

Glide uses rooftop gardens, promotes healthy eating

GLIDE Memorial Methodist Church is turning its apartment building rooftops into showcases for real food for the residents, a step toward changing bad dietary habits and improving health.

The latest example is a mini vegetable and herb garden on the sixth-floor roof at Cecil Williams Glide Community House, 333 Taylor St. It was dedicated Nov. 4.

The education project for about 110 formerly homeless residents started two years ago with sessions on nutrition and cooking emphasizing that “healthy food was an

option” to junk food at the corner store, said Deborah Whittle, executive director of Glide Housing.

Next came on-site planting, growing and tasting. A \$20,000 Community Challenge Grant bankrolled delivery of 12 wood planters and a truckload of soil in May. The residents handled the rest and developed a work roster. Soon, they’ll taste homegrown potatoes, tomatoes, kale, squash, grapes, basil and apples and figs. But harvests aren’t big enough to offer more than snippets of the good stuff.

“I’ve already sampled the cherry

tomatoes,” said Elmer Ray Knowles, a Thursday volunteer.

Linda Galijan of the Zen Center advised on the project and blessed the garden. It overlooks another roof garden to the west on Glide’s main building at 330 Ellis, started 2½ years ago. It has 14 planters funded by \$10,000 in grants from Clif Bar and Focus the Nation.

Whittle said Glide is considering programs for Glide Economic Development Corp.’s apartment buildings at 125 and 149 Mason St. for families and the formerly homeless, respectively. ■



Resident volunteers Larry Medders, Patty Rose and Elmer Ray Knowles take turns caring for the vegetation on the roof at 333 Taylor St. and have learned a good thing or two about healthy food.

PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

District 6 has dirtiest streets and most graffiti

DISTRICT 6 had four of the five dirtiest corridors in the city, according to the annual Street and Sidewalk Maintenance Standards report from the controller’s office.

Three are in the Inner Mission District and one in the Tenderloin, according to the 54-page 2009-10 report on city cleanliness released Oct. 28. The data were based on 383 inspections by the City Services Auditor’s office and the Department of Public Works.

District 6 had none of the top five cleanest residential and commercial corridors in the city, but its four dirtiest were all commercial: Geary between Jones and Van Ness, Mission between Duboce and 18th Street, 16th Street between Valencia and Folsom, and 15th Street between Guerrero and Capp.

To be considered clean, a corridor must have fewer than five pieces of litter per 100 feet of curb. The dirty corridors had five to 15 pieces per 100 feet of curb.

Overall, according to the report, city streets were 18% cleaner than in 2008-09, and sidewalks were 10% improved in reducing an ugly mix of needles, feces, broken glass, condoms and dumping in general.

But when comparing supervisorial areas, District 6 had more street and sidewalk litter than the others, although the district showed improvement over 2008-09 in both categories.

Another dismal result showed District 6 had by far the most graffiti on private property and non-DPW public property than any other district — and 61.5% more than the city average. It was the third consecutive year District 6 led the category. Graffiti throughout the city has increased over four years. ■

— TOM CARTER



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