

Redevelopment Agency demise a body blow to Sixth Street

\$4 million a year lost, along with the loss of momentum

BY BRIAN RINKER

WHILE city agencies scramble to fill the gaps left by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, projects to resuscitate the Sixth Street Corridor have ceased, funding is gone, and the future is uncertain.

"We fear," says Jenny McNulty, executive director of Urban Solutions, "that without support, the revitalization efforts of Sixth Street might be reversed and it will be once again filled with shuttered businesses."

In more than 20 years, Redevelopment spent \$85 million trying to revitalize a 70-acre area south of Market Street. It concentrated on the Sixth Street Corridor, an area notorious for crime, homelessness, alcohol, drugs and worse. With its public advisory committee SOM-

PAC, and community-based organization, Urban Solutions, an open dialogue with the diverse community occurred and slow growth began.

Initially, the agency was only authorized to repair damage caused by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and develop affordable housing. Then, in 2005, the

agency increased its scope and officially began to combat neighborhood blight and encourage economic growth.

"It's not the same Sixth Street it was," says Mike Grisso, senior project manager of the former Redevelopment Agency. "It is a much better place now."

The agency spent \$66 million over the years on affordable housing, creating 1,100 new and renovated units. The Public Initiative Development Organization, a non-profit arm of Redevelopment, owns and operates the \$23 million Plaza Apartments on Sixth and Howard

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NO. 120

PUBLISHED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO STUDY CENTER

MARCH 2012

TL'S LAST POT SHOP SHUTTERED

Feds force out Sanctuary

PAGE 2

TL ARTS DISTRICT A BUST

Gray Area out, newbies are in

PAGE 3



ARCHITECTS PLAY ROLE IN MID-MARKET

Pro bono help to needy nonprofits

PAGE 7

CENTRAL CITY

EXTRA

SAN FRANCISCO

TENDERLOIN STARS



PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Thrift-driven artist Virginia Miller works up to 12 hours daily painting and beading, rarely leaving her Alexander Residence room.

Art is thriving in SROs

Amazing residents surrounded by their own creations

BY TOM CARTER

THERE are many artists in the Tenderloin. Home is often an SRO, where life can be rich and varied. "It takes all kinds" is practically a neighborhood mantra. The three people profiled here are both SRO dwellers and artists. One works with beads, one combines art with compassion, the other raises collecting to a curatorial art. Our kind of stars.

ARTIST ON THE RUN

Anyone visiting affable but insular Virginia Miller is astounded by her walls and inclined to call her eighth-floor room in the Alexander Residence a "museum."

More than 130 masks from all over the world share wall space with seven of Miller's large, colorfully beaded artworks, plus paintings she has created, mostly images of gods from old Mexico. Some of the beaded pieces took her a year to make.

"I work five to 12 hours a day, seven days a week," Miller says, "It's just something I must do — I'm an artist. And I don't go anywhere or spend any money — except when I travel."

For several years that meant Mexico, cheap and accessible. In every town, she makes a beeline to the mercado to find merchants' shelves in 5- by-10-foot stalls

wildly bedecked with colorful strands of tiny plastic beads that she uses to create her intricate tapestries.

"A pound of beads may cost \$108 here, but just \$20 there," she says, as jocular and disarming as Julia Child. "It pays me to go and they treat me like a queen because I clear out their shelves."

She has been to Puerto Vallarta, La Zapitilla, Zuatecu and Zapopan recently. In Zapitilla she was inspired by the quality of glass sculptures children make at an art school from melted down pop bottles. In Zuatecu, she sought out the Huichol Indians, the peyote yarn painters who also work famously with the same small beads she does. She thought she might learn something from them.

"But they are very protected by the government," Miller said. "They smoke peyote — and I have no judgment on that — and come down out of the hills and sell their stuff, which is pretty high-priced — a mask is \$100. Then they go back up into the hills to their mud huts. I found them unfriendly and uncommunicative."

Squirreled away in drawers in her living area are more than a dozen large shoeboxes each holding at least 10 plastic bags of tiny, colored beads, some fluorescent or iridescent. She uses tweezers to fix them to a glued surface. But now she is painting a 2-foot-square cityscape that must be finished before she turns to a new beading project.

Another work is a slightly smaller painting. "It's my concept of the world. It's banks, churches, prisons and the government. They run everything. The hands in the picture are praying to a light bulb."

Miller has never had a show of her

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Pearl's Deluxe Burgers anchors Sixth Street at Market; Dottie's is far left.

Feds force last pot shop in Tenderloin to close

BY TOM CARTER

SANCTUARY, the last marijuana dispensary in the Tenderloin, has shut down. The Justice Department warned in November that it was in violation of federal law, and if it didn't close by Jan. 7, the property it occupied at 669 O'Farrell St. would be seized.

The small Sanctuary sign showing a marijuana leaf atop of a medical caduceus was still on the building Feb. 29, but the inside was being renovated for a pet store, a workman said.

Sanctuary was a small operation serving fewer than 1,000 patients, 80% from the Tenderloin, the majority suffering from HIV/AIDS, cancer and hepatitis, according to owner Michael Welch.

Licensed by the city in 2005 and again in 2008 under new guidelines, the 209-square-foot store

was a "compassion" dispensary. The city health code requires pot clubs to operate "in a not-for-profit manner." Welch created many special programs with profits to help the community, such as free medicine once a week for 60 destitute patients suffering from cancer and HIV, free lunches and grocery giveaways, even aid to a hospital in Africa fighting HIV/AIDS.

U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag sent the threatening letter Nov. 23 to O'Farrell Properties LLC, owner of 669 O'Farrell St. where Sanctuary occupied the storefront. She cited its federal violations and said the property was "subject to seizure and forfeiture." Sanctuary had to fold within 45 days of the letter, which was Jan. 7, or else.

Welch, hospitalized with an aorta blood clot, feared the worst.

"If they close us down, I think all of us (eight employees) will be homeless," he said then. "It's hard to fight from a hospital bed."

The reason the U.S. attorney picked on Sanctuary was believed to be its proximity to Tenderloin Children's Playground directly behind the dispensary, Welch said, based on a conversation he had with a spokesman at the U.S. attorney's office when he was trying with no luck to speak to Haag.

The statewide crackdown was ostensibly aimed at pot shop profiteers. At least three of the city's 26 dispensaries have closed since November. The Drug Enforcement

Administration has sent requests for records from 11 dispensaries, the Examiner reported Feb. 13.

"A business typically notifies the tax collector of its closing when the bill comes," said Larry Kessler in an email from the Department of Health, which oversees the dispensaries. "The tax collector then notifies DPH. If DPH notices the closure during route work, we will notify the tax collector."

