me they deal with, not a name. I’m willing to adapt.” He adds with a smile: “Thanh in Vietnamese means success.”

In September, he was elected to the CBD board and Executive Director Susie McKinnon said she was glad to have him.

“We were all so impressed with John’s desire to work for the neighborhood,” she said.

He was assigned to the District Identity and Streetscape Improvement committee, which now is called Community Engagement and Communications. John had been unaware of the CBD until Hewitt came knocking, but now bristles with anticipation for the work to be done, from landing improvement grants to getting the CBD widely known.

“To me, marketing is where you make money,” he says. “And the CBD doesn’t have a marketing team. My goals are to change that.”

The CBD is dedicated to promoting cleanliness, beautification, street improvements and job training among other objectives for a 29-block area with

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



The Nguyens don't always dine out. They can stay at home and enjoy a traditional Vietnamese meal in the Curran House dining room.

Couple break cultural mode

▶ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

27,700 residents where the average income is \$21,183. A concern of John Nguyen's is how to protect the poor people who have lived here a long time.

"People are coming in with money. Nothing we can do about it. It's frustrating. We love the city and want to be here," he says.

Another CBD concern is Little Saigon. Business falls off after dark — there's plenty of lunchtime foot traffic — but "people are afraid of the Tenderloin at night," John says. It looks certain that it will get improved lighting. But poster designs to promote it, that the CBD solicited from artists, so far have missed the mark.

"They're too complicated," John says. "I don't know what they mean. They miss the point."

John and Van visit many restaurants, not so much in Little Saigon, where Van does weekly grocery shopping, but on occasion the Pakistani and Indian restaurants on Mason Street, and Sunday mornings the Oriental Restaurant on Market Street near Seventh for dim sum. And they make an occasional trip with a friend to Balboa Park to try their hand at tennis.

Otherwise, the star of their outings, and Van's favorite, is the glassy, high-ceilinging Samovar Tea Lounge in Yerba Buena Gardens near the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial fountain. They go twice a week. Sitting outside or inside, she loves looking north at the cityscape with the red brick St. Patrick's Catholic Church, built in 1851 on Mission Street, in the middle.

Back home at Curran House, where both of John's parents now contend with dementia, their busy routines keep them occupied; they are hardly the building's social butterflies. John has some "acquaintances" and Sharen Hewitt "is safe to consider a friend." Van knows three Vietnamese residents, one Chinese and Hewitt.

"Curran House is just a step away from the beauty of the city," John says. "That reassures me of the goodness of people, working hard and enjoying life."

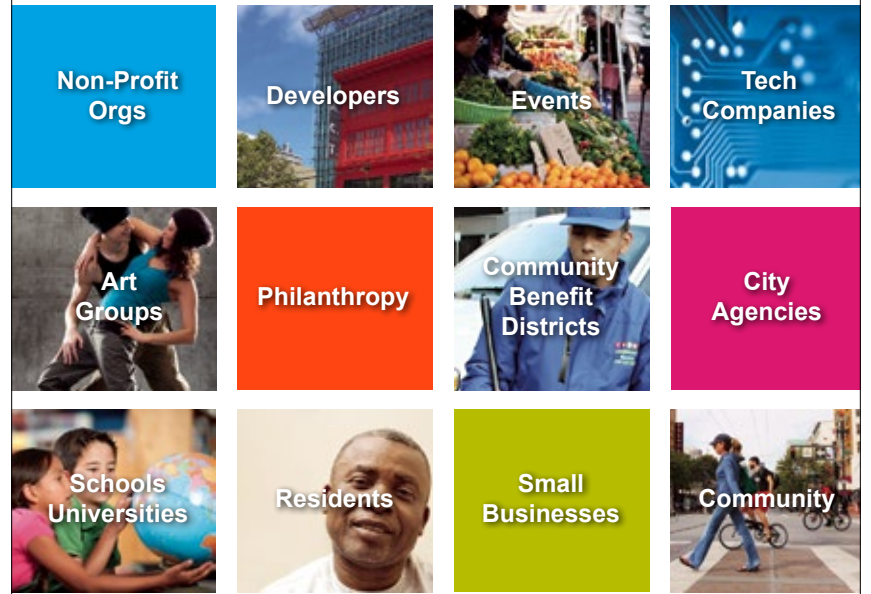
Even so, when their eyes close, all Nguyen family members have had recurring nightmares that they are in Vietnam and can't get out.

