

Violations are piling up at Pink Diamonds

City attorney is 40 days from court showdown

BY TOM CARTER

NOTORIOUS Pink Diamonds continued to cavalierly rack up injunction violations as the city attorney's campaign to permanently shutter it moved closer to a court date after more than 70 neighbors signed complaints in July against the Jones Street strip club.

"We're about 40 days from going to court," Deputy City Attorney Jerry Threet told *The Extra* July 29. "We also have two investigations of the club going on that will be ready in two weeks and we will want to evaluate them."

More than 30 elderly Antonia Manor residents, mostly Chinese American women, were the first to give their stories to a city attorney investigator July 17. The TNDC building is next to Pink Diamonds. Most nodded agreement during an interpreter's brief orientation, acknowledging that they couldn't sleep because of noise Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights when the club is open.

The club has attracted after-hours noise and violence since it supplanted The Vixen strip club at 220 Jones St. in 2008. The worst fears of the neighborhood and police arrived June 27 at 3 a.m. when a 30-year-old man was shot and killed outside the club and two others were injured. City Attorney Dennis Herrera was quoted in a Chronicle story that he would "do everything in my power to shut

"Hallinan... said they'd apply for a permit and follow the law."

Jerry Threet
DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY

this place down once and for all." The building is owned by Entertainment Commissioner Terrance Alan, who also has a minority stake in the management company that operates Pink Diamonds.

Three months before the homicide, the club had come under an injunction following scores of code violations and other shootings. Two victims of the 16 shootings outside the club that police have connected to Pink Diamonds had been paralyzed, police reported. Judge Peter Busch on March 24 signed an injunction that was also signed by the city attorney and Pink Diamonds majority owner Damone H. Smith, who agreed to put surveillance cameras outside by April 8 and add guards to control crowds along with more than 20 other requirements of operation.

But no cameras were operating the night of the homicide. Smith, at the police community meeting June 30, offered "condolences" to the slain man's family and explained that the cameras "failed" and he was "in the process of buying more." TL Code Officer Mike Torres reminded Smith the club had been promising for a year to install cameras outside.

"It was no accident they didn't have them [the cameras] up," said Threet of the fateful night. "It wouldn't

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CENTRAL CITY

EXTRA

SAN FRANCISCO

99 YEARS



PHOTOS BY JOHN HERSHEY

Shown performing at the transition party are Y members Evelyn Liu, Chao Hua Huang, Qi Hua Li and Felice Cary of the Chinese Dance Performance Group.

The Y's last waltz

600 partygoers say goodbye, face unsettled future

BY TOM CARTER

THE Central YMCA showed a stiff upper lip June 30 when it staged "The Next 100 Years"—an invitation-only "transition" bash attended by about 600 of its members and supporters. The love-in offered hors d'oeuvres and entertainment to

assuage separation anxieties and shore up hope for the future.

The Y's fitness facilities — including its gyms and pool — closed July 1, and its memberships became good at any of the city's eight other Ys.

Sometime in late fall, a date undetermined, the Y will vacate and TNDC will take over the historic nine-story building at 220 Golden Gate Ave., its entrance dominated by four imposing columns. Eventually, TNDC will turn the place into housing for the formerly homeless and a health clinic. There's no start date for construction.

The Y opened Thanksgiving 1910 and has since offered recreational and social programs at admirably low rates, endearing thousands of thrifty "Y family" residents from the Tenderloin and beyond. It has been known as the Shih Yu-Lang Central Y since 2002, named after a Taiwanese math professor who believed in building strong families. He inspired his children to come to San Francisco, where they became avid Y members, so much so that one donated \$5 million to the Central Y and thus got naming rights.

The forward-looking party theme was emblazoned in red and white letters on black T-shirts given to the first 300 revelers. Painful nostalgia was palpable as scores waited in line outside to sign in and receive the shirt and a door prize coupon. Many readily rued the loss of the crumbling building and the healthy recreational programs and felt insecure about the undetermined immediate future.

The Y has almost cinched a temporary site to land its programs for four to five years until its new fitness center can be built

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Y members, from left, Erika Lopez, Christina Augello and Elgy Gillespie, are sorry to see it close and joined the celebration.

GOOD NEWS for...

TL TEENS The proof is in the numbers: Last year, four Tenderloin Clubhouse members were college-bound after taking advantage of programs at the neighborhood's Boys & Girls Club of San Francisco site. This year, the number jumped — spectacularly — to 17. Six will be going to City College, four to S.F. State, two to Skyline College, and one each to Holy Names University, UC Riverside, San Jose State, UCLA and San Diego State. The club, said Brittany Johnson, Boys & Girls Club marketing and PR manager, makes the youth “future ready, helping them develop the values, skills, attitudes, character and behavior that enable them to succeed.” Among the club's offerings are programs that help them apply to college and look for a job, public speaking and leadership skills. Membership, \$10 a year, is open to 6 to 18 years old. Call 445-5481 or visit www.kidsclub.org.

TRACK TEAM Ten members of the MacCanDo Tenderloin Youth Track Club made team history by qualifying for the 2009 AAU National Junior Olympics Aug. 1-8 in Des Moines, Iowa. Last year, none qualified. Coach Rob McDaniels, a TL Rec and Park director who founded the team with his wife, Yuko, almost four years ago, immediately began fundraising for the \$5,000 to finance the team's trip to the Midwest. An early response came from TL Capt. Gary



Simon Xie, Rob McDaniels and Capt. Gary Jimenez with \$1,000 check.

Jimenez. His station's officers, with the Police Officers Association, gave the team \$1,000 July 29 during a fundraising lunch at Boeddeker clubhouse. The athletes and their specialties: Christian Eik, 13, shotput, discus, javelin; Dominic Eik, 12, 100-meter; Elena Wang, 12, long jump; Barbara Nguyen, 13, long jump; Joseph H. Morrison Jr., 12, 200-meter hurdles; David Nguyen, Aaron Lam, Arnel Molina and Simon Xie — all are 15 and run the 4x100 relay. Xie is team captain and also runs the 800-meter, as does Michael Baun, 11. In near 100-degree weather, six members qualified in a Tulare track meet in June and four more in Reno over the July 4 weekend. But nobody sweats quite like the coach when a lot is at stake. “The hardest thing is to keep them focused and disciplined when we're competing,” McDaniels said. “I was stressed, but I'm really proud of them. And we salute them and their families for all the hard work and dedication to come this far.” ■

TL school: How far it's come

394 students, 12 languages, free dentistry

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

It's always good to get a refresher on the children who live in the Tenderloin, what they need and who's helping them get it. Midge Wilson, co-founder of Bay Area Women and Children Center, took a few minutes at the July Collaborative meeting to update members about the 28-year-old BAWCC, how it started and what it's doing today.

