

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

REGULAR SCHEDULE HOUSING

Consumer Housing Group, 1st Thursday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m., Mental Health Association, 870 Market, Suite 928. Contact: 421-2926 x306.

Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of the month, noon, 201 Turk Community Room. Contact Michael Nulty, 339-8327. Resident unity, leadership training, facilitate communication.

Supportive Housing Network, 3rd Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., 111 Jones. Contact: Rob Wheeler, 421-2926 x302.

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Board, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., CMHS, 1380 Howard, Rm. 537. CMHS advisory committee, open to the public. Contact: 255-3474.

Hoarders and Clutterers Support Group, 2nd Monday and 4th Wednesday of each month, 6-7 p.m. 870 Market, Suite 928. Contact: 421-2926 x306.

CMHS Consumer Council, 3rd Monday of the month, 5:30-7:30, CMHS, 1380 Howard, Rm. 537. Contact: 255-3428. Advisory group of consumers from self-help organizations and other mental health consumer advocates. Open to the public.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill-S.F., 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Family Service Agency, 1010 Gough, 5th Fl. Contact 905-6264. Family member group, open to consumers and the public.

SAFETY

SoMa Police Community Relations Forum, 4th Monday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m. Location changes monthly. To receive

monthly information by e-mail, contact Lisa Block, 538-8100 ext. 202 Lblock@iisf.org, or Jan Rasmussen, 553-1155

Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting, last Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., police station Community Room, 301 Eddy. Contact Susan Black, 345-7300. Neighborhood safety.

North of Market NERT, bimonthly meeting. Contact Tim Agar, 674-6142, or Lt. Juanita Hodge, S.F. Fire Department, 558-3456. Disaster preparedness training by the Fire Department.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., 301 Eddy. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or sf_district6@yahoo.com. Districtwide association, civic education.

Mid-Market Project Area Committee, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 5:30 p.m., Ramada Hotel, 1231 Market. Contact Carolyn Diamond, 362-2500. Market Street redevelopment on Fifth to Eighth street.

Tenderloin Futures Collaborative, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m., Tenderloin Police community room, 301 Eddy. Contact Jerry Jai at 358-3956 for information. Network of residents, nonprofits and businesses sharing information and taking on neighborhood development issues.

Friends of Boeddeker Park, 2nd Thursday of the month, 5-6:30 p.m.,

Boeddeker Rec Center, 240 Eddy. Plan park events, activities and improvements. Contact: 552-4866.

South of Market Project Area Committee, 3rd Monday of the month, 6 p.m., 1035 Folsom, between 6th & 7th. Contact: SOM-PAC office, 487-2166.

North of Market Planning Coalition, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., 301 Eddy. Contact: 820-1412. TL 2000, neighbor-

hood planning.

Tenderloin Merchants Association, contact Jamie Cutlip, 553-4433 ext. 22 or jamie@urbansolutions.org.

Boeddeker Park cleanup, 3rd Saturday of the month, 9-noon, organized by the Friends of Boeddeker Park. To RSVP to work or for information, contact Betty Traynor at the Neighborhood Parks Council, 621-3260.

Community Leadership Alliance, last Thursday of the month, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Tenderloin Police Community Room, 301 Eddy. Informational forum with monthly agenda of guest presenters and speakers, sharing news of upcoming events, proposals, resources. Contact David Villa-Lobos: 921-4192 or david_villalobos@sbcglobal.net

SENIORS AND DISABLED

Mayor's Disability Council, 3rd Friday of the month, 1-3 p.m., City Hall, Rm. 400. Contact: 554-6789. Open to the public.

Senior Action Network, general meeting, second Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon, St. Mary's Cathedral. Monthly committee meetings, 975 Mission #700. Fundraising, first Thursday, 2 p.m.; Pedestrian Safety, second Friday, 10 a.m.; Sr. Housing Action, third Wednesday, 1:30; Health, last Thursday, 1:30. Information: 546-1333.

SUPERVISORS' COMMITTEES

Budget Committee Sandoval, Daly, McGoldrick, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Thursday, 10 a.m.

City Services Committee Dufty, Ma, Elsbernd, Thursday, 9:30 a.m.

Land Use Committee McGoldrick, Peskin, Maxwell, Monday, 1 p.m.

OBITUARIES

OSCAR SANTOS RICHARD TORRES RIOS THOMAS AVILA

Twenty people gathered in the Cadillac Hotel's main lobby on Dec. 15 to remember three residents who had passed away recently. A hotel staff member interpreted the brief memorial service into Spanish for the many mourners who were not fluent in English.