And after lunch that day at Mangosteens, John packaged up more than half the food he had ordered and took it home. ■

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Download the SF311 App from your smartphone's app store and visit the SF311 Explorer at explore311.sfgov.org today!

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Enrolling in WIC early in your pregnancy will give your baby a healthy start. Also, WIC staff can show you how you and your family can eat healthier meals and snacks. Migrants are welcome to apply as well.

San Francisco WIC has six offices throughout the City. For more information, call (415) 575-5788.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Assessment Appeals Board (AAB)

Notice is hereby given of 7 vacancies on the AAB. Applicants must have at least 5 years of experience as one of the following: Certified Public Accountant or Public Accountant; licensed Real Estate Broker; Property Appraiser accredited by a nationally recognized organization, or Property Appraiser certified by the California Office of Real Estate Appraisers. For additional information or to obtain an application, please call (415) 554-6778.

Board of Supervisors Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings December 2015 Meetings

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC –Tuesdays, 2:00pm, City Hall Chamber, Room 250.

- December 1
- December 8
- December 15 - Last Full Board Meeting

The City and County of San Francisco encourage public outreach. Articles are translated into several languages to provide better public access. The newspaper makes every effort to translate the articles of general interest correctly. No liability is assumed by the City and County of San Francisco or the newspapers for errors and omissions.

CNS#2819697



HOUSING APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED FOR THE KNOX AND BAYANIHAN HOUSE



The Knox



Bayanihan House

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

The TODCO Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Waiting List is open for the Knox and the Bayanihan House. 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 & Amenities	Max/Min Household Income Limits	Rent as of Feb. 1, 2015
The Knox SRO located at 241- 6th St. & Tehama is accepting applications and has an OPEN WAITLIST	SRO – 1 Person or Couple Room size: 10 ½ x 18 (Semi-Private) bathroom 7 x 7 Unit amenities: sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed Building amenities: small gym, library, private lounge, roof top garden, community kitchen, laundry facility, 24 hour staff & surveillance	1 person \$34,600/year 2 person \$39,520/year Minimum income of \$1,374/month	Move-in deposit \$687 Monthly rent \$687 plus utilities
Hotel Isabel located at 1095 Mission CLOSED WAITLIST	SRO – 1 Person Shared bathroom Unit amenities: sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2- burner stove, closet and single bed	1 person \$34,600/year No minimum income Closed	30% OF INCOME Requires a Certificate of Homelessness
Bayanihan House (Non-assisted units) located at 88 – 6th St. & Mission. OPEN WAITLIST	SRO – 1 Person or Couple Room single: 10½ x 12, shared bathroom Double occupancy: 12x12, shared bathroom Unit amenities: sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed Building amenities: community kitchen, 24 hour staff & surveillance, laundry facility	1 person \$30,275/year Couple \$34,580/year Minimum income of \$889.40/month	As of Jan. 1, 2015 Move-in deposit \$590 Monthly rent \$590 Utilities included

TDD: (415) 345-4470



NANCY TYNAN
Knocked out, never woke

A well-liked Tenderloin resident is dead and her 18-year-old alleged attacker may be facing a long prison stretch after arguing one October evening on a 9-San Bruno bus.

"It's a double tragedy," social worker Angie David, of the Homeless Outreach Team, said out on Ellis Street after Nancy Tynan's Nov. 4 memorial at the Mentone Hotel. Dozens of people had crowded the second-floor community rooms to remember 55-year-old Ms. Tynan, a resident for several years.