Sanctuary did not notify DPH or the tax collector it was closing, Kessler said. It had not paid its 2012 license fee, he said, and "it is unclear to me whether they are out of business."

California's 1996 Compassionate Use Act was meant to help suffering people but, lacking regulation, profiteers moved in.

Four years ago, Welch distributed Sanctuary's two-page treatise at community meetings in the neighborhood.

"A medical marijuana dispensary has the potential of being nothing more than a storefront for drug dealers, or it can be a valuable asset to the community it serves," the statement says. "Many dispensary owners have already become millionaires in the few short years that medical marijuana laws have been in effect."

"The Sanctuary, however, is set up to run as a patient's cooperative and a nonprofit, putting all its surplus income back into the hands of the patients that need it most, thus making the whole community rich and not just a select few." ■

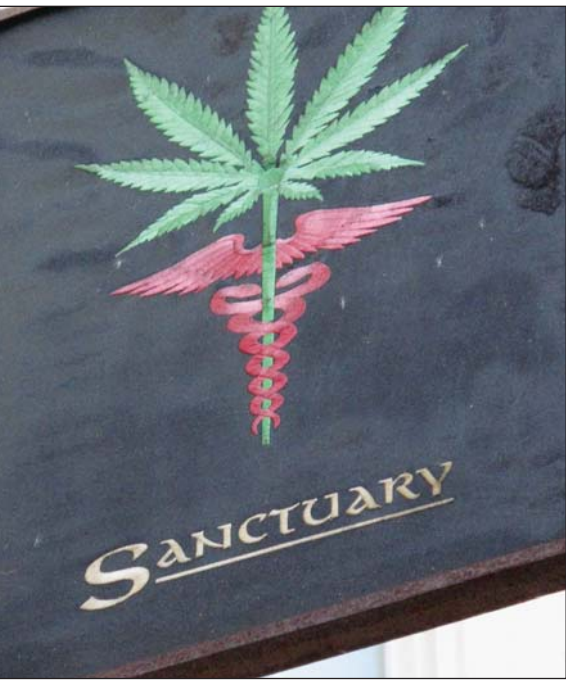


PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

What'll happen to 6th without Redevelopment?

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

streets.

The agency put another \$19 million into infrastructure and economic development.

"When we started," Grisso says, "most of the businesses on Sixth Street were boarded up." The first few years were very difficult, he adds. People had given up, they didn't care anymore.

"We got people to take a chance," he says. In seven years, with the help of Urban Solutions, the retail vacancy rate dropped from a staggering 43% to 9%, the envy of mid-Market revivalists.

Then, Feb. 1, it all stopped after a state Supreme Court ruling closed nearly 400 agencies statewide in the governor's attempt to help balance the state budget.

"I was very alarmed," says McNulty when she first heard the court's decision. Urban Solutions manages the Sixth Street Economic Revitalization Program, relying heavily on the \$400,000 a year from Redevelopment. The agency also gives the nonprofit more than \$1 million a year to distribute in low-cost loans and grants to small businesses. In total, Urban Solutions used \$3.5 million to stabilize the area by attracting and retaining businesses.

In the seven years McNulty's been director, she's seen close to 100 façade improvements and enticed many businesses to the area, including Pearl's Deluxe Burgers and Miss Saigon restaurant, anchoring the respective Sixth Street corners of Market and Mission.

NO MONEY, NO MOMENTUM

"We can't continue to support the businesses without the funding," she says.

The Mayor's Office of Economic Workforce Development and the Department of Public Works are expected to pick up the slack. But no one knows where the yearly \$4 million Redevelopment spent on the neighborhood will come from.

According to the mayor's office, Workforce Development will continue revitalizing the Sixth Street area and will look to replace the resources Redevelopment once provided. Proposals for Sixth Street will be included in the mayor's 2012-13 budget, but final amounts won't be known until June. Meantime, OWED and the mayor's staff say they are looking to private-sector funding,

but that will be a tough sell, considering that most projects require annual funding, not a one-time donation.

The vacant Hugo Apartments, bane of the neighborhood at Sixth and Howard, acquired by Redevelopment through an eminent domain battle, was an affordable-housing project the agency had had in the works for years. The project is still under debate. Rumors in the neighborhood say both that the project has been axed and that it's been green lighted. City officials won't comment.

"The Hugo Apartments, that's up in the air," says Antoinetta Stadlman, former president of now-defunct SOMPAC. "Everyone wants it dealt with. But the city hasn't made up its mind up yet — it will be expensive."

Grisso says the mayor's office is doing everything it can to find money and continue the projects. Without Redevelopment's resources, it will be difficult.

"In the months and years ahead we will incorporate Sixth Street revitalization efforts into the work of the Central Market Partnership as is appropriate and as budget allows," according to Francis Tsang, the mayor's chief deputy communications director.

McNulty says Urban Solutions' contract with the city expires in June, resulting in a funding loss up to 40% of its budget. She fears that without the city's support Urban Solutions will have to relocate, restructure or perhaps shut down.

Though worried, she says her hopes for Sixth Street were raised during a Feb. 1 press conference welcoming Dottie's True Blue Cafe to the block, when Mayor Lee announced DPW would now be in charge of building the police substation and cleaning the area's sidewalks.

Previously, Redevelopment contracted sidewalk cleaning, tree maintenance and graffiti removal with a private company for \$150,000 a year.

"The DPW has taken responsibility for cleaning the Sixth Street corridor," says DPW spokesman Greg Crump. This includes sidewalk cleaning, graffiti removal and refuse pickup. He said workers will steam clean, power wash and work litter patrol three shifts a day.

Crump also said the police substation is scheduled to be up and running by the end of the year.

"The substation will do a lot about all the street shit going on," says Stadlman, 20-

year resident of the Baldwin Hotel, where the substation will occupy a storefront. The loss of Redevelopment doesn't worry her much. Sixth Street life will continue as always.

"The immediate effects — none," says Stadlman, remarking that the city has always moved slowly, with or without Redevelopment money. "Things will go on."

With SOMPAC gone, the community's access to city officials through Redevelopment also is gone, the community input cut off.

"The PAC was unique in one way," Stadlman says. "It deliberately set up to collect all the diverse aspects of the community. The PAC brought a complete cross section of the community together."

Henry Karnilowicz, president of the South of Market Business Association, agrees that SOMPAC held the neighborhood together. Its recommendations to Redevelopment allocated resources that gathered property owners together, and offered incentives for them to spruce up their property or attract new businesses.

WHAT THE LOSS MEANS

"That effort is gone now," Karnilowicz said about the loss of Redevelopment. "Change is going to take much, much longer — there's not the pressure anymore."

