

GOOD NEWS

SAFE PASSAGE Have lemons? Make lemonade. But here's the twist: July 25, noon to 4 p.m., the Homestead restaurant in a stylish Oakland neighborhood held a pop-up sale of \$2 lemonades, iced teas and Arnold Palmers (a combo of the two) and \$3 strawberry shortcakes, then donated all proceeds to the Tenderloin Safe Passage program. "The lemonade stand was a hit — people were loving it," says Liz

Sassen, who owns the Piedmont Avenue restaurant with husband Fred and plans to host more events for Bay Area nonprofits. "We made \$500, and it also raised awareness about the program." Piedmont Ave and the TL? The unlikely pairing isn't much of a stretch: Kate Robinson, Safe Passage program director, lives near the Homestead and a close friend who used to work there introduced her to the Sassens. Better yet, from 2005-09 Liz Sassen lived at Turk and Larkin, then Leavenworth off O'Farrell, while attending culinary school and then working at Farallon restaurant at Post and Powell. "The Tenderloin was always an interesting place to live," she says. "I loved that I could get anywhere easily and I was so close to work. I'd walk from Union Square every night to my apartment and see such an array of people, business models, living situations, demographics

and cultures. It was amazing but often heartbreaking." Remembering neighbors with two school-aged children and her concern about their safety made the lemonade charity event a no-brainer, she said. "I was intrigued by Safe Passage's success — perhaps a similar idea could be applied in Oakland's more notorious neighborhoods."

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BOEDDEKER PARK Since it reopened in December after its \$9.3 million makeover, the 30-year-old park continues as THE go-to place — for kids' summer activities, all ages' planting days in the Celebration garden, Music in the Park coming this fall, a mural in the works for the park-facing Windsor Hotel and much more. Park users now also have bragging rights about its visual beauty: It was one of two city

parks honored with the prestigious American Institute of Architecture San Francisco's 2015 design award. "This new landmark park and clubhouse," said the AIA press release, "serves as a model of civic engagement, inspiration, resource conservation and adaptability." Rec & Park collaborated with the Trust for Public Land in Boeddeker's transformation. "We believe every person deserves a quality, safe place to play within 10 minutes of where they live, no matter what neighborhood they live in," said Will Rogers, Trust for Public Land president. "We design parks hand-in-hand with the community and the city, and the results speak for themselves." The other AIA park award went to Palega Recreation, an 80-year-old rec center and playground in the Portola District that underwent a \$21 million renovation. ■

— Marjorie Beggs

Zendesk creates mobile app, Link-SF, for homeless services

► CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sprint Tribute, Nokia X3-02 and BlackBerry Curve fit the bill, as do various Cricket, T-Mobile and Metro PCS models. Score a used smartphone and you're mobile for next to nothing.

For the data about shelters, addresses, hours and bed counts, and the other uncounted bits of information, the minutiae that harbor the nuts and bolts of every service available through the app, Zendesk and St. Anthony turned to the Homeless Advocacy Project, which long has published a manual of services for homeless and low-income people.

HAP, funded by the San Francisco Bar Association, offers the homeless and low-income legal advice, advocacy and services information, and for 25 years has published a now-\$15 manual of essential services citywide. St. Anthony's used the manual to build the basic infor-

mation for Link-SF, paring the print material to create a clear, user-friendly site complete with Google maps and adding features that allow quick links to service providers.

If you need to shower at Lava Mae, for instance, link through to its Website to find the daily schedule and whereabouts of the shower bus.

"The work that the engineers at Zendesk put into the creation of Link-SF would have cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars," said Karl Robillard, senior manager of St. Anthony Foundation. Instead, Zendesk provided the expertise without charge as part of the community benefit agreement it negotiated with the city in exchange for the Twitter payroll tax breaks.

In giving back to the neighborhood, Zendesk has led the way, showing other tech firms how to do it right, including having a healthy respect for people they

are supposed to help.

Kimberly McCollister, an independent Website designer and UX (user experience expert) worked on Link-SF for nine months during its development, mostly as a volunteer. Testing a handful of Tenderloin residents at the Tech Lab, she told The Extra, she found that changing colors, enlarging fonts and fashioning link "buttons" made things much easier for less experienced and elderly computer users. And so they were incorporated into Link-SF.

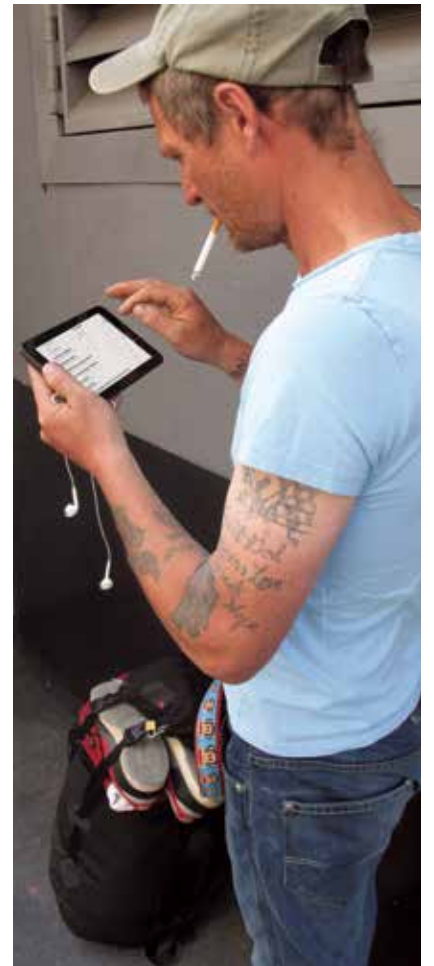
A Link-SF search for medical care quickly directs users to 134 facilities from S.F. General to St. James Infirmary with full descriptions of available services and hours of operation. Navigating the site is easy and the links to providers are direct and fast.

"Link-SF is a great contribution to people," McCollister said. "I hope more caregivers and service providers become aware of it. They could use the site to help their clients."

The open source code that Link-SF uses is available for any tech entrepreneur. Impressed with Link-SF's quality and technical sophistication, the Queens Public Library adopted the code and put up a Website of social services in the New York City neighborhoods served by its 68 branches.

St. Anthony Foundation owns and operates Link-SF. Like all Websites, it collects data from site visitors. Zendesk monitors the data — called analytics — the same info Google searches collect.

"We're only interested in how many people visit the site, what type of device they use to access the site, and how long they stay on site," said Megan Trotter, Ten-



JONATHAN NEWMAN

On 11th Street, John, 45 and homeless, pinches his DigiLand tablet searching for Link-SF, the Zendesk-designed mobile app that connects people to social services citywide.

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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