Besides the loss of Ms. Tynan, David said that the suspect's life, too, though it goes on, is changed for the worse by an impulsive act.

Ms. Tynan was taken unconscious to S.F. General Hospital after an ambulance picked her up off the corner of 16th Street and Potrero Avenue on the evening of Oct. 15 following an altercation aboard Muni. She was taken off life support Oct. 23. Her alleged killer, Isis Hill, was arrested shortly thereafter and charged with voluntary manslaughter, for which, if convicted, she faces up to 11 years in prison.

"Our time is short," Robert Mitchell, Ms. Tynan's next-door neighbor at the Mentone, told the gathering after lay minister Michael Mallory of Quest4Light opened the memorial. "Treat each other with care and respect. Usually you'll get it back. There are some exceptions, but live each day as if it was your last. One day it will be."

Ms. Tynan's last day came unexpectedly. She was arguing with two people on the bus. Multiple sources told The Extra Ms. Tynan was drinking from a flask during the argument, and ignored fellow passengers' exhortations to stay aboard and not follow the people she'd been arguing with when they disembarked near 16th Street. Ultimately, Ms. Tynan was found unconscious on the sidewalk and taken to the hospital with a traumatic brain injury. Her mother flew in from the East Coast to be with her only child. She and friends stayed at Ms. Tynan's bedside until she was taken off life support.

At that moment, the crime for which Hill is now charged changed from aggravated assault to voluntary manslaughter, SFPD public information officer Carlos Manfredi told The Extra. Using Muni video footage of the attack, he said, "One of the sergeants put out a crime alert" and another officer recognized Hill. She was arrested at home that evening.

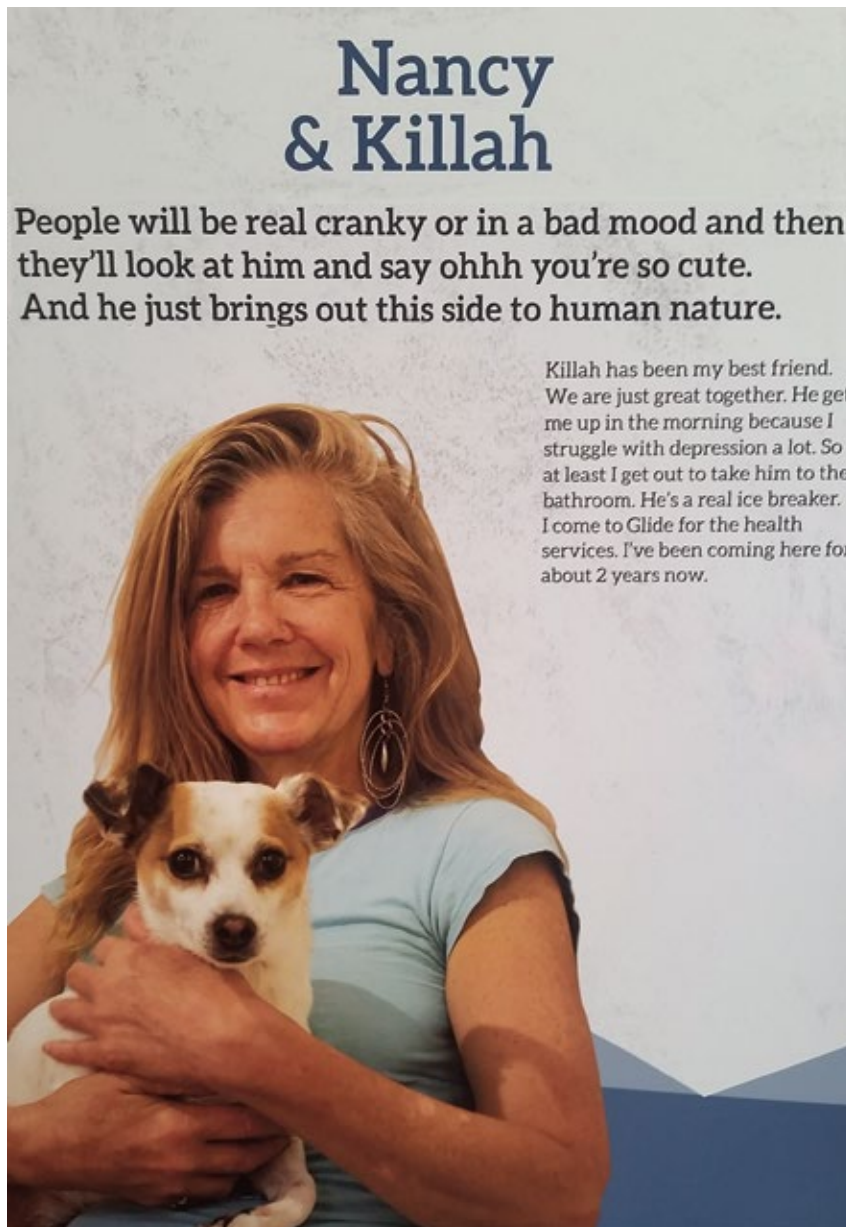
Hill was not alone during her argument with Ms. Tynan, Manfredi said, but "she was the one that actually committed the assault," and thus the only person charged. At the memorial service, when the crime was discussed, the understanding was that Hill's associate had tried to defuse the situation.