Its earliest and still biggest accomplishment was the 10-year campaign to build the Tenderloin Community School on Turk Street, just below Van Ness, a public elementary school for the only neighborhood in the city that didn't have one of its own.

Today, the school, which opened in 1998, has 370 K-5 kids, plus 24 preschoolers. School staff speak six languages, and many live in the neighborhood. BAWCC operates nine programs on site, many of them requested by parents who helped plan the school: Rosa's kitchen, used for kids' cooking classes and community events; two gardens to teach about how food grows; a family room for parenting classes; adult education, computer and counseling centers; more than two dozen after-school clubs and sports programs.

“Parents at the school also said one of the things they needed was a dental clinic,” Wilson said. “So in the basement we established a UCSF pediatric dentistry partnership — every kid who needs it has access to dental help during school hours.”

Tenderloin Community School may be one of the only schools in the city where every child gets his or her teeth cleaned twice a year without fail — and for free if the family has no insurance. The clinic, which does all dental work, not just cleaning, is open one day a week.

Wilson said that BAWCC also serves more than 600 families a month directly out of its 318 Leavenworth site: a weekly play group for preschoolers and their parents, children's and women's clothes, a food pantry, and a drop-in center for help with medical, educational, food, housing, employment, child care, legal and other needs. BAWCC publishes a resource directory, sponsors the monthly Tenderloin Network of Children, Youth & Family Services meeting, and has helped launch five community playgrounds.

“Our annual budget is \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year, and we have no government funding,” Wilson said proudly. Support comes primarily from private foundations and corporations, United Way and individual donations.

TL resident David Baker asked Wilson about the demographics of the children in the neighborhood.

“There are 3,500 kids here. Since 1984, we've done a Tenderloin kid count four times — we go building to building, door to door — and that number's been consistent,” she said. “There are more Latino and Filipino families now, but really, we don't have a lot of families moving out. Ethnically, more than half the children are still Asians, Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders.”

Asked what was on her wish list for the future, Wilson didn't skip a beat: She'd like to have a stronger



PHOTO BY NANCY ONG/BAWCC

Kids on one of BAWCC's after-school sports teams play rugby.

math program for the school and be able to put more effort into literacy.

“There have been classrooms of 20 kids where 12 different languages were spoken.”

HASTINGS' GARAGE OPENS

Hastings opened its new garage at Golden Gate and Larkin in June. Now there's the little issue of filling it, CFO David Seward announced.

“There are 393 stalls, and the garage has been about 40% filled since it opened,” he said. Most of the parking spaces are intended for students and faculty, with the public parking in whatever spaces are left.

It's hard to judge the financial success of a parking garage that opens in the summer on a college campus — even one located in the busy central city. But Seward seems confident that once Hastings' fall session begins Aug. 24 and the economy upticks a bit, the stalls will fill, and “if you build it, they will come” will be apt.

More of a concern is the 9,800 square feet of ground-floor retail space along Golden Gate Avenue.

“We have no tenants yet, though several are looking at the space,” Seward said. “There's enough room for five or so different tenants, and we'd like some to be open at night.”

One idea that is almost a done deal is for the YMCA to use some of the space for its senior and youth programs while it's waiting for construction to start on its new facility, which will occupy the lot right next door to the garage.

“The economy is so bad,” Seward said, “it could be two or three years before the Y can build.” Having classes there would ensure that the corner is lively and would give the Y a connection to its future site.

Lauren Weston, the Y's development director, said the proposal would be to rent about 5,000 square feet of space — some on the ground floor and some in the 2,500-square-foot storage area in the back of the building. A letter of intent from the Y to Hastings has been signed.

Activities would include almost all those currently offered at the Y. For kids, there'd be after-school

computer center, homework study, tutoring and creative arts.

“It depends on the buildout, but we like to have the kids' culinary activities, too,” Weston said. “We're also hoping to be able to bring in a piano so we can continue our once-a-week-or-so live music program for seniors.”

Other seniors activities would be low-impact exercise classes, like tai chi and sit-and-be-fit, as well as computer instruction and Internet access.

Buildout will take 90-120 days, Weston says, so the classes would be ready to roll by the first of the year. ■



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Arts R Us: TL is city's hottest art venue

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

THE Tenderloin's arts scene is shaping up as hot, hot, hot this fall. EXIT Theatre's annual two-week Fringe Festival opens Sept. 9. The city's "Arts in Storefronts" is recruiting artists to fill 13 vacant storefronts with their works for a five-month run also starting next month. Two more murals are on tap, at 101 Hyde and 191 Golden Gate, courtesy of the Tenderloin Community Benefit District and Clean City.

And now there's Wonderland, the monthlong, CBD-sponsored arts show with at least 40 artists creating 10 or more multimedia installations or events all over the neighborhood.

"With Taylor Street being revitalized as an arts corridor and Gray Area Foundation for the Arts officially opening in October [at 55 Taylor], it feels like we're reaching a tipping point for the arts in the Tenderloin," Grants for the Arts Director Kary Schulman told The Extra.

Wonderland is a nice fit with everything else that's going on. It started as an abstract concept, not even visualized for a particular San Francisco neighborhood, said curator Lance Fung, but it's quickly drawing in the community, artists and residents alike.

At a July 9 outreach meeting, one of the first questions was, What's behind the name?

Fung said last year he was guest-teaching a graduate seminar at the S.F. Art Institute and had assigned the students to create three site-specific installations. They chose the Tenderloin. The name Wonderland came up during a brainstorming session. It worked right away, Fung said.

"It wasn't artspeak, it evokes a visceral response, it's showy and a little seedy."

The class assignment has evolved into a full-fledged show. Fifteen of the artists are recent MFAs from the Art Institute, California College of the Arts and the Academy of Art University, the rest established and emerging professionals from San Francisco and beyond.

The kickoff will be a party Oct. 17 in Boeddeker Park, with the free exhibitions, some stationary, some moving around the hood, through Nov. 14.

Wonderland is an eclectic show, hard to define. But Fung — a Bay Area native who moved East and founded Fung Collaboratives in Manhattan's trendy SoHo — tried to generalize: "The projects, most of them ephemeral, will range from performance to sound to light to conceptual pieces to visual arts."

Fung believes the key to Wonderland's success will be its scale. He calls the neighborhood "a big place with a long and rich history and an uncertain future. It's an intellectually fascinating blank canvas, truly authentic, gritty and wonderful."

Wonderlandshow.org, has descriptions and photos of all the projects. A sampling:

- Sound artist Ranu Mukherjee, who teaches at California College of the Arts, is recruiting residents



"Offstage," proposed animatronic sleeping bags on Golden Gate Theatre balconies, melds street life and theater arts.

for "Tender Transmissions," to sing and record songs, a cappella, that express their cultures, languages, experiences, interests.

