

NANCY TYNAN
Knocked out, never woke

A well-liked Tenderloin resident is dead and her 18-year-old alleged attacker may be facing a long prison stretch after arguing one October evening on a 9-San Bruno bus.

"It's a double tragedy," social worker Angie David, of the Homeless Outreach Team, said out on Ellis Street after Nancy Tynan's Nov. 4 memorial at the Mentone Hotel. Dozens of people had crowded the second-floor community rooms to remember 55-year-old Ms. Tynan, a resident for several years.

Besides the loss of Ms. Tynan, David said that the suspect's life, too, though it goes on, is changed for the worse by an impulsive act.

Ms. Tynan was taken unconscious to S.F. General Hospital after an ambulance picked her up off the corner of 16th Street and Potrero Avenue on the evening of Oct. 15 following an altercation aboard Muni. She was taken off life support Oct. 23. Her alleged killer, Isis Hill, was arrested shortly thereafter and charged with voluntary manslaughter, for which, if convicted, she faces up to 11 years in prison.

"Our time is short," Robert Mitchell, Ms. Tynan's next-door neighbor at the Mentone, told the gathering after lay minister Michael Mallory of Quest4Light opened the memorial. "Treat each other with care and respect. Usually you'll get it back. There are some exceptions, but live each day as if it was your last. One day it will be."

Ms. Tynan's last day came unexpectedly. She was arguing with two people on the bus. Multiple sources told The Extra Ms. Tynan was drinking from a flask during the argument, and ignored fellow passengers' exhortations to stay aboard and not follow the people she'd been arguing with when they disembarked near 16th Street. Ultimately, Ms. Tynan was found unconscious on the sidewalk and taken to the hospital with a traumatic brain injury. Her mother flew in from the East Coast to be with her only child. She and friends stayed at Ms. Tynan's bedside until she was taken off life support.

At that moment, the crime for which Hill is now charged changed from aggravated assault to voluntary manslaughter, SFPD public information officer Carlos Manfredi told The Extra. Using Muni video footage of the attack, he said, "One of the sergeants put out a crime alert" and another officer recognized Hill. She was arrested at home that evening.

Hill was not alone during her argument with Ms. Tynan, Manfredi said, but "she was the one that actually committed the assault," and thus the only person charged. At the memorial service, when the crime was discussed, the understanding was that Hill's associate had tried to defuse the situation.

From the East Coast, a younger cousin of Ms. Tynan who did not wish to be identified wrote The Extra, "I do not believe she ever regained consciousness. They had to do surgery and it looked bleak from the beginning. Her mom and stepdad had bought her a surprise ticket home to visit, she was supposed to come just days after she was brutally attacked. I was looking forward to seeing her, hugging her and catching up in person. She was also looking forward to seeing her other relatives from her Mom's side."

Some at the memorial spoke of Ms. Tynan's fierce spirit. "She called it her Irish," one said. "She'd say 'my Irish is rising out of me' when she'd been drinking."

Another speculated that she "may have used the N-word" in her confrontation on the bus. "How much of that was alcohol?" a man asked, adding that it can turn a person into an "instant asshole."

Not everybody experienced the



Nancy Tynan and Killah were inseparable. They graced a poster from Glide's Celebration pet awareness campaign. Below: Iris Hill, defendant in Tynan's killing.

same Nancy Tynan. "I'll just say that people talk about an attitude problem that she might have had," one woman said. "Personally, I never saw that. She was always kind and positive. I never saw that side."



SFPD BOOKING PHOTO

David knew Ms. Tynan for years, having helped her get off the streets when she'd become homeless. "She was educated, had been employed, and fell into a typical San Francisco situation," David said. "She lost her husband, job, housing ... it took 18 months to get her housed," first at the Hotel Civic Center, then at the Mentone, David said, but Ms. Tynan offered "one of those amazing opportunities to help someone who appreciated it."

"She was very neighborly," Mitchell, her closest neighbor, said. "From the first day, she was very attentive, friendly, checking to see if I needed anything. I'm very appreciative of that. I saw a very kind, generous person. She'd go to the store and insist on bringing something back." Then he waxed philosophical:

"I've learned to cry. That keeps me out of prison, keeps me from killing someone else. When we love someone, we can't bring them back, but we can learn something and carry it forward."