Karnilowicz has his doubts about the substation. He doesn't question the mayor's sincerity, but does question the reality of constructing and operating an effective police station in times of budget crisis.

"We were making a difference," says Grisso, lamenting that after making so much progress, losing Sixth Street revitalization funding is especially sad. "It's a totally different street now. But it wasn't finished yet. We still had some work to do. We probably needed only three or four more years, and then we could have finished and put the project to rest."

Instead, Redevelopment was put to rest and cities across California struggle with the loss.

On March 1, Redevelopment was gone, employees laid off or transferred. A week before the city's Redevelopment offices closed for good, personnel didn't know if they had future jobs with the city.

"It's been pretty nerve-wracking for everyone," Grisso says. ■



Gray Area Foundation for the Arts, left, anchor tenant on Newsom's Tenderloin Arts Corridor, moved to the Warfield Building after being evicted from Taylor Street. The old Gaiety Theater, right, planned for renovation to be a player in the corridor's cachet, still sits all boarded up on Turk Street.



Arts District in shambles in just 2 years

Newsom's vision sours as new phase takes shape

BY JONATHAN NEWMAN

WITH typical flourish, Mayor Gavin Newsom staged a midday press conference at Showdogs, then a new hot dog diner, at the triangle of Market, Taylor and Golden Gate on the Tenderloin's southern edge.

Surrounded by young aides from his Office of Economic and Workforce Development, dark-suited bodyguards, SFPD functionaries and media reps, Newsom announced the Central Market Partnership that was to push the area's revival.

It was January 2010 and the spearhead of this renewal was dubbed the Taylor Street Arts District, a plan to refashion Taylor from Market Street to O'Farrell into a Tenderloin gateway of galleries, public art exhibits, artists' studios and general bonhomie in hopes of attracting crowds and shoppers.

The Department of Public Works would redesign pedestrian crosswalks on Taylor and upgrade street landscaping, Newsom noted. An experimental ban on cars east-bound on Market from Eighth to Fifth streets would increase pedestrian traffic, he hoped, and CityPlace, a proposed five-story glass retail mall poised to begin major demolition and construction on Market a half-block east of Taylor, would bring new life to the area.

THINGS WERE LOOKING UP

Newsom also cited the opening of Gray Area Foundation for the Arts at 55 Taylor St., the endlessly rumored reopening of the fire-damaged Original Joe's at 144 Taylor and the Art In Storefronts program on Market Street as signs that things were already looking up. Six months later, San Francisco playwright Sean Owens and his production partner, Cameron Eng, announced plans to restore the old porn-lite Gaiety Theater at 80 Turk St. doors down from Taylor.

David Addington, Showdogs co-owner and owner of the Warfield Theater, was seated at a table in the back of the wedge-shaped diner, beaming at the mayor's pronouncements. If he felt any strain at the defeat two months earlier of Proposition D — the ballot measure designed to allow billboard and electronic signage on Market Street that his company financed to the tune of \$455,000 — it didn't show.

Now, two years later, the Taylor Street DPW planter box trees, unable to gain a foothold against daily deposits of litter and rough use as crack dealers' stash holes, have been removed. Jack Sumski, owner of the building that housed Gray Area, told The Extra that he "had to evict" Gray Area from its 3,000-square-foot Taylor Street site. It's since decamped to an iron-gated storefront in the Warfield Building on Market, where it conducts night classes for aspiring gallery entrepreneurs.

Original Joe's has reopened in North

Beach, a more suitable venue, perhaps, for its now-\$44 porterhouse steaks. Its 70-year Tenderloin site remains an empty plywood-clad hulk; and Art In Storefronts has come and gone.

The 21 Club at Taylor and Turk, with its monthly Ground Zero Poetry Readings, is the only arts venue in the Taylor Street Arts Corridor that is more than a newbie on the blocks.

Addington has filed a Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceeding for the old Hollywood Billiards building in the same block as Showdogs. CityPlace is in limbo while its major funder, Commonfund, navigates its own bankruptcy whirlpool. Not surprisingly, 65% of Market Street merchants recently polled by Observesf.com found the Market Street car ban harmful to their business. The Gaiety Theater has been leased to a clothing manufacturer, its past theatrical roots remaining behind shuttered doors.

Mayor Ed Lee has refashioned the Central Market Partnership of the Newsom era — itself a recrafting of the 1995 Central Market Redevelopment Plan — into the Central Market Economic Strategy, designed to "revitalize Central Market and the adjacent neighborhoods." Lee's plan is for the city to partner with private and nonprofit developers, exempt from payroll taxes for up to six years any Tenderloin businesses that create new jobs and revamp the look of Market Street before the boulevard's scheduled repaving in 2015.

To date, one loan has been granted from the Central Market Cultural District Loan Fund — \$250,000 to Pearl's Burgers, which opened its fourth location at Sixth and Market — two applications are pending and 11 applications denied or dormant. Part of the difficulty in securing this money for the revival of central Market is that applicants must hire one new full-time employee for each \$50,000 loaned, a tough hurdle for most arts groups.

Still, new players have entered the stage. Zendsk, the software innovator, has leased two floors at 989 Market St. for its 160 employees and Burning Man's Black Rock Arts Foundation has settled in at 995 Market St., leasing space for 30 workers.

Sumski, the octogenarian owner of the 112-unit building at Turk and Taylor streets that initially housed Gray Area, moved out a porn studio, bar and Grand Liquors from his site and is building a 5,000-square-foot grocery store, which, according to a recent poll, may become the most popular place in the neighborhood. He's leased 55 Taylor St., Gray Area's old space, to S3X, an erotic art gallery that opened Feb. 10. But the Sumski family is not happy and may start legal proceedings in the belief the tenant is using the commercial space as a residence.

Sumski's watched 30 years of neighborhood struggle and now has new concerns: "The empty buildings, including the

Warfield Building and the Shorestein-owned Golden Gate Theater building, reflect badly and the recent loss of Redevelopment Agency funds doesn't help either," he said. "It's a worry: Where is the money for new development going to come from?"

PianoFight, a theatrical production company, has signed a 10-year lease for space at old Original Joe's with plans to open a restaurant with a 60-foot-long bar and cabaret stage. PianoFight, which operated the Off Market Theater at 965 Mission St. for four years, hopes to secure Cultural District funds. "We're courting private investors, too," Artistic Director Rob Ready said. "The Tenderloin's a tough sell, but I know in five years it will improve. In 10 years, it'll be even better."

CERAMICS STUDIO OPENS

A ceramics studio, the Clay Underground, has leased part of old Joe's as well. It opened in February, offering classes and shared studio space for ceramists at 187 Eddy St. off Taylor.

