

GOOD NEWS for...

IV DRUG USERS In the last 18 months, the Drug Overdose Prevention and Education (DOPE) project has saved 82 lives by administering naloxone to reverse the effects of opiate-related overdoses. The DOPE project, through the Department of Public Health, has trained more than 500 people, mostly in SROs, in what to do if they overdose, how to recognize the symptoms and how to respond. More important, they gave them naloxone, a prescription medication that does the trick. To find out about OD training and naloxone prescriptions: 554-2615.

TENDERLOIN HOUSING CLINIC The mayor's April proposal to cut THC's \$87,000 Community Development Block Grant to \$50,000 was averted by Supe Daly's intercession. "I worked with MODC and its process to restore the funds," Daly told The Extra. "THC is doing good, affirmative work on eviction defense. Why cut a program that works?" The CDBG money supports the Clinic's free legal help for renters threatened with eviction. "One of our attorneys alone currently is representing 50 tenants facing Ellis evictions," said Randy Shaw, THC executive director and beyondchron.org editor.

MEDS IN THE 'HOOD Starting July 1, TL residents will be able to get some over-the-counter items and all prescription medications at MOMSPharmacy, 191 Golden Gate. This newest addition to Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center services will be a 1,200-square-foot, ground-floor space but without the traditional shelves of medications. All inventory, four pharmacists and six pharmacy techs will be out of sight, behind two clerks at windows, one for drop off, one for pickup. MOMS — Medication On-time Management System — specializes in HIV/AIDS meds but is licensed to dispense prescriptions; four of its eight U.S. locations are in California. The other in S.F. is at Davies Medical Center. TARC's MOMS, which probably will operate 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., at least five days a week, also is licensed to dispense methadone, said TARC Development/PR Manager Colm Hegarty. The client makes an appointment with the pharmacy — there'll be 12 time slots a day for starters with the methadone dispensed orally, on site.

LOW-INCOME RENTERS Time again to get together income information to see if you qualify for state Renter Assistance. The once-a-year payment — maximum is a couple hundred dollars — is a reimbursement for the property taxes you pay indirectly through your rent. There's still time to qualify for the 2004 reimbursement; deadline is June 30. You must have been 62 or older, disabled or blind on Dec. 31, 2003; paid \$50 or more a month in rent; earned \$38,505 or less during the year; and been a U.S. citizen or legal immigrant when you file the claim. Filing for 2005 begins July 1. Information is available at 800-868-4171 or www.ftb.ca.gov.

NEIGHBORHOOD ARTISTS The Boeddeker Park Arts Festival needs — guess what? — art. The festival isn't until Oct. 8, but selections will be made well in advance, according to Daniel O'Connor of St. Anthony's, a sponsor along with the Luggage Store and Presentation Senior Community. O'Connor, on the organizing committee, says artists will be responsible for putting up their own work and can offer it for sale. Acceptable are graphic arts, paintings, photos, group art, even greeting cards. Not in the plan are performing arts. For details and deadlines, call O'Connor, 563-2806. The festival celebrates the 20th anniversary of the dedication of the park to Father Alfred Boeddeker.

— MARJORIE BEGGS

If you have some good news, send it to marjorie@studycenter.org or tom@studycenter.org.

Baghdad by the Bay

Capt. Brown grilled about 2 cars aflame in TL

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

CAPT. Kathryn Brown, head of Tenderloin Station, was on the agenda for the May Tenderloin Futures Collaborative meeting to give an update on general police doings followed by a Q & A.

But she was about to confront a series of unexpectedly strange situations, and have to answer alarmed citizens, who seemed to be lying in wait for her with some questions that she couldn't readily answer. The intrigue began before she arrived.

The night before, according to eyewitness David Villa-Lobos, director of Community Leadership Alliance and a resident of the Antonia Manor at 180 Turk, two cars were set afire in the neighborhood. A couple of hours before the Collaborative meeting, he'd sent out an e-mail to his 135-member newsgroup, with this subject line: "Two Car Bombs Hit Baghdad and San Francisco's Downtown!"

His message equated a UPI story of seven killed in two Baghdad car bombings with two TL "car bombs," the first in the 200 block of Turk where "a Molotov bomb [was] thrown into a parked car," resulting, he said, in towering flames, tenant evacuations, while police squad cars were parked down the street "in a nonresponsive mode." Then, a few hours later, "bombs again resonated through the night air" on the 200 block of Eddy, Villa-Lobos wrote.

David Baker, NOMPC president, who also witnessed the fires, came to the 10 a.m. meeting smoking mad. He insisted on getting Capt. Brown into the meeting room immediately to respond to the putative bombings. He didn't want to wait for her to show up at 10:30 and went next door to get her. "The medium is the message, and the message is urban terrorism," Baker said, once Capt. Brown arrived. "[The bombings] show a disrespect of the forces of order, and, if we're complacent, we're heading for an abyss."

He turned to the captain: "I'd like to hear what you think."

"I'm not familiar with what happened," she said simply.

Villa-Lobos reiterated his e-mail.

She knew nothing about it, she repeated, and said that had there been something as serious as a car bombing, she would have been called at home. "Also, I talked to my lieutenant this morning," she said. "He didn't say anything about it, but I'll go check my reports right now."

Out of her hearing, Villa-Lobos said, "We anticipated that she'd say she didn't know about it."

Capt. Brown returned and told the group she'd found a report: "There's not much information: a call about a fire in a car, no witnesses, nothing about a Molotov cocktail. But the Fire Department did feel the fire was suspicious. It might have been a retaliation for a drug deal gone bad."