The songs and other audio pieces will be broadcast daily via a one-watt radio transmitter for reception within a one-mile radius around the Luggage Store Annex's Tenderloin National Forest at 509 Ellis, the audio project's operational base. Listeners can pick up the Tenderloin Play List on cell phones, tune to a specific radio frequency or hear the broadcast at 509 Ellis and "listening stations." EXIT Theatre's Eddy Street lobby and the 222 Hyde club are two possibilities, Mukherjee said.

The first three residents were recorded July 10: Rachelle Brookes sang Sam Cooke's "Change Is Gonna Come," Molly Rosenberg sang "To Teberith," a song she wrote while living in Asmara, Ethiopia, and Jawanza Bomani Saunders sang "Be Not Grieved," a tribute to Michael Jackson. Other "Tender Transmissions" artists plan to record the sounds at neighborhood intersections, a play based on interviews with strippers, and Glide youth reading their poetry.

- "Home Away from Home" artists have asked kids at the Boys & Girls Club on Jones Street and TNDC's after-school program to draw their ideas for "a house that moves." The artists will build one portable composite of the fantasy abodes, moving it twice a week to various indoors or outdoors locations. Audiences will view the model, pick up postcards illustrated with the children's drawings, pen a note on the flip side of and mail the postcards to friends, extending the project beyond the Tenderloin.

"One house that's already been drawn is an ice cream cone on wheels," said Wonderland Director John Melvin, who is on this project team. "I'm not sure how we'd build it."

- An installation called "Offstage," dramatically lit, animatronic, cocoon-like sleeping bags mounted on the five Golden Gate Theatre balconies, which look real in the artists' rendering, is still in the talking stage, according to Anne Abrams, who handles PR for SHN (Shorenstein, Hays, Nederlander), owner of the Curran, Golden Gate and Orpheum theaters.

The Website calls the sleeping bags "the iconic object of [transients'] difficult existence" — artspeak for homelessness — and the installation a representation of the "theatricality" of street life.

- "Down the Rabbit Hole" is to be a room in an SRO, as yet unidentified, that will be furnished to replicate where a young female sex slave might live. A clip from Disney's "Alice in Wonderland" will play on a TV in the room, and on the ceiling a video loop will project film shot by the artists — a 12-year-old girl "playing in the park projected into a crib symbolizing a stolen childhood," says the Web description.

Fung is still inviting more artists to participate, though he doesn't want Wonderland to get too unwieldy, he says, especially because it's a "100% volunteer effort of artists and organizers." He says he's more accustomed to curating multimillion-dollar exhibitions such as "The Snow Show" for the

2006 Winter Olympics in Italy and "Lucky Number Seven" for Santa Fe's 2008 Biennial.

Many organization have signed on to help with the show. Hospitality House is involved in three ways, says Director Jackie Jenks: Its Community Arts Program will host a workshop led by one of the show's artists, its two storefront windows will display Wonderland installations, and Hospitality House will train docents.

"The idea is that people who live in the community — in housing units, on the streets, in shelters —



Oscar Lopez, 11, drew this cool mobile home at the TL Boys & Girls Clubhouse for the "Home Away from Home" installation.

sign up to be docents for art installed in an area where they hang out or live," Jenks said. "We'll put out a call for docents and train those who sign up about the particular art they're representing."

The CBD has put up \$7,500 to cover some promotion costs, said Manager Elaine Zamora — \$5,000 of it is from a Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development grant. The CBD has tossed another \$2,500 into the pot for promotion and has arranged for Wonderland admin to be housed in

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PHOTO BY RANU MUKHERJEE

Rachelle Brookes records her Sam Cooke song for the audio project "Tender Transmissions."

Y may be in limbo, but me

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next to the Hastings Law School garage on Golden Gate Avenue at Larkin Street.

"We're devastated," said one employee inside at a sign-in station who asked that her name not be used.

The basement's splendid, period-tiled pool was closed — maybe forever — along with everything above the third floor, which included the popular, well-used big and small fifth-floor gyms. Basketball and soccer programs were history.

In the big picture, leaving the old building with its ancient plumbing and retrofit needs exemplifies the YMCA's evolution. It used to be spelled out Young Men's Christian Association but has shed its religious emphasis, along with its cheap-hotelier role, to tout fitness. When it originated in England in 1844, the YMCA championed high moral standards and physical strength.

June 30, a promotional YMCA pamphlet from 1918 lay on a table on the second floor with other artifacts and a guest book. "THE NEED of the world today," the first page began. "Men are Needed. Men of Brain — Men

of Muscle — Men of Character. Men with their best brought out. Real Men."

The main reason for Y's building and offering low-cost rental rooms — free if the need was great — was to accommodate servicemen in the two world wars. But it was cheap, respectable housing for anyone new to the city. Malcolm X stayed at the Central Y, and so did Willie Brown when he first arrived in the city.

John Hershey says the Y is in his "DNA." His father belonged to a Y in Pennsylvania, playing on its basketball, volleyball and swimming teams. He gave his son a preteen membership and taught him to swim in the Pottstown pool, a lot like the Central Y pool, Hershey recalled in an interview after the party.

He was one of a few longtime members attending whose name was up on a chalkboard along with 35-year members Tom Coffey and Wayne Piercy. But none matched the longevity of Tommy Travis, 94, who joined in 1937 and posed for pictures with Y Executive Director Carmela Gold.

Travis' grandfather gave him a Y membership in Birmingham, Ala., when he was 14. He came to San Francisco in 1937, barefoot, with

\$11 in his pocket. He joined the Central Y for \$30 a year. He remembers boxing and wrestling rings in the basement and Bob Hope's "nice show" in the late 1930s on the fifth floor for a weightlifting contest. Travis became a gymnast, proficient on parallel bars, later turning to weightlifting. He still lifts three times a week. "The Y was my life."

Travis had stopped coming that June 30 week because the barbells and dumbbells were inaccessible on the fifth floor.

"The Y has the best free weights of any Y in town," he said in an interview three weeks later. "The others have machines. You just sit on your butt. It's easy to work out. With free weights, though, you have to use balance."

Hershey joined the Y in 1976, preferring its friendly staff, community atmosphere and age and ethnic diversity to the trendy gyms of the time. The Y became an essential part of his life, a home, really. He became a devotee of the pool and Nautilus machines, an ardent student of aerobics and spin classes. He benefited from a personal trainer's advice, as well.

When aerobics' popularity soared in the mid-80s, Hershey says, the Y had many instructors on hand daily. His class, Robert

The Y pool, right, with its period tiling will remain closed when the 1910 building is reincarnated. Below: at 94, Tommy Travis, with Executive Director Carmela Gold, is a former Y gymnast, now a weight-lifter.



PHOTOS BY JOHN HERSHEY

Supe candidate's bizarre e

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have been helpful to them."

Club management has continued to ignore other major sections of the injunction. Each incident of noncompliance is subject to a fine of up to \$2,500 in civil penalties. For example, noise from the club mustn't be heard outside. TL police reported five violations in April, the same month a dancer inside was stabbed in the thigh by an irate female competitor. That's \$12,500 just for one month of noise complaints.

Threet said there's no evidence the club has furnished a management phone number to neighbors, compiled a log of complaints and how they were handled, attended every monthly TL police community meeting and made the log available — all violations of the agreement signed in March.

No club representative furnished a log or spoke up as required at the July 28 community meeting when the after-hours permit question came up again. Officer Torres reported the police had issued Pink Diamonds five citations in June for failing to have an after-hours permit, as the injunction requires. Torres said police responded to troubles at the club 120 times during the first five months of 2009. That could be \$300,000 in fines if each incident was cited and upheld — not likely — and certainly the city has another small fortune tied up in

the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of police hours involved.

Most incidents arise when juiced-up crowds leave other clubs at closing and converge on Pink Diamonds as an after hours "in" club. Arguments and fights break out on the sidewalk, in the street and in parking lots. Some of the combatants carry guns.

The permit violations are debatable. Smith, club manager David Muhammad, Smith's lawyer Terence Hallinan, and Alan maintain the business doesn't need a permit. Entertainment Commission guidelines require a place of entertainment to have an after-hours permit only if it sells beverages or fresh food. Pink Diamonds doesn't; its vending machine that sells Red Bull doesn't count.

Threet said he offered Hallinan, the former district attorney, a closer reading of the Police Code, Section 1070 (a) and (b) that defines after hours as 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. and requires a business to have a permit if it serves food or beverages — or if entertainment "is furnished or occurs upon the premises."

"It's required by the injunction and the code," Threet said. "Hallinan didn't agree at first. But then he came back and said yes and said they'd apply for a permit and follow the law."

However, the commission can't issue a permit to an ex-felon. And Smith, The Extra has learned, was sentenced to three years in

state prison in 2002 after plea bargaining for tax evasion, according to a Franchise Tax Board report. Smith, then 33, was running a similar operation in Vallejo — as Platinum Pleasures Entertainment — and owed the state about \$6,000 with penalties for 2000.

The report reads in part:

"During 1998-1999, investigators say Smith applied for and received a California Driver License in the name of Damon Morris and in the name Pervice Watts. With each new name, he also provided a false Social Security number. While applying for these identifications, Smith certified under penalty of perjury he had never applied for a California driver license in any other name.

"Using the name Pervice Watts and a false Social Security number, Smith completed a residential loan application in 2000. The monthly income and account balance listed on the application were shown to be false. During the application process, under penalty of perjury, Smith attested to the accuracy of the information."

The case was a joint investigation of the California Department of Justice, the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Franchise Tax Board.

Threet, in a telephone interview, said that Smith dismissed as "bullshit" one of the recent police citations for lack of after-hours permit. He read from a police report that quoted Smith

Members remember an Eden

Scott's "Killer Aerobics," became so crowded it had to be moved to the gym and Scott "became the rock star of aerobics at the Y."

But it was the spin classes that changed Hershey's life.

"Through spin classes I was able to strengthen my road cycling skills and, at age 60 in 2006, I signed up for AIDS/LifeCycle," he told The Extra. "I was able to cycle the entire weeklong route from San Francisco to L.A. — 545 miles to raise money for the AIDS Foundation. This year I completed my fourth (ride)."

"I attribute my cycling confidence and hill climbing skills in large part to the YMCA Spin Classes, which I was still taking when the Y closed its doors.

"The memories of 33 years at the Y are very special. And at the ripe age of 64, I am somewhat fit and an avid long distance cyclist, thanks to the YMCA. But I'm still in shock. I'll be getting into swimming at the Embarcadero Y, but it's always crowded."

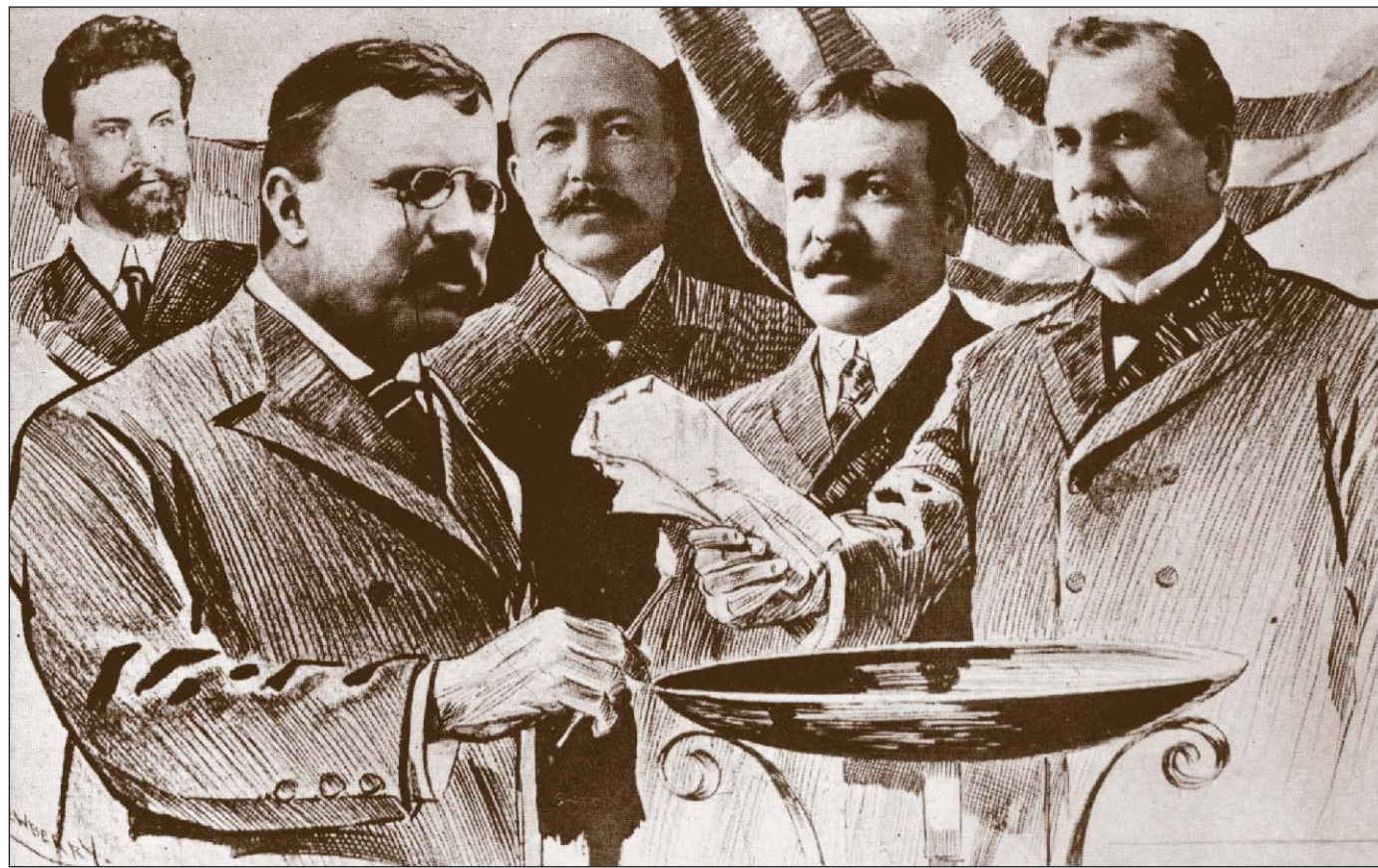
The Y apparently will put its operations in Hastings garage retail space. (See story on page 2.) Groundbreaking also hasn't started on its planned green- building center in the next block of Golden Gate Avenue on the vacant lot next to the Hastings Law College garage at Larkin Street. There's no target date, and construction will take about four years.