Tenderloin Economic Development Project is partnering with American Conservatory Theater to build a \$100 million mid-Market Center for the Performing Arts at 950 Market St., the intersection of Mason, Turk and Market streets. Meantime, ACT has opened a small-box performance space — The Costume Shop — at 1117 Market near Seventh Street and recently purchased the nearby Strand Theater with plans to make it a 300-seat live performance theater.

Elvin Padilla, project director of TEDP's North of Market Neighborhood Improvement Corp., agrees with Sumski about vacancies.

"If the Golden Gate Theater would start running performances again, it would bring people and energy back to the street," Padilla said. But he still sees youth and talent heading for the Tenderloin, citing PianoFight's lease and the refurbishing of the 240-44 Taylor St. storefront into gallery/art studio by Hella More Funner, an art collective of Sam Fuchs and Adam Gray, as positive signs.

In devising the mayor's economic strategy for Central Market, OEWD polled 124 Tenderloin residents and found what they consider the gravest problems in the neighborhood — homelessness, lack of cleanliness and crime — and its biggest needs — additional housing, jobs for residents, and a full-service neighborhood grocery store.

The Taylor Street Arts Corridor is in shambles, at least as it was originally conceived. It is becoming something different — but good, maybe better.

And for the 21 Club — the landmark dive bar that Esquire noted — to be the senior arts venue on Taylor Street is just another real-life example of the Tenderloin mantra: Expect the unexpected. ■



3 artists in SROs, where the

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

work, or even sold a single piece, but she has given a few things away.

Her piece de resistance — it took a year to paint — is the plumed serpent Mayan god. The stippled orange and green oil painting is 20-by-30 inches. “I have a thing for cultures other than my own,” Miller says. “I feel like I’m a child of the universe anywhere I go.”

Miller periodically flees the Tenderloin, or she couldn’t stand living here. “You see people throwing up in the street, shooting up, jacking off, it’s a rough place.” She was mugged a year ago. But the grim Tenderloin is ultimately affordable. And because of her Spartan life she’s able to save her nickels and dimes to travel every year or two.

“I get an idea of where I want to go and get books on it and do research,” she says.

Miller wasn’t always a full-time artist. A barber for 28 years, she had had two shops in Carmel Valley, the Clip Joint and the Mid-Valley Barbershop, where she scratched her artistic itch by whittling or painting at a little desk in back. Then she sold the shops to bankroll her lifelong dream — a dive into higher education. And at Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, she did quite well, graduating magna cum laude with a BFA degree. Then she got a master’s degree.

She lived in San Carlos. As her savings dwindled, her rent jumped \$200, leaving her \$6 a month to live on. She got “very depressed.” She ended up in San Francisco homeless as she had been for four years in her early 20s in Monterey. But she pulled out of it in a recovery and treatment program in 2006. Two years later, through Section 8 housing, she became an Alexander resident with a heightened sense of well-being.

Living in an SRO has been a godsend because it is affordable housing. But otherwise it hasn’t affected her art.

“I always wanted cheap housing, but even in a homeless shelter I did art. It’s something I have to do. It brings me peace.”

An ad recently caught her attention that sent her into her research mode.

“I wanted to go to Key West, Fla., but I saw this \$367 cruise to the Bahamas,” she says, unable to hide her enthusiasm. “How do you say no to that, dude?”

A little detail was the cruise left from Miami. No problem. Miller planned to grab her German-made art pencils, pack her sketch-

book along with a stack of peanut butter sandwiches, take the Greyhound across the country, stopping at youth hostels along the way.

The cruise, the cheapest way to travel she says, stopped at Ft. Lauderdale where she went into a funky art store and found a battered, 6-foot totem pole. She bought it and had it sent to her at the Alexander. She has been whittling away ever since to smooth the surface. She’ll cover it with five pounds of beads, she estimates, which will take “months and months.”

“I like to go see how other people live,” she says, “And I see everything through my art eyes — shapes and color. Then I come back to the Tenderloin and I’m okay for a few months. Then I have to have another idea about some place. I’ll start the research because I’ll have to get away again.”

She’ll go to Guatemala this year, then tackle her favorite dream — Australia, thousands of nickels and dimes away.

“I love the aboriginal culture, their idea of origin, their religious beliefs,” she says. “They can make art out of just a twig — painting it and putting dots on it. I’ve used dots, too. But that’s a \$7,000 trip. Until then, I’ll be eating lettuce sandwiches and peanut butter.”

PICTURE PERFECT: POSTCARD OBSESSION

Todd Hebbbron got antsy when his friend, Buck, didn’t return to the bar from the lobby bathroom in Yosemite’s Ahwanee Hotel. So he strolled over to the gift shop, bought five postcards, returned to the bar and wrote each one to a friend.

“Maybe if he’d have come back sooner, I wouldn’t have been doing this,” said Hebbbron, 62, grinning and looking pleased at the postcards on his busy walls in his neatly organized sixth-floor room in the Ambassador Hotel. He likes sports, too.

The walls are colorfully swathed, dominated by Giants orange and 49ers red. He has 24



Joseph Sierra loves having art around him in his San Cristina room. He uses art as a way to encourage other residents to try their hand at creating.

Giants schedules, 6 49ers, 6 Warriors and 24 pennants. He also has framed pictures of athletes, Thanksgiving church gatherings, seven blowups of Route 66 decal-scenes (he belongs to the nostalgic Route 66 Association), a raft of pins, old maps, two watercolors his stepfather painted and, not the least of it, 17 framed postcards. However, it’s an understatement to say the postcards are the tip of the iceberg.

Hebbbron has 12,605 postcards that he went on to write since that stimulating bathroom break, Sept. 23, 1974. From then on, Hebbbron, a postcard collector before that, wrote them five at a time, being especially prolific when traveling. He keeps a diary with the names. The recipients are his family in Los Altos and other relatives and friends in California, Illinois, Minnesota, Texas, Oregon and Washington.

“My former landlady in Minnesota not only answers, she writes me about twice as many as I send her,” he says. “People are grateful for a postcard correspondence. I’m not a computer person, just sort of old-fashioned.”

Hebbbron’s postcard-writing record came in 1994, a year he traveled across country. He wrote 605. Last year he wrote 379 postcards, and he just keeps going.

The ones on his walls are select postcards commemorating milestones, like the 7,000th he sent, and the 9,000th. But Hebbbron has embellished the postcards to look like fancy certificates. He has numbered and color-copied the postcard and on paper above has written the date, the five addressees he sent the card to, the store he wrote in, plus the town’s name along with its emblem. He puts the special ones in 8- by 10-inch frames. Other formatted postcards he stashes in 157 scrapbooks, most of which are in storage and at his parents’.

