

T. CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS
'A joyful man'

The death of Christopher Edwards at age 58 on June 19 was still reverberating through the Alder Hotel on Sixth Street almost a month later, when co-minister Kathryn L. Benton presided over a rescheduled memorial service for him.

There were about a dozen people who this time got there in time, on July 14. The memorial, originally set for July 1, had been rescheduled, Benton said, because no one had showed. The first of the month is always a busy time in SROs, of course, but perhaps it was simply a matter of the word not having gotten out.

Because even when this memorial had concluded, the sight of Mr. Edwards' smiling face, beaming from a picture frame on a table in the community room, surrounded by five white candles and four vases of irises and tiger lilies, shocked one man who wandered into the high-ceilinged community room as things were wrapping up.

"I just talked to him a couple of weeks ago!" he said.

Others were more resigned. "He knew he was going," a man who identified himself as Frank had said earlier. "He knew it was coming. He said, 'I know. I'm gonna do it my way.'"

"He became a nice person. He was still Chris," Frank said as a chuckle rolled through the others gathered there. "Those of you who knew him know what I mean. But he had peace in the end."

"We were both chefs," said Diane, who brought a yellow rose to the memorial and laid it on the table as she spoke. "We did a lot of cooking together. He was a joyful man, a good person, a nice person."

Diane arrived after the memorial had begun; she'd been upstairs cook-



COURTESY ALDER HOTEL

ing, and when things had concluded, brought a plate of chicken and fixings out for everyone to share.

"He's gonna come knocking at my door in about 10 minutes!" Sheryl said. "He's like a brother to me. We went to school together. He had a sister having problems, he had to go back and forth. He was always a pest, but all in all, he was a good person. I will miss him. I consider him a brother." She spoke of how Mr. Edwards would, at times, be seen with one phone in his hand, another in his pocket attached to an earpiece, and be conducting conversations on both of them, and with someone in person, all at the same time.

Someone else said she suspected he was keeping about five home care social workers busy at once, too.

One of the two flyers on the table with Mr. Edwards' photo quoted a poem by Louise Bailey. The other had a statement by Alder manager Sajid Shabber, along with lines attributed to Maya Angelou about how people will forget what you said and did, but never how you made them feel.

"Christopher Edwards was a kind man that lived in unit 303 ... he always showed me a lot of respect," Shabber

had written. "He was one who had an awesome personality. ... He would come to my office to express his obligations, joy and fears with a smile."

Shabber attended the memorial, too. "He'd come by my office every day," he said. "Most of the time it was about his overnight violations. He'd take it to the edge and bring it right back."

"He was always positive toward me," said a man named Lewis, a near neighbor of Mr. Edwards on the hotel's third floor. "I saw the friendship he had with Tyrone. That was a special bond. We all need that."

Tyrone had sat in the front row of the two arrays of chairs, seemingly too broke up to speak. Toward the end of the memorial, though, he addressed the photo: "Hey big brother, I love you, I miss you. May you rest in peace."

"Chris always shined," said a young man named Max, who was present with his little Chihuahua mix Lucy. "He'd quote 'I Love Lucy' whenever he'd see us: 'Lucy, you got some 'splainin' to do!'"

"He was really doing something for himself. Not a lot of people here take care of themselves that much. I'm not a very social person, but Chris was one of the people I'd always say hi to, have short conversations with." ■

— Mark Hedlin

JAMES SCHELSCHE
'A real gentleman'

James Schelske died July 8 at his residence in the Bishop Swing Community House on Tenth Street. He was 50.

A memorial for Mr. Schelske was held there July 18.

In a room filled with light from a

wall of glass, Kathryn Benton, minister with Episcopal Community Services, stood before a small table on which a vase of roses and mums sat alongside a framed photograph of Mr. Schelske. She reminded an assembled group of 10 of his neighbors that "Our journey — James' journey — connects us all in the stream of life and death."

Mr. Schelske moved into Community House, a home for 134 formerly homeless men and women, in December. His neighbors knew very little about him.

Juanita Kolacia met Mr. Schelske several years ago. "We were waiting in line for shelter at the Multi-Service Center one late afternoon. He introduced himself and we talked. He always remembered me whenever we'd met in passing on the streets," Kolacia said. "I was happy when I saw he moved here. We laughed and he promised to have me over for dinner, but it didn't happen. He was a real gentleman," she added.

"He was always very friendly, very kind and genuine," Lisa Wheeler said.