The planned fitness center would be 45,000 square feet and cost \$33 million, though the figures these days are slippery, according to Lauren Weston, the Y's director of development, a 17-year member who learned to swim at the Central Y as a child. It will have a gym, swimming pool and space for programs and community events.

Hastings Chief Financial Officer David Seward said that if the Y has, say, a \$5 million gap in its financing, the school can step in with assistance. The tradeoff would be free membership for the school.

"We could build the shell and leave the inside for them to develop," Seward said. "We'd want access for faculty, staff and students. A world-class athletic facility would be a campus enhancement."

Only a few programs remain at the Y's first two floors, where youths and seniors come for lunch and evening meal cooking classes, com-



COURTESY OF CENTRAL YMCA

puter and exercise classes and "spin" time on stationary bicycles. The Y is working on a collaboration with the Salvation Army's Kroc Center for its youth to use the Kroc pool.

"We are trying to continue as many programs as we can and we're looking at other facilities that want to do IT," said Community Wellness Director Debbie Koenig, who previously ran the aquatics program.

Estimated membership earlier this year was 2,400 to 2,700. Membership was highest in the early 1990s, around 5,000 when several other nonprofits were in the building.

"It was probably closer to the lower side," Weston said. "We saw about 1,000 go to the Embarcadero. We've got an agreement for youth swimming programs there. But we remain a center for well-being and we still have everything beyond athletics."

Staff has shrunk from 80 to 14. After the April announcement that the Y would be closing in the fall, many employees began transferring to other Ys as programs got pared.

Now, the Y serves about 250 youth and 350 seniors, Weston estimates. Most of the seniors are on assistance and pay the bottom \$15 monthly fee on a three-tiered scale.

Seniors Director Greg Moore said in July the seniors were looking forward to visiting the lavish Filoli Gardens in Woodside. Additionally, the Y is collaborating with the National Council on Aging to help seniors re-enter the workforce doing 20-hour work weeks at minimum wage, he said.

"We're starting a seniors' exercise class next week and bringing down some machines, bicycles and weights from the third floor," Moore said. "But no locker room or showers." ■

U.S. presidents loved the Y. Here, in 1903, President Teddy Roosevelt, front left, with an official entourage, burns the mortgage of the Central Y's predecessor facility at Ellis and Mason.

mail crusade for strip club

saying to officers, "This shit ain't going anywhere — they're just going to throw this out."

Meanwhile, nearby neighbors continue to feel victimized. A handful of Antonia Manor residents who feared reprisals asked the city attorney's investigator if they could be anonymous. One woman had seen the slain man lying on the sidewalk. They were assured there was safety in their numbers.

David Villa-Lobos, Community Leadership Alliance director and an avid supporter of Pink Diamonds throughout its travails, complained to Threet in a July 17 email that he had been threatened on the street "in a very hostile fashion" by people who thought he had organized the Antonia Manor residents against the club. He had been made a "target" that day along with the SRO staff and its residents, he said.

Villa-Lobos, an announced District 6 supervisorial candidate, concluded with a threat: "If I get hurt or harmed in any way over your outreach effort at the Antonia you can be assured I will file suit against your office and TNDC big time."

Later that night he sent an email to Police Chief Heather Fong, copying Threet and TL Capt. Gary Jimenez, saying his personal safety was "extremely compromised and endangered" and that he needed immediate police protection.

"He said he was repeatedly threatened,"

Threet said. "He said it was by Pink Diamonds supporters, not management. I asked him to provide details. But I never got a response. And he never filed a police report."

This reporter on July 19 received an ominous email from Villa-Lobos. The confusing heading said it was a message from David Villa-Lobos to himself. The subject line was: "Frm: 18 Year Antonia Resident-Senior." The message was a raw threat to me.

"Dear David, Maybe it would be a good idea to ask [TNDC Executive Director] Don Falk to order (from the responsible [sic] parties) an official written statement/apology to the effect that this 'party' was not yours, CLA's, or Antonia's idea and send it to perhaps David Mohammed [sic] but definitely to the locations that were asked to participate. Too little too late maybe, but I think you (we nonparticipants) certainly deserve one. And if your name is even mentioned in the CCE article, sue them and the TNDC."

The trail of emails took an even more twisted turn. On July 24, Villa-Lobos sent an email titled "Ku Klux Klan (KKK) Tenderloin Chapter" to Threet, who forwarded it to Capt. Jimenez. Eventually, it got around to probable candidates for District 6 supervisor and to The Extra. Villa-Lobos said Pink Diamonds management is black and a few community leaders — "racists" — were trying to shut it down.

"Actually, this pseudo KKK faction's grand wizard wears an SFPD uniform, another uses a Community Benefits District manager shield-sword to ward off these black business owners, managers, patrons...the other hides behind their low-income senior-disabled tenants," the email said in part. "The latter manipulating tenants through intimidation to file testimony against the club in hopes it will help in getting the club shut down."

Threet told The Extra, "It's not the sort of thing I respond to."

Capt. Jimenez, whose ardent crime-fighting and neighborhood presence has earned him wide community respect, was less restrained in his reply to Threet.