“I call them picture postcard personal plates.”

Some he has given away, like the one near the pickle barrel on the balcony facade at Tommy’s Joynt on Van Ness Avenue.

You could say Hebbbron’s life has followed his bliss. In 1982, he wrote a compliment to a postcard manufacturer in Aurora, Ill. It led to an exchange of letters, and a job for him the next year.

Although Hebbbron has been at the

Todd Hebbbron
is surrounded in his Ambassador Hotel SRO by his postcard collection that is meticulously curated with complete context for each.





They live among their creations



Hotel room, and he spreads it throughout the hotel and goes out

headed to City College, and with no regrets.

"I didn't have the income but I wasn't discouraged. To me it was just getting the tools (for art) and I met some wonderful people at City College."

For Sierra, art is the radiant flower of life and the fount of energy that fuels his compassion. "It's the way I see things and communicate," he says

At City College, he got another tool for his personality. The shy, introverted Sierra was afraid to be in crowds, even to go outside. In art class he made a clay angel hiding its face behind its left wing. But Sierra found two psychology courses that addressed his problem. Eventually, he overcame shyness. Angels he made after that weren't hiding. They are iconic for him. "I have always felt that I am protected," Sierra says.

To some innocent folks — like Sierra certainly was — San Cristina would have been a nightmare. To him it was an "experience." He says most of the 58 residents have mental issues and many have addictions and have been homeless.

"I saw the need for improvements," Sierra says. "So I went to most meetings and addressed the issues that can be used to integrate people. It opened my eyes to a new reality I never knew could exist. It has affected the way I see the world today and my art."

"We can do things to affect the lives of others."

He thought the place needed brightening up. "The energy was depressing," he says. "I thought it would be healing to have some color."

Sierra suggested in 2002 to Community Housing Partnership, which owns the place, that he paint a tropical mural on a community room wall. CHP approved and furnished the paint. As more of Sierra's ideas tumbled out, the project grew to include a decorative terrarium with flowers and a gurgling fountain under the mural.

"I wanted something relaxing," he says, "a

small paradise so people felt connected."

He went on to organize monthly art and crafts classes downstairs and to furnish supplies, snacks and beverages. Making art is therapeutic, he says. When he finds out what each person likes he suggests a suitable medium.

Once a month he organizes recycling, which is more like a garage sale. He makes a flyer and circulates it, then meets with residents a day in advance to preview their pieces, mostly cameras, DVDs and stereos. They do the pricing. At the beginning of the month, the objects go on tables he sets up outside and the sale is on. He includes recycle pamphlets.

"A lot of units are full of stuff but it's not organized properly. If they've been homeless and living out of a push cart, they bring all that with them. Some don't have money for food."

An inveterate recycler, Sierra scours neighborhoods on his bicycle for castoff treasures to bring back to the hotel. Sometimes he'll travel by Muni, so he can haul larger items like a TV and refrigerator, which he has given away to residents who needed them.

Sierra's art — paintings, photographs, collages — are also found throughout the lobby and ground-floor common rooms.

Now, he's starting to organize a consciousness-raising group to meet on the topic of breathing. He has asthma. There are many smokers in the San Cristina.

"I'm not better than anyone," he says. "I just want to do things right. I want to bring the best of me wherever I am. Thank God I don't have addictions. Thankfully, I have ideas."

It's a huge commitment the diminutive artist has taken on, sustained by his own art, much of which is stored yet in evidence in his room. One wall is dominated by three 4-by-4-foot abstract paintings in red, green and yellow, giving off a tropical air. Other walls have masks and other paintings. Below, on tiered surfaces, are small shrines and hundreds of statuary and icons. Some are the seven dwarfs, a small plastic Christmas tree with suspended silver horses and the four clay angels he created while at City College. The room's cramped, but tidy with a hard-to-see washbasin in the corner.

"I have to deal with drugs and mental illness," Sierra says. "For me it's important. I'm motivated. It's a reflection of being alive in the electric energy that's here in San Francisco. I like to project that as a citizen of the world." ■

One angel Sierra made (center) is hiding his face under his wing, reflecting Sierra's own shyness, which he has overcome.

Ambassador nearly seven years, he doesn't like staying long anyplace and soon moved on to work for postcard companies in Phoenix, Portland, San Antonio, and Smith Novelty Co. here in San Francisco, one of the nation's oldest postcard companies, where he continues to work periodically, stocking store shelves, among other jobs.

"People come in and say this is like a little museum," Hebbbron says pleasantly, proud of the colorful detail he has amassed. Friends have suggested he use his copyrighted format and go into business. "But no," he says. "It's strictly a hobby. I'm in for the nostalgia of it."

COMPASSION IN HIS MEDIUM

Artist Joseph Sierra came downtown 15 years ago to check on studio space at the Warfield, passing on Market Street the San Cristina Hotel, an SRO he thought might make a good dwelling place. It was centrally located and near Central City Hospitality House and its arts program.

The studio didn't work out, too pricey for his shallow pockets. Homeless at times and living in his car, he applied for Section 8, and got the San Cristina — 18 months later.

The SRO changed his life. Nothing in his experience related to it, he says, and it was nothing he ever could have imagined.

Born in Mexico to a family of field hands, they came north to work in farming communities from Bakersfield to Modesto under the searing summer sun.

"We worked in the fields — grapes, onions, garlic — 100-degree weather," Sierra said. He was telling his story in his colorful San Cristina third-floor room behind his door covered with silver CDs. "The work day started at 6 a.m."

Sierra's about 5-feet-5 with alert dark eyes and a round serious face that seldom breaks a smile. His thoughtful answers are surprisingly quick. And he never complains. "It was an experience, a way to see life in another way."

He came to the city of his dreams in 1994 wanting to be an artist. He loved San Francisco and its energy. He applied at the Art Institute.

"I got the tour," he said. He was offered a scholarship — 85% of the \$25,000-a-semester tuition. But he couldn't afford the 15%, so he



PHOTOS BY TOM CARTER

HAROLD ARMWOOD
34 years of disco dancing

Harold Armwood and Steve Royston were at separate tables in a Hollywood restaurant in 1977 when a mutual friend introduced them. They hit it off, hooked up and went on to spend countless nights at discos dancing the night away in a relationship that lasted 34 years.

After that first year they were inseparable, traveling back and forth from San Francisco to family in Chicago, working as picture framers, bike messengers and day laborers. Their relationship ended when Mr. Armwood, who had been in ill health and cheating death for several years, died at San Francisco General Hospital Feb. 6. Cause of death wasn't official, but Mr. Armwood had long been HIV-positive and for two years underwent kidney dialysis treatments. He was 58.