From the East Coast, a younger cousin of Ms. Tynan who did not wish to be identified wrote The Extra, "I do not believe she ever regained consciousness. They had to do surgery and it looked bleak from the beginning. Her mom and stepdad had bought her a surprise ticket home to visit, she was supposed to come just days after she was brutally attacked. I was looking forward to seeing her, hugging her and catching up in person. She was also looking forward to seeing her other relatives from her Mom's side."

Some at the memorial spoke of Ms. Tynan's fierce spirit. "She called it her Irish," one said. "She'd say 'my Irish is rising out of me' when she'd been drinking."

Another speculated that she "may have used the N-word" in her confrontation on the bus. "How much of that was alcohol?" a man asked, adding that it can turn a person into an "instant asshole."

Not everybody experienced the



Nancy Tynan and Killah were inseparable. They graced a poster from Glide's Celebration pet awareness campaign. Below: Iris Hill, defendant in Tynan's killing.

same Nancy Tynan. "I'll just say that people talk about an attitude problem that she might have had," one woman said. "Personally, I never saw that. She was always kind and positive. I never saw that side."



SFPD BOOKING PHOTO

David knew Ms. Tynan for years, having helped her get off the streets when she'd become homeless. "She was educated, had been employed, and fell into a typical San Francisco situation," David said. "She lost her husband, job, housing ... it took 18 months to get her housed," first at the Hotel Civic Center, then at the Mentone, David said, but Ms. Tynan offered "one of those amazing opportunities to help someone who appreciated it."

"She was very neighborly," Mitchell, her closest neighbor, said. "From the first day, she was very attentive, friendly, checking to see if I needed anything. I'm very appreciative of that. I saw a very kind, generous person. She'd go to the store and insist on bringing something back." Then he waxed philosophical:

"I've learned to cry. That keeps me out of prison, keeps me from killing someone else. When we love someone, we can't bring them back, but we can learn something and carry it forward."

"The only thing positive I can say," another woman at the memorial said, is that "she said she didn't think she could handle it if her mom passed first." She paused to sob.

"I just want to say 'thank you,' because she helped each of us in her own way," she continued. "She had an attitude, but most of the time she'd apologize."

Ms. Tynan was born in Wellesley,

Mass., and stayed through high school, eventually heading west and arriving in San Francisco at 21. She first found work in a cafe, then things took a less conventional turn.

"Her and I stripped together at Market Street Cinema," Heidi Puffer said. She said they went back 23 years and had been partners as the Double Trouble Girls, working at bachelor parties, but left that all behind when they got through college.