"Thank you for forwarding this latest of emails from Mr. Villa-Lobos attempting to crusade the Pink Diamond's cause through intimidation. It is remarkable that the sixteen young men shot coming or going from this club has in no way caused Mr. Villa-Lobos any concern for his neighbors or the neighborhood he wishes to represent on the Board of Supervisors. I am taking the liberty to email his below character assassination to those in my Command Staff and City Hall who constantly demand Tenderloin Station cater to and investigate all his fictitious accusations of a lack of protection and police enforcement in the Tenderloin." ■

ALFONSO JOSEPH LOTITO
"Father Floyd" of St. Boniface

Alfonso Joseph Lotito, known to generations of Tenderloin residents as "Father Floyd," died in San Leandro July 14 at age 74. He received the religious name "Floyd" when he joined the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor as a teenager in 1953. He was ordained a priest in 1960 and came to St. Boniface Church and the St. Anthony Foundation eight years later.

He served St. Anthony's in many capacities, as deputy executive director under the guidance of Father Alfred Boeddeker, and as director of public relations and director of St. Anthony's Dining Room. He initiated St. Anthony's Sunday meals program in 1981 and presided over San Francisco's first drop-in hygiene program for the homeless two years later.

In 1984, he delivered the invocation opening the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco. The Democrats nominated Walter Mondale for president and for the first time in history, a woman, Geraldine Ferraro, for vice president.

In 2000, Father Floyd blessed the field at the opening of Pac Bell Park, and although the Giants lost that day and the following five home games as well, they played before capacity crowds all year in their new home, winning the National League pennant in September.

Since 1990, Father Floyd presided over the Blessing of the Animals at St. Boniface Church, an annual October event coinciding with the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi and, beginning in 1999, he oversaw the annual Blessing of the Taxi Fleet, including individual cabbies' religious medals, rosaries, Bibles and pictures of loved ones.

Barry Stenger, St. Anthony's director of development, was a student 40 years ago at St. Anthony's Seminary High School in Santa Barbara where he took first-year Latin and speech courses from Father Floyd. He does not believe that the priest, who was educated by the Jesuits at Marquette University and held a master's in speech and communication, entered the Franciscans with a clear understanding that his calling was to be a social reformer for the poor.

"Floyd's first experience at St. Boniface guided him," Stenger said. "It was the daily exchanges with people waiting in line on Golden Gate Avenue for meals at St. Anthony's that formed his dedication to

the poor. He also understood that creating the opportunity for people to volunteer time and service to the poor was as important as fundraising. He felt the longing people have to be of help."

A requiem mass was said for Father Floyd at St. Boniface on July 21. He was buried at the Franciscan cemetery at Old Mission Santa Barbara. ■

—JONATHAN NEWMAN

MEMORIAL FOR 8 AT THE ALEXANDER
A lively celebration

"I'm in the Mood for Love" didn't seem quite the song to memorialize eight Alexander Residence tenants whose names and death dates were posted in the community room. But the idea was to provide entertainment to turn the residents on to life.

The deaths, all this year, have taken an emotional toll on the mostly elderly residents of the TNDC-owned SRO. As 40 of them streamed into the room while the song played, Marvis Phillips, sitting next to a window, explained how he had dreamed up this way for his fellow residents to handle grief.

"I was in bed one morning thinking about this and thought of New Orleans and what they do in Louisiana at funerals," Phillips said. "Five of ours died in 14 days. I wanted to do something besides sit around and be mopey."

Phillips said that the week before he had pitched his lively "celebration of life" idea to honor the deceased to TNDC Executive Director Don Falk, who liked it and approved. The Alexander staff took it from there, lining up entertainment and food that TNDC furnished — a chicken and macaroni soup prepared by the building's steadfast, volunteer cook Carol Moratillo, 83.

Greeting the celebrants June 2 were SoMa's Canon Kip Senior Center Singers — a female vocalist accompanied by keyboard and maracas. It was a leap from toe-tapping New Orleans street bands but a mood elevator just the same. And Canon Kip offered dozens of songs during the 90-minute morning celebration and brunch that the crowd enjoyed.

The residents at the Alexander commemorated were: Edward King, who died Jan. 3 at 80; Ronald Urrutia, died Feb. 9, at 55; Leonardo Dizon, March 18, at 89; Teofilo Medlad, May 4, at 84; William Maye, May 11, at 57; Yan Chen, May 17, at 77; Mark Reynolds,

May 20, at 54; and Mark Gouguen, May 12, at 52.

The group's average age is 68.5 and the average length of residency was 10 years. Only one cause of death was known: Mr. Urrutia had cancer. His obituary and Mr. Dizon's ran in The Extra in May and June respectively.

"There is a lot of sadness," Alexander Property Manager Nicole Grays said to the group. "It's hard. I think of you all as family. Now they're gone. But death is a part of life. I encourage you to remember what these people brought to us."

Desk clerk Sudarma Kalekula from Sri Lanka told something about each of the deceased and said she had broken through to a few who had been reluctant to communicate. Hard times, said Michael Nulty, is why so many had died. He urged residents to get to know one another and "show a sense of community."

The Alexander has a diverse population of 200 residents in 179 units. In a recent TNDC survey, 130 responded and declared their ethnicity: 57 Chinese, 42 white, 18 black, 5 Native American, 2 Pacific Islanders, 1 Hispanic, 1 mixed and 4 "other" ethnicities.

Several took the opportunity to express feelings about their extended family, the Alexander residents.

Yue Mei addressed the crowd in Chinese. Her remarks were translated by a man who had been translating for a group of Chinese women sitting in the middle of the room.

"Even though we don't speak the same language, we live together as family and care about each other and love each other," Mei said through the interpreter.

"We are all neighbors," said Reggie Meadows, an 18-year resident. "It takes time to get to know someone. But we all have an opportunity to help each other. Doing right is loving each other and not judging each other. I appreciate all my neighbors. God bless us all."

"The outpouring here shows our love for the people in the building," Phillips said as staff began delivering bowls of soup to the tables. Copies of a four-page fact sheet on Grief and Loss from the Family Caregiving Alliance were available on a table along with a list of counseling contacts at the Institute on Aging. ■

—TOM CARTER

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Poetry night at 21 Club, Ground Zero for the arts

BY ED BOWERS

On Wednesday, July 8, 2009, on the corner of Taylor and Turk, the first official poetry reading took place, a regular offering to be held there the second Wednesday of each month, and the publisher of The Extra asked me to review it.

This poetry reading at the 21 Club was my idea. Jonathan Siegel, a poet from South of Market, backed me up by bringing in a sound system. Charlie Getter, a poet from South of Market, backed me up by bringing in other poets and reading his poetry. The Extra made this all possible by subsidizing a poetry reading where each of the first 15 poets to read gets \$5. Frank, the owner of the bar, gets total credit for allowing this idea to get off the ground in the first place, and I further contributed by reading poetry and agreeing to be the M.C.

