

GOOD NEWS for...

TAXPAYERS Tax-Aid gives families that earned less than \$35,000 in 2003 free help in preparing their taxes. Of Tax-Aid's 23 sites in the city, four are in the TL: at Glide Memorial Methodist Church, Community Elementary School, Hastings Law and Northeast Community Federal Credit Union. Only the credit union requires appointments; the other three take walk-ins. If you qualify for the earned income tax credit, Tax-Aid and its co-sponsors — United Way, Dept. of Human Services, SFWorks, EARN and others — say you can get a credit of up to \$4,000. For location, addresses and hours: 1-800-358-8832.

FAMILIES LIVING WITH HIV Delta Lambda Phi's annual Spring Cleaning Clothing Drive, which is collecting new and "gently worn" clothing during March, this year will benefit homeless and marginally housed children and mothers living with AIDS in Catholic Charities' Rita de Cascia Program (intensive home-based case management, kinship support, money management, peer advocacy, treatment advocacy, food, transportation, family activities, support groups). Delta Lambda Phi, not affiliated with any college, describes itself as a "gay, bisexual and progressive straight men's service fraternity." Says chapter President Paul Pratt, "The long-term success of the drive depends on having enough locations accepting clothing to make donating convenient." Volunteer locations get a decorated box for donations, which are picked up weekly. The TL already has one site — Mr. Lee-Ona's Bar at Turk and Leavenworth — but drive organizers want to increase donation sites in the central city area. To participate: 724-1092 or PaulDLPzeta@hotmail.com

BUDDING ARTISTS AND FRAZZLED PARENTS Need a way to beat the doldrums of spring's long, rainy evenings? Central City Hospitality House offers free Kids Art workshops every Wednesday, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., 146 Leavenworth at Turk. Open to kids 5 to 12, the workshop is led by Angie Leonino, who has an MFA in cinema and has been teaching Kids Art for seven years. Activities include painting, drawing and clay work, with a snack break for the always-hungry youngsters. Parents can stay and create art alongside their kids or drop them off. Information: Angie Leonino, 749-2132.

AND BUDDING PHOTOGS S.F. Network Ministries offers free Photoshop 7.0 classes at its computer training lab, 366 Eddy, the first three Wednesdays in March, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (the first class is March 3). Participation in the class, which is limited to 10 people and will be offered again in May, July and September, depends on pre-placement test scores. Come by the lab or call 928-6209 for information.

— MARJORIE BEGGS

This column needs regular infusions. If you have some good news (no events, please), send it to marjorie@studycenter.org.

Big changes on 38-Geary line

Muni will give DPH rep's safety concern another look

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

EVERY day, 50,000 people travel on 38-Geary buses. The ride is bumpy, the vehicles crowded, arrival times unreliable. And the buses are really, really slow. Two Muni planners, Suany Chough and Jay Primus, unveiled those unsurprising findings at the February Tenderloin Futures Collaborative meeting.

During peak hours, they said, a Geary local averages 5 mph — faster, The Extra's Google search revealed, than a snail, which takes 33 days to crawl one mile, but just beating out a toy battery-powered John Deere tractor, which can go 3.9 mph.

The planners were at the meeting as part of their community outreach to neighborhoods that will be affected by Geary transit changes. Phase 1, they said, is scheduled to begin in October and will cost about \$400,000. Much of it will come from Prop K, it renews an existing half-cent sales tax approved by voters last November.

"We're looking for a 17% increase in the speed of the buses and a 40% increase in their reliability," Chough said.

In what Muni calls the inner-Geary area, improvements include adding 15 inches to parking and right-turn-only lanes, adding 4½ feet to transit-only lanes, and widening traffic lanes from 9 feet to 10. Traffic-signal timing will be adjusted to make the flow more transit-friendly, and DPW will build

bus bulbs — curb extensions that give pedestrians more room to wait and allow buses to load and unload without pulling out of traffic.

Also planned: Reducing the number of bus stops between Van Ness and Kearny, where Geary meets Market, from 19 to 14, and increasing the number of yellow zones, for a net loss of about four parking spaces per block, 40 lost in all.

"It looks like some of those new stops will be mid-block," said Michael Radetsky, facilitator of The Health Department's TL Pedestrian Safety Working Group. "I'm worried about people running across the street in the middle of the block to catch buses."

Primus agreed that could be a concern and said he'd bring it back to the planning table.

TL resident John Nulty put in a plea for not making wholesale changes. "Making fewer stops and changing where the stops are located can have an adverse affect on seniors and the disabled," he said.

Chough and Primus promised to come back with final plans. Meantime, they said, there will be two more public meetings, Wed., March 3, noon-1 p.m., World Affairs Council, 312 Sutter, 4th Floor, and Thur., March 11, 6:30-8 p.m., First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin.

LATEST ON 50 MASON ST.

February's meeting was one of the best-attended in a long time — almost

40 people packed the TL Police Station community room.

Maybe everyone came to hear the continuing saga of 50 Mason St. Almost three years ago, lessee Joel Hunt started renovations and planned to open the site as King's Court, a retail lingerie shop with live models. Nix, said the community, to another adult entertainment venue in the TL. When the Dept. of Building Inspection revoked Hunt's building permit, he appealed and lost.

Next Hunt decided to try a comedy club — S.F. Comedy Open Mike he dubbed it — and was on the agenda to give an update at this Collaborative meeting. The showman was a no-show. Later he told The Extra the club will open this month or next, but without the coveted liquor license.

"But we're still working on it," Hunt said.

THE MAYOR'S MAN

Or maybe the draw to the meeting was a scheduled appearance by Marlowe Paraiso, the new mayor's District 6 liaison. Though he had lots of time to present Mayor Newsom's plans for the neighborhood, Paraiso merely introduced himself and, when no one asked questions, he sat down.

Like Earth circling the sun, the topic of the Collaborative's organizational structure came up again. Chair Glenda Hope of SF Network Ministries asked once more: Did the group want to maintain the status quo — as an informal, informational group — or morph into a more formal neighborhood organization that takes stands on issues?

By a hand vote, the Collaborative is a stet. ■

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SAN FRANCISCO

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