Ms. Tynan earned a degree in accounting from San Francisco State University and worked for a time as a bookkeeper at the Sherman Williams paint store on Bryant Street, friends remembered.

A poster showing Ms. Tynan and her little dog, Killah, stood on display at the front of the room at the Mentone where Mallory spoke extemporaneously, read from the Bible and British poet Gerard Manley Hopkins' "Heaven-Haven." The poster was from Glide's Celebration effort to raise pet awareness.

Others told stories of Killah getting into minor mischief as he and Ms. Tynan made the social rounds on different floors of the Mentone. "You never saw Nancy without Killah," one said. Another person lamented, "We lost two, not just one — Killah, 'cause now he's gone. He's part of this family, too." Puffer said she'd found a home for Killah.

Ms. Tynan got her moment in the national spotlight in 1999, when a reporter for the Philadelphia Inquirer, Nita Lelyveld, quoted her in a story about San Francisco's mayoral election race between Tom Ammiano and Willie Brown. It was about the time the dot-com bubble burst and Ms. Tynan sounded prescient. Lelyveld quoted Ms. Tynan regarding then-Mayor Willie Brown:

"I don't think he gives a rat's ass about the working people of this city. There used to be a middle class here. You used to be able to come here and work in a restaurant and not know what

you were going to do with your life and it would be OK. You wouldn't have to sell your soul to make ends meet."

Puffer said she and Ms. Tynan's boyfriend, Ted Breston, were with her till the end. "He's very devastated," Puffer said, adding that she's worried about him now, too.

Deborah remembered Ms. Tynan as a devout Catholic who "loved art, loved beauty," went to Mass at St. Boniface first thing every morning and "was always ready to lend a hand."

She was buried in Massachusetts by her surviving family, who asked that any donations offered in her memory be made to the Wounded Warrior Project in Topeka, Kan. ■

— Mark Hedlin

DARYL JEROME FAISON
Collapsed riding his bicycle



COURTESY GALVIN APARTMENTS

Daryl Jerome Faison was doing what he loved most on Aug. 10, riding his bicycle down 10th Street at Folsom, when he collapsed. Passersby gave assistance and called 911, but he couldn't be revived. Mr. Faison was 51 years old.

A memorial attended by many of his neighbors was held Nov. 16 in the lobby of the Galvin Apartments, where he had lived.

Galvin Manager Lori Dashiell told tenants at his memorial, "It wasn't a heart attack and he hadn't been sick," stating she had been informed he died from natural causes. "It was just his time," she said.

Originally from North Carolina, Mr. Faison spent his years in California cooking food for friends, receiving tutoring and honing his reading skills at the Public Library, and collecting all sorts of hats. He kept a framed picture of himself wearing a jester hat prominently displayed in his apartment. Neighbors recalled a diversity of hats hanging across a line in his apartment, containing everything from average baseball caps to goofy party hats, and said he had a different hat on whenever they encountered him.

Harriet Kirk, an elderly neighbor who tutored Mr. Faison, recalled his cheerful demeanor and said he was quite helpful to her. "He took me out to movies and meals sometimes, and he had a talent for cooking," she recalled. Kirk bought him a recipe book.

"I don't know how many books he had," because of his reading struggles, "but at least he had a recipe book for the cooking he loved."

Neighbor Pamela Brown said that Mr. Faison was always making delicious holiday dinners, and when she passed him in the hallway, she would ask him, "When are you gonna make gumbo again?"

Mr. Faison was a quiet person, Brown said, recalling him as a "gentle bear" who kept to himself, talking mostly to his three parakeets and cockatiel, sometimes jokingly telling them to "shut up" when they became too talkative.