Benton passed a small box filled with inspirational thoughts printed on paper slips among the assembled, inviting them to select one at random and share the message. "Structure your day. A productive schedule keeps you on track and connected to the world," someone read aloud.

In closing, Wheeler and Ralph Reyes led the group through several choruses of the simple hymn "Amen," softly singing as clapping hands quietly kept the beat. ■

— Jonathan Newman

OBITUARIES



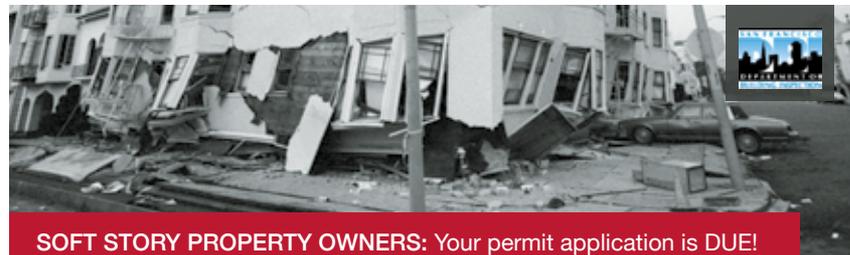
Would you like a friend or relative who has passed away to be remembered in the Central City Extra?

We have written and published hundreds of obituaries for central city residents after attending their memorials at the invitation of officiants. Usually held at the SROs where the deceased lived, the memorials are where our reporters talk with neighbors, friends and relatives, and, until recently, with SRO staff.

From what's shared there and from followup interviews, we write the obituaries that honor the lives of Tenderloin and South of Market residents. Photos from some of those obituaries are pictured above.

But because of federal privacy laws and the city's more stringent interpretation of them, The Extra is being invited to fewer and fewer memorials. Without the focus of those gatherings, it's becoming increasingly difficult to continue to write the obituaries.

If you would like to share information about someone who has passed, contact Marjorie Beggs, senior writer and editor, at marjorie@studycenter.org or 415-626-1650. A reporter will contact you to set up an interview time. Please: no anonymous interviews. We always appreciate photos to accompany the obituaries.



SOFT STORY PROPERTY OWNERS: Your permit application is DUE!

If you are a property owner of a multi-unit building with 3-stories, 15+ units, your permit application is due by **September 15, 2016**, which is less than 45 days away.

Turn in your permit application to DBI by September 15 to avoid getting this placard and a Notice of Violation on your property.

Find out if your property is on the list by visiting sfdbi.org/soft-story-properties-list.



TODCO
HOUSING APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED FOR THE KNOX AND BAYANIHAN HOUSE



The Knox



Bayanihan House

Please go to 241 6th Street, San Francisco, CA for applications

The TODCO Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing Waiting List is open for the Knox and the Bayanihan House. If your name is currently on any TODCO Housing Waiting List and you would like information on your current status, please call the TODCO Marketing Office at 415-957-0227 on Fridays only.

Building	Size & Amenities	Max/Min Household Income Limits	Rent as of Feb. 1, 2015
The Knox SRO located at 241- 6th St. & Tehama is accepting applications and has an OPEN WAITLIST	SRO – 1 Person or Couple Room size: 10 ½ x 18 (Semi-Private) bathroom 7 x 7 Unit amenities: sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed Building amenities: small gym, library, private lounge, roof top garden, community kitchen, laundry facility, 24 hour staff & surveillance	1 person \$34,600/year 2 person \$39,520/year Minimum income of \$1,374/month	Move-in deposit \$687 Monthly rent \$687 plus utilities
Hotel Isabel located at 1095 Mission CLOSED WAITLIST	SRO – 1 Person Shared bathroom Unit amenities: sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2- burner stove, closet and single bed	1 person \$34,600/year No minimum income Closed	30% OF INCOME Requires a Certificate of Homelessness
Bayanihan House (Non-assisted units) located at 88 – 6th St. & Mission. OPEN WAITLIST	SRO – 1 Person or Couple Room single: 10½ x 12, shared bathroom Double occupancy: 12x12, shared bathroom Unit amenities: sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed Building amenities: community kitchen, 24 hour staff & surveillance, laundry facility	1 person \$30,275/year Couple \$34,580/year Minimum income of \$889.40/month	As of Jan. 1, 2015 Move-in deposit \$607 Monthly rent \$607 Utilities included

TDD: (415) 345-4470

