

**PATRICIA WALKUP
FREDERICK HOBSON
JAMES LEO DUNN
JIM BERK
Activists**

District 6 lost four of its neighborhood activists recently: Patricia Walkup who spearheaded the Octavia Boulevard project, former supervisorial candidates from the Tenderloin, Frederick Hobson and the creative-dreamer James Leo Dunn, and SoMa senior Jim Berk.

Ms. Walkup, a leader in the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association, worked doggedly for years to create the tree-lined, six-lane Octavia Boulevard and park after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake crippled the Central Freeway. She died June 6 after a long battle with diabetes and related complications that prevented her working for 15 years, the Chronicle reported. She was 59.

The Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in June urging the Rec and Park Department to name the Hayes Green park for her.

Ms. Walkup came to San Francisco 30 years ago from Texas where she had been a school teacher. In Hayes Valley she advocated for sustainable transportation and more affordable housing and open space. With architect Robin Levitt, she lobbied to get the Central Freeway torn down and the Octavia project built. They organized campaigns for ballot measures in 1997, 1998 and 1999.

Her friends described her as "tireless" and "selfless." In recent months, Ms. Walkup pushed for more retail and indoor recreation in redeveloping a Hayes Valley UC Berkeley Extension campus.

In resolutions on June 6, the Board of Supervisors recognized the contributions of Ms. Walkup and Supervisor Chris Daly commemorated Mr. Hobson and Mr. Dunn. All three had been members of Alliance for a Better District Six at some point.

One of the last activities of Mr. Hobson and Mr. Dunn was serving on a committee to save tenants from Section 8 evictions from the apartment building where both lived at Turk and Hyde. No tenants were evicted.

Mr. Dunn, a familiar sight in the Tenderloin with his long white beard, three-piece suits, cowboy boots and fedora, died of a stomach aneurysm on May 11. He was 61.

Most of his working life, he was a cabbie. In the days when he wore a handlebar mustache, other drivers called him Wyatt, a reference to western hero Wyatt Earp. But Mr. Dunn listed his occupation on his candidate form for supervisor as an inventor.

At the time of his death, he was an announced candidate for the board for the third time. Although he finished far down in candidate fields in 2000 and 2002 that were led by Daly, he was best known for a wild plank in his 2000 platform. It called for a tunnel to be built under Nob Hill along Taylor Street by homeless workers. The tunnel would not only provide jobs and enhance traffic flow but it would house the homeless in the tunnel's catacomb walls. Mr. Dunn got 197 votes.

Two years later, he proposed that gigantic glass tetrahedrons be built on pylons above the city for the homeless. But this was less popular. He got 149 votes, last place among nine candidates.

Mr. Dunn was also active in the North of Market Planning Coalition, Central City Democrats and Tenant Associations Coalition.

Community and political activist Frederick Hobson took on issues as close to home as the affordability of his apartment building and as large as LGBT rights and AIDS public policy. Mr. Hobson died May 15. He was 56.

His most recent efforts involved working with city agencies and officials to offset Section 8 subsidy cuts, as they affected the

low-income, seniors and disabled people who lived in his building.

Mr. Hobson, who came to San Francisco in 1973, served on many boards and commissions — San Francisco Tomorrow, the Citywide Drug Abuse Advisory Board, the Animal Care and Control Commission, the Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board, the San Francisco Health Authority. He was a 14-year resident of the Tenderloin.

An animal lover and advocate, he left behind cats Drucilla and Wilse, nightingales Florence and Beau, and lorikeet Aloysius.

Jim Berk's most recent appointment was by the Board of Supervisors to the Western SoMa Citizens Task Force last fall. The long-time resident of the Silvercrest Residence at 133 Shipley St. was a SoMa activist although he once served on the executive committee of Alliance for a Better District 6.

With long gray beard and ponytail, the retired electrical engineer looked like father time. He co-founded Safe on Sixth, was its Clean Team coordinator, and he helped develop a plan for SoMa earthquake and disaster relief. He was a member of the Yerba Buena Neighborhood Council and had been on the South of Market Project Area Committee.

As an engineer, he had worked on the UC Berkeley's radio telescope and helped build the Stanford Linear Accelerator. He became president of the Palo Alto area's Service Employees International Union local after going to bat for employees who Stanford terminated a day before they gained permanent employee status, his son Jason Berk said. Mr. Berk was handy away from the job, too. He built a sailboat in the 1960s, the son said.