An ideal tenant, a cheerful neighbor, and a wonderful cook, Mr. Faison will be missed by many. ■

— Mira Ingram

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Housing planned for post office site

By *BRITTANY HOPKINS*

The S.F. Planning Commission June 11 approved the demolition of 101 Hyde St. after determining that the post office on that site was underutilized and should be replaced with housing. The following is excerpted from Brittany Hopkins' Dec. 2 Hoodline posting, "Tenderloin & Mid-Market Residential Development Update: Winter 2015."

The demolition of the post office at 101 Hyde St. could begin as early as January, as the U.S. Postal Service's lease ends Dec. 31. Plans to replace the one-story structure with an 85-unit, eight-story residential complex were approved in June, and a series of appeals was defeated shortly after.

Residents renting post boxes and receiving mail through general delivery at this location expressed concerns during the approval process about how they'll receive their mail. Augustine Ruiz, speaking for the U.S. Postal Service, tells us that post boxes at this location will be transferred to the USPS location at Fox Plaza (1390 Market St.). Mailing addresses will not change, and patrons will be notified as soon as the transfer is complete.

As for general delivery, the U.S. Postal Service is in lease negotiations with two different locations in the Tenderloin near 101 Hyde. It will share the new location once a deal is signed, ideally before the 101 Hyde location shutsters. ■

Brittany Hopkins is Neighborhood Editor for Hoodline, Central City Extra's online partner.



COSTA BROWN ARCHITECTS

Rendering shows the proposed eight-story apartment building that would replace the post office at 101 Hyde St.

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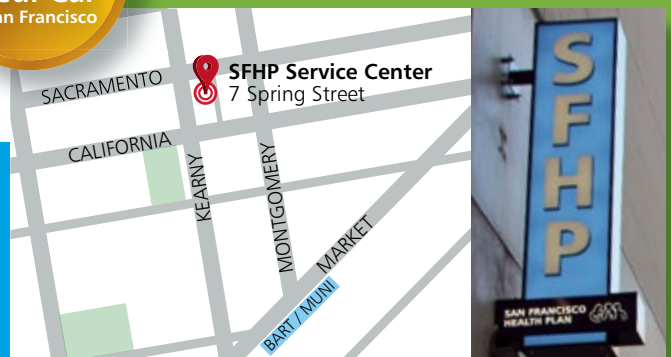
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ARTS EVENTS

O Glorious City, 100 drawings by Jeremy Fish, first artist in residence at City Hall, commemorating City Hall's 100th birthday, on exhibit through March 25, 2016, on the building's ground floor and in the north light court, and in posters on 40 downtown kiosks. Info: startscmission.org.

Thursdays@Noon film series, Main Library, Koret Auditorium, noon-2 p.m. Theme: dark humor for dark days: Jan. 7, "Hudsucker" (1994); Jan. 14, "Fargo" (1996); Jan. 21, "The Big Lebowski" (1998); Jan. 28, "O Brother, Where Art Thou" (2000). Info: sfpl.org.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Interfaith Homeless Memorial, Dec. 21, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Civic Center Plaza. Annual service sponsored by the San Francisco Night Ministry and San Francisco Interfaith Council honors those who died on the streets in 2015.

Christmas at Glide, 330 Ellis St.: Dec. 19, 9-11:30 a.m. toy giveaway; Dec. 24, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., House of Prime Rib luncheon; Dec. 25, 7:30-9 a.m. breakfast; 9 and 11 a.m. celebrations in the sanctuary; 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Christmas dinner; Dec. 30, 4-6 p.m., Kwanzaa celebration with music, games, storytellers, drumming and a holiday meal.

Christmas at St. Anthony's, 150 Golden Gate Ave.: Dec. 19-24, curbside donation drive, 9 a.m.-mid-afternoon; Dec. 25, Christmas Day meal, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Info: stanthonysf.org.

Winter Shelters for homeless adult males: St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1031 Franklin St., Jan. 17-Feb. 6; Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption, 1111 Gough St., through Jan. 16; First Unitarian Universalist Society, 1187 Franklin St., Feb. 7-Feb. 27. Info: sfhsa.org.