Ten years ago I would have regarded anyone suggesting that I be an M.C. as terminally insane.

That was then, and now is now.

I would have to have the objectivity of a robot to review a poetry show that was my idea.

So let's pretend I'm not reviewing this. Let's pretend I'm some frustrated lonely man or woman wandering in off the street to a buy a drink at the 21 Club, the best bar in the United States of America that has been written up twice in Esquire magazine.

When this person enters the bar he observes a deranged M.C. who has ruined his life and owes the IRS money screaming at people to write poems on cocktail napkins. Now this lonely man or woman is suddenly being offered the opportunity not only to drink beer, but to get paid \$5 to read a poem, and make a statement that he can communicate and pass on as a small part of his life to others and feel less lonely.

His review would probably be this: "I really had fun that night. And I did something, too. I turned my

small talk to the guy sitting next to me into a poem that became larger when I wrote it down and read it out loud."

And that's a good review. It doesn't get any better than that.

This is an open mike. There is no political or social agenda except to express yourself in a few words in front of a friendly audience who will listen to you. Some people are scared to do anything but talk to their friends and remain silent. Getting up in front of an audience is scary. But everything is scary, so what's the difference?

I had to practically squeeze the following poem out of a woman who really wanted to write one but thought she didn't. It goes like this:

By Lizzie

When I was 12
I was made of plastic.

Plastic toys,
plastic trees,
plastic people.

Southern California is the land of
plastic weather.

Plastic surgery
and fake wars
own high schools everywhere.

And that is absolutely why I'm here.

That's why I'm here, too. Lizzie's poem sticks in the mind and has wisdom.

So, if you want a beer, need to get out and see people other than your miserable self, hear poetry that sticks in your mind, and maybe write one yourself, make \$5, and express yourself while having fun, I would encourage you to come to the 21 Club the second Wednesday of each month.

Or just go to another bar the second Wednesday of every month and cry in your beer and feel sorry for yourself.

It's your choice. ■

The Third Coming of Living in the Land of the Dead

BY ED BOWERS

LIVING in the Land of the Dead is an anthology of poetry whose subject matter is directed at life in the Tenderloin and the citizens occupying this zone.

This is the third edition of the anthology and it is obviously a survivor. I was its first editor. My idea was to utilize the now-defunct Faithful Fools Copy Shop as an instrument to create a publishing company that could create a book of poetry and literature that would give expression to those who are disrespected, ignored and written off in the major media as losers living in a mythological ground zero for violence and depravity.

The Faithful Fools followed up on this idea and made it work.

This anthology gives people living in The Land of the Dead an intelligent voice, one that, rather than screaming and scaring people away, articulates the multiple-universe minds of those living not only in the Tenderloin, but in the world.

The poems in this book carry a rarely seen light that glows brightly on the printed page. Possibly they are the Last Words of a Last Chance Saloon in America.

The Tenderloin is full of life, but it will not be here forever. The real estate is too valuable, the location too coveted. Living in the Land of the Dead is destined to be a valuable piece of history. And it is published now.

At the moment, publishing is in an emergency situation. Its house is burning down.

The ability to hold a book or newspaper in your hand and slowly read its contents in a coffee house, subway, or bar, and actually own it and think about it, is becoming increasingly rare due to economic contingencies. There is the Internet, but it is an

ocean of egos.

People evolved from the ocean. People are fish with feet. But now, apparently, they are returning to the ocean and the ocean is big. But the ocean can bury you faster than any Tenderloin hotel.

This small publication, however, is so full of beautiful poetry that you can hold it your hand, and

essentially the world could change for the best, and perhaps evolve for another 10,000 years. I can be an optimist when I'm not busy getting pissed off at something.

As for the individual poems, I'm going to let them be a mystery to you until you read them in Living in the Dead Part Three. I am not putting words into your heads.

I'm a poet and I do not critique other poets.

The painting on the cover is by Charles Blackwell whose excellent work I have reviewed in Central City Extra.

On the back of the anthology are four photographic images taken by rA mu Aki whose work I've also reviewed for The Extra. Aki is one of the most imaginative and sensitive photographers in America. Nobody photographs faces with the sensitivity of Mr. Aki, unless Dianne Arbus is still alive, which she is not.

Most of the poets at the Faithful Fools' reception for this book were almost as old or older than me. I'm 60, but my mind is functioning more effectively now than when I was 30.

But where are the young people? Are bohemian poets becoming geriatric dinosaurs?

Possibly poetry is going the way of all newspapers.

Possibly a personal intimate connection with the written word is going the way of all things. We're in a New Age of

iPods and pop star divas.

Possibly I'll be dead before finishing this article, or before newspapers and poets die, and before the Tenderloin is torn down and zoned off for Very Important People.

Anything is possible. I'm an optimist!

So go to 226 Hyde and pick up a copy of this anthology. It will entertain you while exposing your mind to some ancient wisdom.

Use it. ■



CHARLES CURTIS BLACKWELL

"Musical Purification," cover image of Tenderloin poetry anthology's third edition.

read the poems at leisure, and transform their words in your mind with the words in this book into something that will combine into a thought or idea that might help you get through your life, if only for a few minutes longer than you would have otherwise.

Later, the words will be placed in the archives. But now, in this moment, they are still alive.

If even 10 people read the insightful poems in this book, and think deeply about them, then expo-

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS

National Night Out, Boeddeker Park, Aug. 4, 5-8 p.m. Tenderloin Station police host the annual crime- and drug-prevention event, featuring information on local anti-crime programs, food and games for residents, a kids' parade. Info: Sgt. Gaetano Caltagirone, 345-7340.

16th Annual Pistahan Parade and Festival, Aug. 8-9. Largest celebration of Filipino arts, culture, cuisine. Aug. 8 opening ceremonies at Beale and Market, 10 a.m., Market St. parade at 11 a.m. ends at Yerba Buena Gardens. Free festivities: Adobo Cook-off, balut-eating contest, pavilions with Filipino cuisine and desserts, cultural exhibits, and the 2nd annual San Francisco Filipino American Jazz Festival. Info: pistahan.net/about/index.html; Gerard Talampas, 218-5664, or Richelle Mae Ruiz, 260-4380.

Survive & Thrive, free seminar for District 6 small business owners about managing during the downturn, Aug. 12, 6-8 p.m., Conference Room A, Main Library. Presented by Culture Connections and San Francisco SCORE. Contact Quentin Fininen, qf.qinc@gmail.com or 260-1870.

Boeddeker "Saturdays in the Park." The park will be open seven Saturdays Aug. 1 through October, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Next day is Aug. 15. Staffing paid by Friends of Boeddeker Park with its Innovator Award from the San Francisco Parks Trust.