Mr. Armwood's memorial was held in the spacious second-floor community room at 1180 Howard St. A half-dozen friends sat on folding chairs in a semicircle under the 20-foot ceiling with light streaming in from more than three dozen vertical windows and large glass doors.

Royston, dressed in a black track suit with gold trim, had his Pomeranian-Pekingese dog Oscar on a leash. He thanked the five other mourners for attending as he reminisced about his partner and their many fun-filled days. He, Mr. Armwood and Oscar were in a framed color photo on the table next to the flowers.

"We went to discos — we loved dancing — and to the beach," he said. "And we both liked to paint — his grandfather in Hollywood taught him and he was a very good sign painter. Harold took an art class at the Lighthouse for the Blind just two years ago, too.

"He battled HIV for 18 years and he lost a kidney. We almost lost him several times. But he was a fighter."

The two men lived at 1180 Howard for 13 years until Mr. Armwood, who lately used a wheelchair, fell ill and was sent to Laguna Honda Hospital and, after several weeks, to S.F. General. Royston moved to TNDC's recently renovated Civic Center Residence at 44 McAllister.

A woman said Mr. Armwood happily tooted around "on his little scoot-



PHOTO COURTESY STEVE ROYSTON

Harold Armwood, left, and Steve Royston with Oscar.

er" and was always grateful when people did things for him.

Dennis Wilson, in dark suit and tie, had heard about Mr. Armwood's death and memorial just that day. He had been a friend of the couple, often seeing them at dance spots in the city.

"It's hard to lose a true friend," he said, turning to Royston. "I still consider you a friend."

Royston read "Brotherhood," a poem that was in a frame next to the picture:

*He shares the same dreams and vision
stands by you in the strongest wind*

*without fear
He is brother
You can count on his friendship,
strength and loyalty
He believes his actions speak for themselves
He is friend.*

Saying this was the last time he'd be with his longtime friend, Royston went to the table, held up the picture and said to it, "Goodbye, I love you so much."

Mr. Armwood's body had been sent to Chicago, where his relatives lived. He was to be buried the next day. ■

— TOM CARTER



NEWS IS A COMMUNITY SERVICE

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA is published monthly by San Francisco Study Center Inc., a private nonprofit serving the community since 1972. The Extra was initiated through grants from the S.F. Hotel Tax Fund and the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. The contents are copyrighted by the San Francisco Study Center, 944 Market Street, Suite 701, San Francisco, CA 94102.

- PHONE:** (415) 626-1650
- FAX:** (415) 626-7276
- EMAIL:** centralcityextra@studycenter.org
- EDITOR AND PUBLISHER:** Geoffrey Link
- ADVERTISING DIRECTOR:** Heidi Swillinger
- SENIOR WRITER/EDITOR:** Marjorie Beggs
- COMMUNITY REPORTER:** Tom Carter
- REPORTERS:** Jonathan Newman, Mark Hedin, Brian Rinker, Ed Bowers
- DESIGNER:** Lenny Limjoco
- PHOTOGRAPHER:** Lenny Limjoco
- CONTRIBUTORS:** John Burks, Diamond Dave
- DESIGN CONSULTANT:** Don McCartney
- DISTRIBUTION:** Mark Hedin
- EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** David Baker, Michael Nulty, Debbie Larkin, Nicholas Rosenberg, Brad Paul, Tariq Alazraie

Central City Extra is a member of the
SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION, SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS, NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER,
AND SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA PRESS CLUB

Want to make a difference? Join us!

The North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District works to make the Tenderloin a cleaner and safer neighborhood for all.

Get involved with us:

- Join our Board Meetings (all meetings are open to the public),
- Join our Board of Directors (property owners, business owners, and residents), or
- Join our Committees (Public Rights of Way, District Identity & Streetscape Improvement, or Community Advisory Board)

For more information contact Dina Hilliard **415-292-4812** or dinanomtlcbd@att.net

All meeting and committee information is available on our website: nom-tlcbd.org



north of market
tenderloin
community
benefit district

PREGNANT?

In the first half of your pregnancy?



Join a study about stress reduction and wellness for women concerned about gaining too much weight during pregnancy.

Get PAID \$\$ for your time.



CALL: 415-476-9800
email: mamas@ucsf.edu
www.mamasstudy.com

Architects play role in nonprofits' survival

1% Program links pro bono pros with groups in need

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

THE faux wood floor is smooth, almost silky, a far better surface for the multipurpose room in the Study Center's new digs than the stained beige wall-to-wall carpet it replaced.

The flooring — 879.6 square feet of oak-colored Deco Advantage Luxury Vinyl Plank — came to Study Center free, thanks to an innovative online program that lets nonprofits match their design or renovation needs with architectural firms willing to pledge at least 1% of one employee's annual billable hours to pro bono work. That averages about 20 hours a year.

In the last year, five other central city or mid-Market nonprofit projects have used the resources of the 1% Program, which joined the latest public-private push to revive the grungy area on Market Street between Fifth and 10th.

The 1% idea is the brainchild of Public Architecture, a 10-year-old nonprofit at Eighth and Folsom streets. In six years, 571 nonprofits nationwide have searched for help and 1,011 architectural firms have made the pledge.

De Meza + Architecture + Interiors Inc., founded by Gregg De Meza in 2001, is one of those firms. The Study Center's floor project was a far cry from De Meza's other architectural and design efforts — mansions, yacht interiors, corporate cafeterias locally and in New York, Hawaii and other countries.

"Our clients are high-profile, but I've always wanted to give back to the community," says De Meza. His staff suggest ways to do this, and as a result regularly participate in National River Cleanup Day — last year it was San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto — as well as a Christmas gingerbread house decorating party for the kids at Edgewood Center for Children and Families. The firm also donates to Muttville, a San Francisco rescue organization that places older pets in foster and adoptive homes.

Eighteen months ago, a staffer told him about the 1% program. De Meza pledged 1% and has been involved in three projects. Mostly the 1% program is self-directed, with nonprofits and architects making the matches themselves. Like many matches, not all are made in heaven. Two of the three didn't pan out.

"One project was a Native American clinic out of state," De Meza says. "We didn't have a lot of experience with that kind of facility." The other was the Project Artaud theater renovation, right across the street from De Meza at the time. "They went with a firm that had a lot of theater design experience."

But the Study Center's project was a perfect fit, he says. "It was quick and fairly easy. We do office space planning for clients every day. Also, it was a natural progression for us — we have all these connections with vendors who can supply materials pro bono or at cost."