Alliance For a Better District 6, 17th annual meeting and celebration, Jan. 25, 201 Turk St. Apartments, Community Room, 6-8 p.m. Keynote speaker Public Defender Jeff Adachi, guest speakers, election of officers, recognition awards ceremony, food, door prizes. Info: 820-1560.

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 Client Council, 3rd Tuesday of month, 3-5 p.m., 1380 Howard, Room 515. Consumer advisers from self-help groups and mental health consumer advocates. Public welcome. Info: 255-3695. Call ahead as meeting location may change.

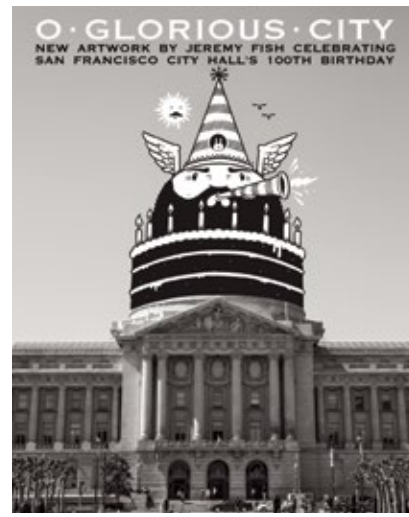
Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of month, 1010 Mission St., Bayanihan Community Center, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home services, expanded eligibility for home care, improved discharge planning. Light lunch. Call Ligia Montano, 546-1333 x315.

Hoarding and Cluttering Support Groups, weekly meetings at various times, conducted by Mental Health Association of San Francisco, 870 Market St., Suite 928. Info: 421-2926 or mentalhealthsf.org/group-search.

Legal clinic, 4th Thursday of the month, 507 Polk St., 10 a.m.-noon. Legal help for people with psychiatric or developmental disabilities who need help with an SSA work review, sponsored by People with Disabilities Foundation. Sliding-scale fee. By appointment only: 931-3070. Info: pwdf.org.

Mental Health Board, 3rd 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, 3 p.m., Kelly Cullen Community Building, 220 Golden Gate Ave., 2nd floor auditorium or 5th floor gym. Public invited to discuss legislation that encourages corner stores to sell fresh food and reduce tobacco and alcohol sales. Info: Jessica Estrada, jessica.healthyretail@gmail.com, 581-2483.



SAN FRANCISCO ARTS COMMISSION

One of 100 images by Jeremy Fish, City Hall artist in residence.

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 IMPROVEMENT

Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Tuesday of month, 6 p.m., 230 Eddy St. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or 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, 3rd Thursday of the month, 3:30 p.m., park clubhouse, Eddy and Jones. Info: 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.

Tenderloin Community Benefit District. Full board meets 3rd Monday at 5 p.m., 55 Taylor St. Info: 292-4812.

Safe Haven Project, 4th Tuesday of month, 3 p.m., 519 Ellis St. (Senator Hotel). Contact: 563-3205, x115, or 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 month, 11 a.m.-noon, Tenderloin Police Community Room, 301 Eddy. Presentations on issues of interest to neighborhood residents, nonprofits and businesses. Info: 820-1412.

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.

DISTRICT 6 SUPERVISOR

Jane Kim, chair, City & School District committee; member, Land Use Committee, Transbay Joint Powers Authority, Transportation Authority, Association of Bay Area Government

Legislative aides: Danny Yadegar, Davi Lang and Ivy Lee.

Jane.Kim@sfgov.org 554-7970



Happy Holidays from Recology San Francisco

Holiday Schedule:

December 25th, Christmas Day – No Collection Service

January 1st, New Year's Day – No Collection Service

If your collection falls on one of the above holidays, your collection will occur on the following day (December 26th or January 2nd).

Tree Recycling:

Recycle your Christmas tree by putting it curbside on your regular collection day from January 2nd through January 15th. Please remove all decorations before putting it curbside.

For more information, visit www.RecologySF.com