ART EVENTS

Concerts at Boeddeker Park, noon-1 p.m. Aug. 13, Franco Nero Jamaican ska band led by trombonist Scott Larson; Aug. 27, North Beach Brass Band. Concerts made possible by TL Benefit District's \$1,500 grant to Friends of Boeddeker Park.

Monthly art lecture series, hosted by visual artist and educator Stephen Wagner, and sponsored by TL Benefit District, 134 Golden Gate, Suite A, 7-9 p.m. Aug. 11: Creating Alternative Venues for Your Artwork. \$10 per session, at www.SFArtistNetwork.org.

Concerts at the Cadillac, once a month on Fridays, 12:30 p.m., Cadillac Hotel, 380 Eddy St. Sponsored by the hotel and the TL Benefit District. Schedule: nom-tlcbd.org/id71.html or Elaine Zamora, 292-4812.

At EXIT Theatre, both through Aug. 15, 156 Eddy: "The Unexpected Man," a comedy by Tony Award-winning Yasmina Reza, director Stephen Drewes, a presentation of Spare Stage. Tickets: \$20. Info: sparestage.com and sffringe.org. Aaron

Trotter and the "Incident at Bikini Beach," by KFOG's Peter Finch, directed by Jeremy Cole, a Thunderbird Theatre presentation. Tickets: \$18-22. Info: www.thunderbirdtheatre.com.

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE HOUSING

Supportive Housing Network, 3rd Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., location TBA. Contact: Kendra Fuller, 421-2926 x304.

Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of the month, noon, 201 Turk, 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., CBHS, 1380 Howard, room 537. Call: 255-3695. Advisory group of consumers from self-help organizations and other mental health consumer advocates. Open to the public.

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

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of the month, Quaker Center, 65 Ninth St., noon-1:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home and community-based services, expanded eligibility for home care and improved discharge planning. Light lunch served. Call James Chionsini, 703-0188 x304.

Hoarders and Clutterers Support Group, Mental Health Association, 870 Market, Suite 928. Call for dates and times: 421-2926 x306.

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, 5th Fl. Call: 905-6264. Family member group, open to the public.

SAFETY

Safety for Women in the Tenderloin, every 3rd Wednesday, Central City SRO Collaborative, 449 Turk St., 4-6 p.m. Informal, friendly environment, refreshments, gender sensitive to LGBTQ community and sex workers. Discuss how to make Tenderloin SROs safer for women. Information: Alexandra Goldman, volunteer campaign coordinator, 775-7110 x102.

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. See www.sfgov.org/sffdnert, or call Lt. Arteseros, 970-2022.

SoMa Police Community Relations Forum, 4th Monday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m. Location varies. To receive monthly e-mail

info: Meital Amitai, 538-8100 x202 or mamitai@iisf.org.

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

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., 230 Eddy. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or sf_district6@yahoo.com, a districtwide improvement association.

Boeddeker Park cleanup, 3rd Saturday of the month, 9-noon, organized by the Friends of Boeddeker Park. To RSVP to work or for information, call Betty Traynor, 931-1126.

Central City Democrats, meets four times a year, 301 Eddy St. Community Room. Information: 339-VOTE (8683) or centralcitydemocrats@yahoo.com.

Central Market Community Benefit District, board meets 2nd Tuesday of the month, 989 Market St., 3rd Fl., 3 p.m. Information: 882-3088, <http://central-market.org>.

Community Leadership Alliance. Monthly meetings and informational forums, Tenderloin Police Station community room. David Villa-Lobos, admin@communityleadershipalliance.net

Friends of Boeddeker Park, 2nd Thursday of the month, 3:30 p.m., Boeddeker Rec Center, 240 Eddy. 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. Board works to protect SoMa resources for children, youth, families and adults. Gene Friend Recreation Center, 270 Sixth St. Information: 538-8100 x202.

North of Market Planning Coalition. Contact David Baker, 771-4765, for information.

North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District. Call District Manager Elaine Zamora for times and dates, 292-4812.

SoMa Leadership Council, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., The Arc, 1500 Howard St. at 11th. Emphasizes good planning and good government to maintain a diverse, vibrant, complete neighborhood. Contact: Jim Meko, 624-4309 or jim.meko@comcast.net.

South of Market Project Area Committee, 3rd Monday of the month, 6 p.m., 1035 Folsom, between 6th & 7th sts. Health, Safety and Human Services Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday after the first Monday, 1035 Folsom, noon. Information: 487-2166 or www.sompac.com.

Tenderloin Futures Collaborative, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m., Tenderloin Police Station community room, 301 Eddy. Call 358-3956 for information. Network of residents, nonprofits and businesses taking on neighborhood development issues.

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, second Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon, St. Mary's Cathedral. Monthly committee meetings, 965 Mission #700: Pedestrian Safety, third Wednesday, 10 a.m.; Senior Housing Action, third Wednesday, 1:30; Information: 546-1333 and www.senioractionnetwork.org.

Wonderland coming to TL

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

unused space near its own offices on the lower level at 134 Golden Gate.

The city sees its small investment in Wonderland as practical — "one of a range of efforts intended to use the arts a tool for community development in the Tenderloin," says Amy Cohen, director of neighborhood business development for the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, which has been pushing Taylor Street as an "arts corridor."

Arts Commission Director Luis Cancel says his agency has no money to give Wonderland but is a fan of the project, and he plans to throw some weight behind his enthusiasm. "It's such an exciting project," he says. "I'm impressed with Lance's vision for the event and his fascination with the Tenderloin — I think people are curious about the neighborhood and this will give them a reason to come and see it."

Cancel adds that the Arts Commission will produce a segment about the show for "Culture Wire," its 30-minute programs about local artists and events aired on SFGTV.

"We're also going to use our bully pulpit to try to get financial support from foundations and others so Wonderland can print a catalogue," he said.

"Art in Storefronts," a joint program of the Arts Commission and the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, is separate from Wonderland but connected artistically. It offers artists free, temporary exhibition space beginning in September through next February in 10 vacant storefronts along mid-Market — Fifth to Ninth streets — and in three storefronts along Taylor, Market to Ellis, as well as in the Bayview and Mission. Artists at each site receive \$500 to help cover production expenses.

"Anything goes — videos, recycled art, sculpture, paintings," says Judy Nemzoff, program director of the Arts Commission's Community Arts and Education Program.

Along the three-block Taylor Street arts corridors, even the 21 Club, which Esquire calls "the diviest bar in the Tenderloin," has launched a monthly poetry reading sponsored by Central City Extra. ■

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Proprietor Karim Rantisi and family. Rantisi has proudly served the Tenderloin since 1989.