Mr. Berk knew he didn't have much time to live after his annual doctor's visit in late 2005, his son said. He died of heart disease in January, at age 79. A memorial was held in East Palo Alto for him in March. He is survived by his former wife, Glenda Jones, and two daughters and two sons.

— TOM CARTER
Michael Nulty collaborated in the preparation of this report.

**RICK NELSON
Dreamer**

Rick Nelson, a devout Catholic who said his rosary, loved his cat and was proud of the three-room, Polk Street apartment that he died in on May 20. He was 44, the medical examiner's office reported.

"He was very Catholic," said his friend Cecil Baker. "We watched Sunday service on TV together. We liked the prayer time."

A memorial, attended by four people was held June 22 at the Ambassador Hotel where he lived.

"He was real happy to get an apartment," the Ambassador social worker said at his memorial.

"The manager found him," Baker said. "He was HIV-positive, but died from emphysema. He couldn't quit drugs and he couldn't quit smoking."

Mr. Nelson, who worked in an adult bookstore on Market Street for \$5 an hour, according to Baker, was from St. Louis, and a longtime resident of the hotel, living there for 16 years before finally moving into an apartment six months prior to his death.

"Karma, his cat, died in January, a month or two after they moved into the place," Baker said. "Karma would insist on running out into the hallway with Rick chasing behind him — the cat just out of his reach. It always looked like she was trying to get him to exercise."



Jim Berk

"I remember Rick quite well," said the Rev. Glenda Hope, who conducted his memorial. She recounted a story that a previous minister at the hotel had told her about him. "Rick was coming down the stairs very regally — like a model — clad only in his skivvies and a long feather boa. He said (to the minister): 'I had a dream that your church became a mighty temple.'"

"He was very giving," Baker reflected, "and never let go of his dreams. If people were in trouble, he'd allow them to stay in his room — sometimes longer than he wanted them to."

Asked what Mr. Baker dreamed about, Baker said, "To outlive AIDS."

— JOHN GOINS

**LESTER TATE
Collector**

Lester Tate was known as a generous figure around the Tenderloin, easily recognized by the winged eagle hat he always wore, dark shades, the long necklaces and his jackets — embellished with various charms, amulets, skull and crossbones patches and playing cards. Some said he looked like a voodoo priest.

His memorial service on June 14 at the West Hotel was celebrated by a half dozen of his friends who revealed that Mr. Tate was a collector extraordinaire.

"He collected everything, you name it," said West social worker Tomiquia Moss.

A porcelain rabbit holding a bowl, outdoor chairs, jewelry and stash boxes were just a few of the items that found their way into his collection. And suitcases. "He loved to collect suitcases," said one of his friends at the service. "He was a bit of a loner. Super-generous. A recycler," who mined trash cans and dumpsters in the neighborhood.

Mr. Tate restored and sold or gave away the goods he accumulated in his small room on the fifth floor. He was found there June 1, several days after he succumbed to a liver condition, his friends said. Although they thought he was in his late 50s or early 60s, Mr. Tate was just 44, records show.

Mr. Tate was from the Modesto area and a resident of the once-disreputable West Hotel at 141 Eddy St., a dilapidated, 99-year-old building that the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp. bought in 2003. After a two-year renovation, it was reopened and Mr. Tate moved back in.

"He was a kind person," said one mourner. "If you needed something, he'd give it to you. He wasn't one of the bad guys, that's for sure."

— TOM CARTER AND JOHN GOINS



**Seeking volunteers
for Community Courts**

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seen some offenders "really get it," realizing they've violated the community and need to make up for it.

For the 12 Community Courts in the city, there are 70 volunteer jurists, which is about right, according to the California Community Dispute Service that trains volunteers.

Volunteers handle 12-20 cases a session and receive no stipend, Ellinger said. The TL court meets the fourth Monday of the month at 111 Jones St. at 10 a.m.; SoMa court meets at The Rose at Sixth and Minna, Tuesdays at 10 a.m. The courts handle misdemeanors only.

"What about going to the bathroom on the street?" activist Bruce Windrem asked.

"Those cases go to traffic court," Ellinger said, "We were trying to get them routed through Community Courts, but it hasn't started yet. When it does, for public urination and defecation the Homeless Outreach Team would escort them to (community) court." ■

