

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## ARTS EVENTS

**November at EXIT Theatre**, 156 Eddy St. "The Trojan Requiem," Nov. 6-23, 12 nights of dramatic readings of new plays by local writers exploring the legacy of the Trojan War. "52 Letters," Nov. 8, 9, one-woman poetic stage play, written and performed by Regina Y. Evans. "Memphis on My Mind," Nov. 15, 16, written and performed by Rebecca Fisher. "Thankschicken!" Nov. 15-23, Chicken Scratch Improv. "Eating Pasta Off the Floor," Nov. 22, 23, written and performed by Maria Grazia Affinito. At EXIT on Taylor, 277 Taylor: "Sidewinders" continues through Nov. 17, absurdist-Western romp through gender queerness. Info for all shows: theexit.org.

**Thursdays@Noon** films, Main Library, Koret Auditorium, noon-2 p.m.: Nov. 7, *Whales of August* (1987); Nov. 14, *Driving Miss Daisy* (1989); Nov. 21, *Make Way for Tomorrow* (1937). Info: sipl.org.

**Divas, Dames & Daredevils**, Main Library, Latino/Hispanic rooms A & B, Nov. 21, 6:30-8 p.m. Author Mike Madrid talks about heroines at the dawn of the comic book who mete out justice to Nazis, aliens and evildoers of all kinds. Info: sipl.org/index.php?pg=1014527701.

**Art All Around**, exhibition of kids' art from studio projects and New Year dragons from Tenderloin Children's Playground workshops, Main Library, Fisher Children's Center, 2nd floor, through December 30. Drop by for a Dec. 15 workshop, 2-4 p.m. and learn to make kimono dolls, dream-catchers and miniature books. Additional workshops, 2-4 p.m. on Jan. 12, Feb. 9, Mar. 9. Info: Jim Jeske, Fisher Children's Center, 557-4554.

## REGULAR SCHEDULE HOUSING

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

## HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

**CBHS Consumer Council**, 3rd Monday of month,



PHOTO SERENA MORELLI

**Regina Evans performs** in the one-woman play "52 Letters" at EXIT Theatre, Nov. 8, 9,

5-7 p.m., 1380 Howard St., Room 537, 255-3695. Consumer advisors from self-help groups and mental health consumer advocates. Public welcome.

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

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

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

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

## SAFETY

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

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

## NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

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

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

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

**Gene Friend Recreation Center Advisory Board**, 3rd Thursday of month, 5 p.m. Works to pro-

vide SoMa resources for all residents. Gene Friend Rec Center, 270 Sixth St. Info: Tim Figueras, 554-9532.

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

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

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

**Tenderloin Futures Collaborative**, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 11 a.m.-noon, Tenderloin Police Community Room, 301 Eddy. Presentations on issues of interest to neighborhood residents, nonprofits and businesses. Info: 424-0957.

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

## SENIORS AND DISABLED

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

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

## DISTRICT 6 SUPERVISOR

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

Legislative aides: Sunny Angulo, April Veneracion Ang and Ivy Lee. [Jane.Kim@sfgov.org](mailto:Jane.Kim@sfgov.org) 554-7970

## To you, who may be concerned:

My name is Ed Bowers. You probably don't know me. I'm a writer and a poet and I've won a couple of awards (The Acker Award For Avant Garde Excellence and the S.F. Peninsula Press Club Award For Analysis) and have written for Central City Xtra. But right now I'm writing for you and I would now like to explain why.

On November 9th I am going on a street retreat for seven days in which I will be homeless and compelled to navigate society as a homeless person sleeping on the streets, or in the shelters, panhandling strangers, and eating in soup kitchens. This I will be doing as a participant in the Faithful Fools' street retreat. One of the main purposes of this retreat is to give the participants an experience of what it is to be homeless in this society and close the gap of separation felt when one citizen witnesses another citizen suffering from homelessness and perceives, fearfully, that this vagrant cast-off is somehow threatening or different from everyone else. It's a 'gap closing' experience we are looking for here.

As for me, I don't have any feeling of fear or separation from the homeless. I've known lots of homeless people. Even my ex-wife is homeless and that doesn't prevent us from still being friends. Plus, my life has been a consistently annoying experience and I do not wish to actively cultivate that pattern. So why am I doing this?

The answer to that question is that I want to overcome my fear of homelessness. Everyone in America, no matter how different they may appear, has one thing in common. We all fear going

broke and we all fear being homeless. That is the sword of Damocles that hangs over each of our heads and fuels the economic and social engine of the nation. This is the fear that gets people going in the morning and puts them to bed at night as it chases them into their dreams and nightmares. It comes as an infuriating threat, this fear of homelessness, and I want to face it. I've been threatened with homelessness too many times and come close to it for decades. So I want to face it and maybe punch it in the mouth.

Hell, I might get to like it.

But there is another more important reason that I am going on this retreat. I want to get something more out of this retreat than a narcissistic sense of self-satisfaction at doing something that horrifies me. I want to go homeless for seven days like a runway model wants to get fat. But I'm doing it. And I'd like somebody besides me to get something out of it. In fact, even if I get nothing out of it but a pain in the ass, I want somebody to get some good out of my efforts. Let me explain.

The Faithful Fools is an Institute For Street Level Learning operating in the San Francisco Tenderloin at 234 Hyde St. and it has provided over the years one of the most unique and effective educational programs for the development of empathy and understanding currently in existence. The Fools' street retreats, where young people from high schools, colleges, and churches go out onto the streets and eat in the soup kitchens, offer young people the opportunity to really see the citizens of the Tenderloin as human beings. It pro-



PHOTO LISE STAMPFLI

**Writer Ed Bowers** is temporarily homeless to raise funds for the Faithful Fools.

vides the kind of maturing experience that can only have a positive and evolutionary effect on the consciousness of the participants and improve their sense of connection to all the people in our society, not just a select few.

Also, The Fools are a jewel in the lotus of the 'loin and have done untold good for hundreds of the citizens who find themselves there.

So, in honor of my efforts to confront homelessness and evolve my consciousness for the sake of all sentient beings I ask only one thing: that somebody out there make a contribution to The Faithful Fools.

That's right. I'm panhandling. You are the first person I am panhandling on my street retreat, and I hate asking for anything, so that is why this letter is so weird and perhaps a bit disjointed. I am about to do something I don't want

to do, but that I really do want to do, and I am asking someone I really don't know to give some organization they know nothing about some money. So there.

Finally I have one last thing to say. Empathy is dying in this country and when it is completely dead, the country will die. It is as simple as that. Please support anything whose focus is planting the seed of empathy in the human heart if you want America to survive another hundred years. ■

— Ed Bowers

## DONATIONS

People can donate by sending checks to: Faithful Fools Street Ministry  
234 Hyde Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

or online at: [faithfulfools.org/donate/](http://faithfulfools.org/donate/)