"The only thing positive I can say," another woman at the memorial said, is that "she said she didn't think she could handle it if her mom passed first." She paused to sob.

"I just want to say 'thank you,' because she helped each of us in her own way," she continued. "She had an attitude, but most of the time she'd apologize."

Ms. Tynan was born in Wellesley,

Mass., and stayed through high school, eventually heading west and arriving in San Francisco at 21. She first found work in a cafe, then things took a less conventional turn.

"Her and I stripped together at Market Street Cinema," Heidi Puffer said. She said they went back 23 years and had been partners as the Double Trouble Girls, working at bachelor parties, but left that all behind when they got through college.

Ms. Tynan earned a degree in accounting from San Francisco State University and worked for a time as a bookkeeper at the Sherman Williams paint store on Bryant Street, friends remembered.

A poster showing Ms. Tynan and her little dog, Killah, stood on display at the front of the room at the Mentone where Mallory spoke extemporaneously, read from the Bible and British poet Gerard Manley Hopkins' "Heaven-Haven." The poster was from Glide's Celebration effort to raise pet awareness.

Others told stories of Killah getting into minor mischief as he and Ms. Tynan made the social rounds on different floors of the Mentone. "You never saw Nancy without Killah," one said. Another person lamented, "We lost two, not just one — Killah, 'cause now he's gone. He's part of this family, too." Puffer said she'd found a home for Killah.

Ms. Tynan got her moment in the national spotlight in 1999, when a reporter for the Philadelphia Inquirer, Nita Lelyveld, quoted her in a story about San Francisco's mayoral election race between Tom Ammiano and Willie Brown. It was about the time the dot-com bubble burst and Ms. Tynan sounded prescient. Lelyveld quoted Ms. Tynan regarding then-Mayor Willie Brown:

"I don't think he gives a rat's ass about the working people of this city. There used to be a middle class here. You used to be able to come here and work in a restaurant and not know what

you were going to do with your life and it would be OK. You wouldn't have to sell your soul to make ends meet."

Puffer said she and Ms. Tynan's boyfriend, Ted Breston, were with her till the end. "He's very devastated," Puffer said, adding that she's worried about him now, too.

Deborah remembered Ms. Tynan as a devout Catholic who "loved art, loved beauty," went to Mass at St. Boniface first thing every morning and "was always ready to lend a hand."

She was buried in Massachusetts by her surviving family, who asked that any donations offered in her memory be made to the Wounded Warrior Project in Topeka, Kan. ■

— Mark Hedlin

DARYL JEROME FAISON
Collapsed riding his bicycle



COURTESY GALVIN APARTMENTS

Daryl Jerome Faison was doing what he loved most on Aug. 10, riding his bicycle down 10th Street at Folsom, when he collapsed. Passersby gave assistance and called 911, but he couldn't be revived. Mr. Faison was 51 years old.

A memorial attended by many of his neighbors was held Nov. 16 in the lobby of the Galvin Apartments, where he had lived.

Galvin Manager Lori Dashiell told tenants at his memorial, "It wasn't a heart attack and he hadn't been sick," stating she had been informed he died from natural causes. "It was just his time," she said.

Originally from North Carolina, Mr. Faison spent his years in California cooking food for friends, receiving tutoring and honing his reading skills at the Public Library, and collecting all sorts of hats. He kept a framed picture of himself wearing a jester hat prominently displayed in his apartment. Neighbors recalled a diversity of hats hanging across a line in his apartment, containing everything from average baseball caps to goofy party hats, and said he had a different hat on whenever they encountered him.

Harriet Kirk, an elderly neighbor who tutored Mr. Faison, recalled his cheerful demeanor and said he was quite helpful to her. "He took me out to movies and meals sometimes, and he had a talent for cooking," she recalled. Kirk bought him a recipe book.

"I don't know how many books he had," because of his reading struggles, "but at least he had a recipe book for the cooking he loved."

Neighbor Pamela Brown said that Mr. Faison was always making delicious holiday dinners, and when she passed him in the hallway, she would ask him, "When are you gonna make gumbo again?"

Mr. Faison was a quiet person, Brown said, recalling him as a "gentle bear" who kept to himself, talking mostly to his three parakeets and cockatiel, sometimes jokingly telling them to "shut up" when they became too talkative.

An ideal tenant, a cheerful neighbor, and a wonderful cook, Mr. Faison will be missed by many. ■

— Mira Ingram