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a nationwide project on the health of elders produced by a frequent partner, western SoMa's New America Media. It documented Mr. Charles' struggle to receive medication to ease intense, persistent pain, a too-common battle that suffering seniors wage with doctors who often withhold relief clinging to the questionable belief that addiction is worse than pain, no matter the intensity.

Mr. Charles underwent surgery in 2013. Though his illnesses progressed, his upbeat persona and playful, teasing ways rarely wavered. He received medical care at S.F. General and California Pacific hospitals, as well as Curry Senior Center's primary care clinic.

Born in Texas, Mr. Charles arrived in California with his family in the late 1950s. He was a track and football athlete at Poly High and served nearly three

years in Vietnam with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division. When on leave, he delayed returning to his unit to be with his ailing mother and was considered AWOL.

Mr. Charles was a lively, ebullient presence at Curry Senior Center, a volunteer greeter and jocular lifter of people's moods during the daily senior lunches. His friend, Paul Hickman, called him a "beacon for the Center, a light for all." "His spirit and humor made everyone feel good," Hickman said.

More than 20 friends and neighbors of Mr. Charles filled the community room of the Mentone Hotel, his home for the past 10 years, for his Aug. 7 memorial. Rev. Kathryn Benton, of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, began by citing Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier's belief that faith brings "a calm that takes from our souls the strain and stress," and encouraged all to celebrate Mr. Charles' life with stories and their

feelings.

Diane Evans called Mr. Charles "wonderfully flirtatious" as she recounted a time at Curry Senior Center when Mr. Charles' incessant flirting rankled some women who thought his words were meant for each of them exclusively. "I told them, 'Dears don't you know Norbert has more wives than Solomon,'" Evans said.

Jim Murray met Mr. Charles eight years ago. "Norbert was good people. With his medical problems, life was a struggle, but he never hid in his room. He was out and active to the end," Murray said.

Mr. Charles' happy presence in the community room watching television was noted. "Military channel," someone quipped. "Never 'Judge Judy,'" another added. His case manager, who asked to be identified as Leonard, voiced pride at being at Mr. Charles' memorial. "Norbert

was so sick, yet his spirit was so positive. He was an example for us all. He took his medicines, did his exercises, tried to do everything right," he recalled. Once, while waiting for an optometrist's appointment, Mr. Charles told Leonard that his life was without purpose.

"I reminded him that he brightened the world for others. His job was to be himself," Leonard replied.

All agreed Mr. Charles was now free from pain and the fight against his illnesses.

Rev. Benton read the Serenity Prayer by theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. With the words and serenity in the air, the memorial shifted to music and food in celebration of Mr. Charles' life.

"We were always planning on going to Tommy's Joynt for lunch," Hickman remembered. "We didn't make it on time." ■

— Jonathan Newman



# Turning a Parking Lot into Parks, Jobs & Affordable Housing

## Dear Fellow San Franciscan,

We are the residents and small-business owners living and working closest to the proposed Mission Rock project and we are saying YES on Proposition D and we urge you to support it too.

Today, the area is a large surface parking lot known as Lot A. Proposition D will breathe new life into our community and help create a place worthy of this spectacular location.

Over the past eight years, the Giants have worked collaboratively with our neighborhood to help shape the plans for Mission Rock. Our community will be improved significantly by the new parks, waterfront access, recreational opportunities, a refurbished historic pier, affordable housing, jobs, neighborhood retail and restaurants, transit connections and replacement parking for Lot A.

Our neighborhood played an active role in the planning process and we are excited to see the transformation begin!

The Giants have consistently demonstrated a steadfast commitment to our City and our neighborhood. Proposition D is another example.

### As neighbors of the project, we say YES on Prop D!

Please join us in improving our community.

### Sincerely,

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|--|---|
| <b>Bruce &amp; Tara Agid,</b><br>Mission Bay Residents                             | <b>Katy Liddell,</b><br>South Beach Resident  |
| <b>Art &amp; Sherrie Agnos,</b><br>Potrero Hill Residents                          | <b>Charmaine Lobo,</b><br>South Beach Resident  |
| <b>Cathy Akiyama,</b><br>South Beach Resident                                      | <b>Robert Mansfield,</b><br>South Beach Resident  |
| <b>William Cahill,</b><br>South Beach Resident                                     | <b>Ronald Miguel,</b><br>Potrero Hill Resident  |
| <b>Shelley Carroll,</b><br>South Beach Resident                                    | <b>Laura Nichol,</b><br>Potrero Hill Resident   |
| <b>Derrick &amp; Tricia Chu,</b><br>South Beach Residents                          | <b>Rudy Nothenberg,</b><br>South Beach Resident   |
| <b>Chris &amp; Noel Kelton,</b><br>Proprietors of Primo Patio Café,<br>South Beach | <b>Peter &amp; Janet Osborne,</b><br>Proprietors of Momo's &<br>Mission Rock Resort,<br>Mission Bay Residents |
| <b>Toby Levine,</b><br>Mission Bay Resident  |   |



## WE SUPPORT PROP D:

- Mayor Ed Lee
- House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi
- Board of Equalization Member Fiona Ma
- State Senator Mark Leno
- Assemblymembers David Chiu & Phil Ting
- Board of Supervisors President London Breed
- Supervisors John Avalos, David Campos, Julie Christensen, Malia Cohen, Mark Farrell, Jane Kim, Eric Mar, Katy Tang, Scott Wiener, Norman Yee
- Former Mayor Art Agnos
- Former State Senator John Burton
- Former Assemblymember Tom Ammiano
- Judge Quentin Kopp (ret.)
- San Francisco Parks Alliance
- Affordable Housing Alliance
- San Francisco Bay Area Planning & Urban Research Association (SPUR)
- UNITE HERE! Local 2
- San Francisco Chamber of Commerce
- San Francisco Democratic Party
- San Francisco Republican Party

MissionRock.com

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