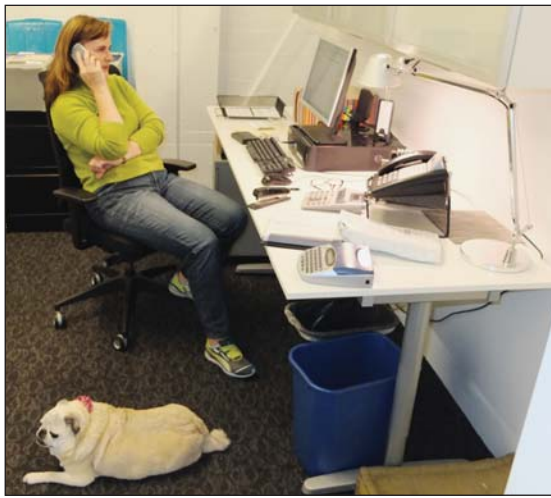
Study Center Executive Director Geoff Link heard about the 1% Program last year at an S.F. Arts Commission gallery opening when he met Amy Ress, 1% Program manager. Ress was working with the Arts Commission's ARTery Project and was actively involved in encouraging matches that would benefit mid-Market revitalization.

"Part of our work," Ress recalls, "was to direct organizations to our program that wanted to make mid-Market their home. I stepped in when the Study Center started looking for a match."

Link, following 1%'s online protocol, first posted the project, listing Study Center's need for help planning the offices, then picked three likely architectural firms.

"De Meza was one of them, and Gregg got back to us fast," Link said. He and Jennifer Gustafson, the firm's director of interior design, met with Link at the old office in the Grant Building to see how Study Center used its existing space. Then, at the new office, they sent out interns to take photos and measure the space. They toured the new quarters with staff of Office of Self Help and Mental Health Clients' Rights Association, which are part of Study Center, took more photos and drew space plans.

The floor in the large multipurpose room and adjoining kitchen area, used by OSH for client



PHOTOS BY LENNY LIMJOCO

De Meza architectural firm is one of hundreds nationwide in the 1% program. Firm founder Gregg De Meza, right, and Jennifer Gustafson, director of interior design, helped Study Center in its relocation.

groups and arts sessions, needed a tougher surface for all the wear it would get. Gustafson contacted Shaw Industries in Georgia, among the biggest flooring manufacturers and a Fortune 500 company, and Welker Bros. in Milpitas, America's largest flooring contractor.

"We got involved with this project through Gregg, who we've worked with for 15 years," said Eric Borg, a senior account executive at Welker Bros. "Jennifer asked if we wanted to participate, and I was glad to do it."

The job, he said, was expected to take one day of removal and a day to install, but the schedule took a hit when the old carpet came up. Like an archaeological dig, layer upon layer of old flooring underneath had to be removed to create a level sur-

face," said SAGE Executive Director Amy Rassen. She had heard about the 1% Program last year through her membership on the board of directors of the Northern California Community Loan Fund, which helps nonprofits find funding and resources, including real estate, in areas needing revitalization.

The loan fund has been an important player in plans to create a mid-Market arts district and, through that connection, began working in 2007 with the Luggage Store gallery at 1007 Market St. Leiasa Beckham, the fund's real estate consultant, oversaw the project to make the first-floor rental space ADA-compliant, working with architects from Asian Neighborhood Design and managing project funding from two city agencies, Grants for the Arts and the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development. Hospitality House moved its Community Arts Program into the space in 2010 while its 146 Leavenworth St. location is being renovated.

Darryl Smith, Luggage Store co-director and founder, says the next stage of its work with 1% will be to make the galleries, which opened in 1991, more accessible to the public. That might include adding an elevator and interior stairway and making the rooftop usable.

"We're working with Jensen Architects now and it's been very easy," Smith said. "They toured our building with Leiasa, asked how they could best serve us and assessed what we needed most." Jensen, a high-end firm with offices in mid-Market, designed the SF MOMA rooftop garden and California College of the Arts' new graduate center and studios. For the Luggage Store, it's creating a full set of CAD (computer-aided design) drawings of the entire building, an expensive but essential first step to any renovation.

Public Architecture promotes its matching program on the premise that architectural excellence should be available to all and that sophisticated design can be applied to real problems.

Its 1% Program is a first-of-its-kind architecture-related public service, following in the footsteps of other professions like law and medicine whose members donate their time to civic and social efforts. Established in 2005 with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the 1% Program has received pledges of more than 300,000 pro bono hours worth \$38 million annually. Services include analyzing potential new locations, enhancing the aesthetics of an office, creating drawings for capital campaigns, evaluating ADA compliance, building out new offices or renovating old ones, and much more.

So far, 308 matches have been made, 73 of them complete, 164 in progress, and another 70 or so just beginning the matching process. Also, more than 570 architectural firms have used the Website to report projects they found in their community on their own, outside the 1% Program. Nonprofit projects are in every state, and the pro bono services come from one-man shops up to huge firms: Gensler alone has pledged 43,000 hours annually.

In January, the American Institute of Architects signed a partnership agreement with Public Architecture to promote the program to its 78,000 members in 300 chapters nationwide, "a huge step forward for us," Ress says. ■



The finished floor gleams in the Office of Self-Help's multipurpose room at 944 Market St. Inset: Welker Bros. installer levels the floor before laying the vinyl.

face for the vinyl. "In the end," Borg said, "it took six man days, or 48 hours."

Another mid-Market nonprofit involved with the 1% Program is Hostel International, parent company of the City Center Hostel at 685 Ellis St., just off Larkin, a seven-story, 88-room Deco building constructed in 1927.

The hostel, says Sam Hussein, hostel manager, is "a really beautiful building but we struggle to get people into the Tenderloin. We're looking to redesign the common lobby, fine-tune the space so it's more inviting and feature our neighborhood amenities." Three weeks ago, Hussein posted the project, requesting planning assistance and help purchasing materials, and now is looking for a good match among the designers.

He's optimistic. "The process is so easy and the people at 1% are so helpful. Within hours of my posting, I heard back from them."

SAGE — Standing Against Global Exploitation — is another nonprofit that just posted its request. The 20-year-old organization sold its building at 1275 Mission St. and moved at the end of February to a leased space at 68-12th St.

"What we need help with is simply space planning at this stage — where to best put furniture and people — but we haven't contacted any designers

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS

Safe Passage volunteer training, Thur., March 15, 5-7 p.m., and Fri., March 16, 3-5 p.m., 201 Turk St. "Kid Power" instructors teach how to safely monitor children and use de-escalation techniques. Trainings sponsored by State Farm Company. Info: Kate Robinson, 567-2518

ARTS EVENTS

Merchants by Susan Sobeloff, EXIT Stage Left, 156 Eddy St., Thu., Fri., Sat., March 1-24, 8 p.m., produced by San Francisco indy theater troupe No Nude Men Productions. Tix at BrownPaperTickets.com (1-800-838-3006)

Octopus's Garden, world premiere of a full-length play by Scott Herman, presented by PianoFight, Saturdays March 17-April 7, 8 p.m. Alcove Theater, 414 Mason St. Tix \$25 at door, \$20 online at www.pianofight.com.