"Well, I think you're minimizing this," Baker said.

The captain tried to end the exchange by citing the case number and explaining that the SFPD's Arson Task Force would investigate.

"Can we get a followup report on the incident?" asked TFC Chair Glenda Hope, S.F. Network Ministries executive director.

"You can call the Arson Task Force," Capt. Brown answered.

Baker, who was seated at the other end of the table from the captain, said quietly, but audibly, "Capt. B., passing the buck again."

The Extra called the SFPD Arson Task Force a couple of days later. Inspector Jeff Levin confirmed a report of two car fires outside of 275 Turk, "one moderately burned, one minimally, both under investigation," he said. There was no report of a car fire on Eddy.

Two weeks later, we called him for an update, but he didn't return our call. We called Capt. Brown. She had no further information, she said, and suggested we call the Fire Department's Arson Task Force. Capt. Pete Howes of SFPD said Inspector Levin had already given us all the information there was.

DRUG DEALING DILEMMA

Once Capt. Brown got past the bomb business, she faced more scrutiny from TFC members.

"This is the first time we've seen you at one of these meetings since you came to this station [in March 2004]," said Jim Thompson, 165 Turk apartment manager. "I'd like to welcome you to attend regularly."

She said she'd be glad to attend — or to send one of her lieutenants. Just let her know when.

To questions about police attempts to stop drug dealing, she responded that light penalties and perp persistence "infuriate" her.

"I could take uniformed officers and have them sit at problem corners for two hours," she said. "The dealers will leave, but we follow them until

they eventually go away for that night. Sometimes to deter them, I take a car out myself and just sit there and do my paper work."

Plainclothes officers make a lot of arrests, she added, but only the uniform is a deterrent. "And the consequences of [arrests] are so minimal, the kids can't figure out why not to do it."

Baker asked Capt. Brown for 10-year drug arrest trends. She referred him instead to the two-year trends in her March 2005 Tenderloin Police Station report to the Police Commission.

The Extra took a look at the report, which also summarizes the station's history. Brown is the neighborhood's eighth captain since the 1991 formation of the Tenderloin Task Force; the TL became a full-fledged police district with its own station at Eddy and Jones in October 2000.

In 2004, 97 officers responded to 71,701 calls for service, 3,154 more than the previous year. They made 876 arrests for homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, auto boosting, other larceny and car theft. Narcotics arrests totaled 2,074 in 2004, up slightly from 2,026 in 2003.

RELATIONSHIP WITH POLICE

Thompson was less than satisfied with Capt. Brown's responses about drug dealing and her officers' effectiveness.

"We had some success handling the problems on the 100 block of Turk in the mid-1990s when we got involved with community policing," Thompson said.

(Community policing includes soliciting input from all levels of the police, sworn, non-sworn and civilian, and from business, city officials, public agencies, community institutions, nonprofits, community leaders, residents. Community courts also frequently are a key feature of community policing.)

"We worked with the police, we knew who was involved with problems," Thompson continued. "All that abruptly changed and stopped — and it came from the police."

"It stopped with the move from the Tenderloin Task Force to the Tenderloin Police Station, when this building opened," said resident John Nulty.

"And the community is still trying to get back to where it was a few years ago," added Thompson.

Brown's time was up — Hope runs a tight ship, timewise. The captain smiled and excused herself. ■

Law firm tosses suspended nonprofit a pro bono lifeline

THE Alexander Tenants Association, which got its 501(c)3 five years ago, hadn't filed tax forms and other required paperwork since October 2002.

That's when the Alexander Residence owner, TNDC, began renovations that weren't complete until this January.

In the meantime, residents were displaced, paperwork was misplaced, and the association fell into disarray, says Michael Nulty, who lives at the Alexander and counts its tenants group among his many organizational responsibilities.

So the IRS suspended the group's tax-exempt status and the state suspended the corporate status, Nulty says.

He has found a law firm — Hanson Bridgett Marcus Vlahos & Rudy — to take the case pro bono and try to restore the nonprofit's charitable status.

Meanwhile, the Alexander Tenants Association is in legal limbo, but back in action now that the 178-unit SRO has been made over and the displaced tenants have returned.

Knowing how easily small organizations can be sidetracked, Nulty tells this story as a cautionary tale for other vulnerable nonprofits. ■

— GEOFF LINK

CENTRAL CITY



CENTRAL CITY EXTRA is published monthly by San Francisco Study Center Inc., a private nonprofit serving the community since 1972. The Extra was initiated through grants from the S.F. Hotel Tax Fund and the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. The contents are copyrighted by the San Francisco Study Center, 1095 Market Street, Suite 602, San Francisco, CA 94103.

PHONE: (415) 626-1650

FAX: (415) 626-7276

E-MAIL: centralcityextra@studycenter.org

EDITOR/PUBLISHER: Geoffrey Link
SENIOR WRITER/EDITOR: Marjorie Beggs

REPORTERS: Tom Carter, Phil Tracy, Anne Marie Jordan

DESIGN AND LAYOUT: Carl Angel
DESIGN CONSULTANT: Don McCartney

CIRCULATION: Steve Sumcey

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Lenny Limjoco, Mark Ellinger

CONTRIBUTORS: Adrian D. Vamedoe, Diamond Dave, William Crain, Mark Hedin, John Burks, Eric Robertson, Meg Dixit

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE: David Baker, Michael Nulty, Debbie Larkin, Nicholas Rosenberg, Brad Paul, Tariq Alazraie

Central City Extra is a member of the SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION