

GOOD NEWS for...

ROBERT MCDANIELS The former S.F. State high hurdler-turned-Boeddeker-director was honored by the mayor's office and the Board of Supervisors on April 21 for his work with at-risk youth. He also picked up a Community Builder Award from Hayes Valley's Mo Magic Recognition. McDaniels created the MacCanDo Tenderloin Youth Track team in 1992. But the park was too dangerous to train at so the kids ran around the block. Now McDaniels conducts a monthly track meet. The MacCanDo team, 35 athletes ages 3 to 18, has outgrown its 16-person van that it takes to Northern California track meets and weekly practices at Kezar Stadium. McDaniels wishes somebody would donate a school bus. The team competes May 19 at U.C. Berkeley in the Tommie Smith one-day track event, then goes to Reno a week later for a three-day tourney.

THE HIBERNIA BANK The long abandoned, elegantly domed bank will shine new lights down on the McAllister Street sidewalk beginning this month, according to property manager Edward Leong. People complained that, without lighting, drug dealers and other loiterers were attracted there at night. But the building became a historic landmark in 1981 and certain physical features can't be altered, so the alteration permitting process dragged on for nine months. The Tenderloin Task Force police occupied the basement for nearly 10 years before moving to the new station at Eddy and Jones streets in October 2000. The bank has been empty since, and the surrounding area has attracted incontinent pigeons and street people. The bank's Jones Street steps were used as a public toilet until they were sealed off in May 2001. A gate and floor-to-ceiling screen to keep people and pigeons out of the entrance alcove went up in June 2004 — a consequence of a Department of Public Health violation. And police set up barricades in front of the steps in June 2005 to keep people off. The owner, Thomas Lin, a Buddhist sect leader from Berkeley also known on the sect's Web site as His Holiness Grandmaster Professor Lin Yun, bought the bank in 1995 for an undisclosed sum, though taxes were calculated on a value below \$1 million. In March, Lin put the bank up for sale with Green Bank of Millbrae. Asking price: \$20 million.

LGBT SMOKERS These Californians smoke way more than straights, according to statistics from the LGBT Tobacco Education Partnership, which in April received a three-year, \$550,000 grant from the state Department of Health Services. Gay men smoke 50% more, lesbians smoke at triple the rate of all women and LGBT 18- to 24-year-olds at a rate of 44% compared with 18% for that age group at large. The Partnership was formed three years ago to educate the LGBT community about the perils of tobacco. "The tobacco industry loves our LGBT community to death," says Bob Gordon, Partnership project director, "targeting LGBT people, undermining our community's health." The Partnership has launched a colorful ad campaign of its own: a rainbow flag with a cigarette replacing one of the stripes, posing the question, "When did smoking become part of us?" The Partnership works with Pride event committees across the state, advocating for smoke-free outdoor events.

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

Keep on trackin'

Tenderloin housing boom — 'a speculation game'?

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

THE city's with-it cutting-edges have fingered the Tenderloin as "the new Mission," the next place where hot things happen in a cool setting.

"That's according to one of my younger, hip colleagues," Peter Cohen, Asian Neighborhood Design's community planning director, told the April Tenderloin Futures Collaborative. "What we're seeing is an opportunity for a demographic not usually associated with the Tenderloin." He was referring to the amount of new building going on in the Tenderloin, especially housing.

Cohen presented stats from two years of City Planning pipeline data — the number and type of residential and commercial projects on the drawing board, from Van Ness to Powell, Market to Sutter, in five phases from start to finish: pre-application (preliminary work); entitlement (permits in progress); entitled (permits approved); in construction; and constructed.

The numbers are startling, Cohen said, from 18 projects in December 2004 54 in December 2006, a 200% increase in two years.

Of the 18 projects, 12 had permits in progress, one had all permits approved, three were in pre-application and none was under construction. Nine were affordable housing projects and four market rate.

Two years later, with 54 projects on the books, 32 had permits in place and were ready to build. Market rate housing spiked to 26 projects.

Cohen said he wasn't sure if the statistics signaled a "revival of urban living or just a niche trend — the desire of middle- and upper-middle-class people to live in the city" and especial-

ly, he said, in a dense neighborhood like the Tenderloin.

"Maybe it's because living in the city is more sustainable, but these are just guesses on my part," he said. "I've been watching these trends to see what's changing, but it's hard to interpret. The data come from Planning and there's certainly some margin of error. The numbers are rough."

Completed projects seem to move almost glacially: There was only one in December 2004, three a year later and nine two years later.

"How many of these entitlements do you think go to the shovel?" asked Carmela Gold, YMCA executive director.

Cohen didn't have figures at hand, he said, but at a recent meeting he was at the Mayor's

Office of Housing said of 6,000 housing units permitted only a small percentage were built.

"Is this some kind of a speculation game?" Cohen wondered. "Maybe, because many sponsors seem to go through the entitlements, then sell the property for a lot more money."

Are entitlements forever? someone asked.

"I think they have an eight-year length, but many extensions are allowed," Cohen said.

He plans to keep on trackin'.

Meantime, to see a map of Tenderloin developments, go to TFC's Web site, <http://www.tlfutures.org/links.php>, and click on TL Development Tracking Database-March 2006. An up-to-date map should be posted soon, Cohen said. ■



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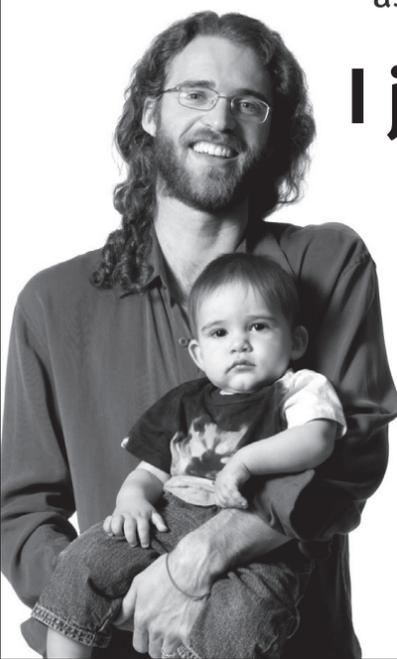
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