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE HOUSING

Supportive Housing Network, 3rd Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., Dorothy Day Community, 54 McAllister. Call: 421-2926 x304.

Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of the 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 the 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.

Health & Wellness Action Advocates, 1st Tuesday of the month, 5-7 p.m., Mental Health Association, 870 Market St., Suite 928. 421-2926 x306.

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of the 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.

National Alliance for the Mentally III-S.F., 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Family Service Agency, 1010 Gough St., 5th Fl. Call: 905-6264. Family member group, open to the public.

SAFETY

Neighborhood Emergency Response Team Training (NERT). Central city residents can take the S.F. Fire Department's free disaster preparedness and response training at neighborhood locations. www.sfgov.org/sffdert, or Lt. Arteseros, 970-2022.

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

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

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Alliance for a Better District 6, 1st Wednesday of the 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 the month, Hotel Whitcomb, 1231 Market St., 3 p.m. Information: 882-3088, <http://central-market.org>.

Friends of Boeddeker Park, 2nd Thursday of the month, 3:30 p.m., Boeddeker Rec Center, 240 Eddy St. Plan park events, activities and improvements. Contact Betty Traynor, 931-1126.

Gene Friend Recreation Center Advisory Board, 3rd Thursday of the 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.

SoMa Community Stabilization Fund Advisory Committee, 3rd Thursday of the month, 5:30 p.m., 1 South Van Ness, 2nd floor. Info: Claudine del Rosario 749-2519.

South of Market Project Area Committee Housing Subcommittee, 1st Wednesday of the month, bimonthly 6 p.m., 1035 Folsom St. Health, Safety and Human Services Committee 1st Wednesday after the 1st Monday bimonthly, 1035 Folsom, 6 p.m. 487-2166 or www.sompac.com.

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. Information: 928-6209.

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

SENIORS AND DISABLED

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

Senior Action Network, general meeting, 2nd Thursday of the month, 9 a.m.-noon, Universal Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St. Monthly programs, 965 Mission St. #700: Senior Housing Action Committee, 3rd Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. Call for health program and Senior University: 546-1333 and www.sfsan.org.

DISTRICT 6 SUPERVISOR

Jane Kim

Chair of Rules Committee, member of Budget & Finance Committee and Transportation Authority.

Legislative Aides: Matthias Mormino and Viva Mogi. Jane.Kim@sfgov.org, 554-7970

We moved

Central City Extra, as a publication of the nonprofit San Francisco Study Center, has moved to 944 Market Street. We're on the 7th floor of a building at the confluence of Market, Mason and Turk.

The Office of Self Help and S.F. Mental Health Clients' Rights Advocates are with us here, too, as they have been for many years.

We're a block and a half and a world away from our previous home of nearly 40 years in the Grant Building at Seventh and Market. No one can appreciate the nuances of mid-Market more than a longtime business or resident.

City and County of San Francisco March, 2012 Monthly

CONCESSION OPPORTUNITY FOR THE RENTAL CAR CENTER CAFÉ LEASE (A Small Business Set-Aside)

San Francisco International Airport (SFO) is preparing to conduct the competitive selection process through a Request for Proposal for a Food and Beverage Lease at the Rental Car Center. An informational conference is scheduled for Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 10:00 a.m., International Terminal – G Side Pre-Security Administration 5th Floor – Conference Room 28R at SFO.

This is a time when staff discusses the desired concepts, minimum qualification requirements and addresses any questions relating to the food and beverage lease. Written comments and recommendations will be accepted until 12:00 p.m., Thursday, March 15, 2012.

For more information visit our website at <http://www.flysfo.com/web/page/about/b2b/conces/> or call Sharon Perez, at (650) 821-4500.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS (NOFA)

The Department of Children, Youth and their Families, First 5 San Francisco and the San Francisco Human Service Agency announce this NOFA of up to \$10,441,138 to support neighborhood based and population focused family resource centers in San Francisco. Grant awards are anticipated to begin July 1, 2012 and are renewable (for up to 2 additional years) pending performance and fund availability. The NOFA document will be available at www.first5sf.org. Interested parties should consult the NOFA document for application instructions, bidder's conference details, and objectives for these funds. The proposal due date is March 30, 2012.

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

First 5 San Francisco announces a RFP of up to \$160,000 to provide Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Services to Preschool for All sites. Grant awards are anticipated to begin July 1, 2012 and are renewable (for up to 3 additional years) pending performance and fund availability. A copy of the RFP will be available at www.first5sf.org on or about March 1, 2012 or at First 5 San Francisco's office at 1390 Market St., Ste. 318. A bidder's conference will be held on March 14, at 9 a.m. at the First 5 San Francisco Office. Proposal deadline is April 13, 2012 at 5 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE (RDTF)

The RDTF must present a final plan outlining the new supervisorial district lines to the Board of Supervisors no later than April 15, 2012. The San Francisco RDTF has been holding meetings in each of the supervisorial districts to maximize public participation in the redistricting process.

The March 2012 meeting schedule is below. The Task Force urges the people of San Francisco to attend the community meetings. Language interpreters are available at each meeting.

March Schedule:

Thursday - Mar 1	6pm	D8	Everett Middle School – 450 Church Street
Wednesday - Mar 7	6pm		Room 406, City Hall
Monday - Mar 12	6pm	D7	West Portal School – 5 Lenox Way
Saturday - Mar 17	10am	D5	Ella Hill Hutch Comm. Ctr – 1050 McAllister Street
Thursday - Mar 22	6pm	D4	United Irish Cultural Center – 2700-45 th Avenue
Thursday - Mar 29	6pm		Room TBD, City Hall

Information meeting changes and updates on the TBD locations will be available at sfgov.org/rdtf

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#2262586

Faithful Fools
STREET MINISTRY

Oscard's Feast "Caravan of Clowns"

**Saturday, March 31st 2012
6:00 p.m.
\$50 per person (sliding scale available)**

**First Unitarian
Church and Center
1187 Franklin @ Geary
San Francisco, CA**

Join the Faithful Fools' "Caravan of Clowns" as we set up a tent for our annual fundraising event. Your journey will include a free-trade market, foods from many of the countries along the Silk Road plus dancing to the popular music of "Half-Dozen-of-the-Other" Band. call 415-474-0508 or go to www.faithfulfools.org for info.