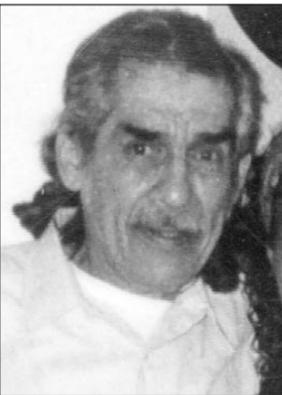
Oscar Santos, a Cadillac resident since 1995, was 44 when he died in the hospital on Nov. 3. One friend and fellow resident called Mr. Santos "a very compassionate guy." Another said that Mr. Santos originally was from Honduras, had lived in San Francisco for 18 years, and had two brothers and a mother in Bakersfield.



Oscar Santos

Thomas Avila died Sept. 13 in the hotel, where he had lived since 2001. He was 57 years old, born in Mexico and is survived by several brothers, said hotel Case Manager Nubia Albarracin.

Richard Torres Rios, from Texas, died in the hotel of a stroke on Dec. 8 at age 72. The Cadillac had been his home since 1998. A Cadillac staff member commented on the unhappy surprise of death: "I remember that Richard said he'd pray for me when I was about to go on a trip. When I came back, he was gone."



Richard Torres Rios

Mr. Santos, Mr. Avila and Mr. Rios were in the city's Shelter Plus Care program, which provides rental assistance to homeless individuals and families with multiple disabilities. Albarracin, who manages the program at the Cadillac through the Tenderloin Housing Clinic, explained that 68 of the hotel's 158 rooms are reserved for Shelter Plus Care tenants.

— MARJORIE BEGGS

BRUCE STURGIS Architect, artist, musician

Craig Waul brought his alto clarinet to the memorial for his friend, architect and artist Bruce Sturgis, who died Nov. 30 at age 58.

"Bruce was a musician, too. He played a lot of instruments, and he could get way out there, but when he was serious, he was one of the best," Waul said. "He was my first friend in San Francisco, in North Beach."

Mr. Sturgis periodically fell on hard times, said another friend, John Bukur, at the Dec. 9 memorial for Mr. Sturgis at the Civic Center Residence, where he lived for six months before he died. "The first time I met him, he was dressed in a suit with a tie and spats, but he was on the street, homeless. Later on, I introduced him to that lady in the purple jacket," and Bukur pointed to an elderly hotel resident sitting just outside the circle of chairs.

"I took him in, let him live with me, until he could get a room here," the woman told the small group of mourners. "I understood his problem — I've been clean from alcohol for four years and I understood him."

The hotel's social worker recalled how Mr. Sturgis once surprised her by attending a hotel crafts session.

"We had a watercolor set, very simple, like for a child," she said, "and Bruce used it to paint these really beautiful sunflowers for me. I kept it on my desk, but I gave it to the family when they came to clear his room."

Mr. Sturgis spent his last week with his ex-wife and teenage daughter in Fresno, the social worker said. "It was wonderful that they were able to be together. We'll miss him here — he was very well-liked, and he knew it and was proud of it."

In memory of his friend, Waul stood and played a long, slow, haunting blues piece, dipping and swaying, eyes mostly closed. The music, he said afterward, was "original and it came through me to honor Bruce."

— MARJORIE BEGGS

CAROLINE CONTRERAS Latina grandmother

Caroline Jane Contreras moved into the Franciscan Towers on Eddy Street just three months before she died Jan. 12 at age 42.

Residents attending her Jan. 18 memorial in the hotel lobby remembered her smile and how she would "glow" when they spoke to her in the elevator. But she wasn't the talkative type, and knew hardly anyone.

Desk clerk Monica Henderson said the 4-foot-11 Latina grandmother, who darted about with quick little

steps, often was visited by her daughter and grandson. Henderson said Contreras' companion, Ed Hicks, who lived with her, said she had died of a heart attack. But the medical examiner's office had not completed its investigation.

"She seemed healthy but said she had been bitten by something," Henderson said. "She had a knot on her face. Then the day I came back from vacation, I heard she had died. She seemed so healthy."

— TOM CARTER



DOUGLAS FARQUSON Airport shuttle driver

Douglas Farquson, an airport shuttle driver, was cut down in the prime of life — at age 39 — by complications from diabetes.

During a memorial at the Ritz Hotel on Jan. 18, the 6-foot-3, 225-pound African American was remembered by hotel employees as a quiet man who minded his own business and never caused trouble. A driver for San Francisco Airport Shuttle, he moved to the Ritz on Eddy Street in August 2003.

Mr. Farquson had spent several weeks in the hospital before returning to his second-floor room, where he was found dead on Dec. 21.

"He didn't know many people in the building," said hotel manager Calvin Nance. He was so self-sufficient that he didn't need the hotel's services, either, so the social worker didn't know him. Some residents had asked about the memorial, but none attended.

Commemorating his life on a shiny black table in the mezzanine's community kitchen was a bouquet of small-bud white carnations, a lone candle and a tan card with his name written in black on it. "His death is not passing unnoticed," said the Rev. Glenda Hope, who led the ceremony.

— TOM CARTER

