

FRANKLIN JONES
A Senator SRO 'veteran'

Twenty people filled the seats in the Senator Hotel's community room on Nov. 26 to remember friend and fellow tenant Franklin Jones.

"Frank helped me and my kids — it will be hard without him," said Jenine Evans, emotionally shaken. She sat in the front row with one of her grandchildren, a little boy in a stroller, who started to fuss.

The Rev. Glenda Hope, officiating the memorial, waved away her attempts to hush the child. "It's okay. Don't stop him. It's the sound of new life."

One after another, people rose to recall a man who was easy to like and died too young. Many were tearful. Mr. Jones died Nov. 17, a few weeks shy of his 53rd birthday.

"It was so nice to have a friend like him around," said one man. "He'd confide in me. And he was smart, a good businessman. He's going home now, I hope to a better place than this."

Evans said Mr. Jones had lived in San Francisco for about 30 years, worked for a long time and then was homeless before finally moving to the Senator five years ago.

When you've been homeless, five years is a long time to live in one place, said another Senator resident. "There were three of us and we called ourselves 'veteran tenants.' This is a real shock, a real loss. I saw him just the night before he died and everything seemed fine."

But he wasn't fine. Evans said that Mr. Jones never really took care of himself. "He died so suddenly. We just take life so much for granted. Frank was a friend to everyone he knew, but no one knew the pain he had inside."

Roger Blalark, a counselor at the Hotel Iroquois, knew Mr. Jones from when he was employed as a Senator janitor.

"He was a man who never seemed to have a bad day," Blalark said. "He'd come downstairs here in his little bathroom with his little cane — happy — and that's how I want to remember him."

Several more people spoke about their friendship with Mr. Jones and his even temperament: "I only saw him mad once in all those years," said a woman.

Evans concluded the sharing of memories by reading a poem she'd written to celebrate Mr. Jones' life. When she sat down, she motioned her daughter, sitting a row back, to let her hold her infant granddaughter.

As the child was passed over, The Rev. Hope began the concluding prayers.

—MARJORIE BEGGS

LAWRENCE MILLER
Bicycle man

Lawrence Miller made bicycles from scavenged parts, then gave them away. A quiet man, he hadn't been a resident of the Ambassador Hotel long enough to gift many of his fellow tenants but he made a real impression anyway.

Mr. Lawrence, tall and lean, moved quietly into a fourth-floor room in February 2006 and pretty much kept to himself.

"He was a good tenant and didn't seem to need us," said hotel social worker Rachel Throm at Mr. Miller's memorial Nov. 9 at the Ambassador. The Rev. Glenda Hope conducted the memorial that was held in the Listening Post room on the second floor. "He was a good guy, sweet," said another social worker.

"If you went by his room he always said hello," said Larry Edmond. "I had a vinyl record album but no record player. He sold me his for \$12. It was worth a lot more than that."

When Mr. Lawrence wasn't out searching for used bicycle parts in the neighborhood, he was in his room assembling one.

He kept his room neat and clean, his friends said. The parts were organized in one place and he worked on just one bicycle at a time.

"He gave me three bicycles," said Richard Zinser. "And he always asked me if I needed any help."

Mr. Lawrence worked until the day he died on Oct. 31, likely of AIDS, his friends said, because of the way he deteriorated. He was found in his room. He was 49.

"He was very sick at the end and worked until he couldn't get up to answer the door," said his neighbor Gerry Kirby. "Other people were affected by his death. There were more arguments, people jumping to anger. I think they were acting out their hurt, their emotions."

Kirby couldn't say for sure that Mr. Miller died of AIDS, only that he had exhibited symptoms of the disease. "His hair had straightened out and his eyes were large (and dull)," he said.

The Listening Post room originated in 1984 during the AIDS epidemic as a place where residents could come and talk with someone from Network Ministries. It was a project of the Rev. Glenda Hope, executive director. At the time, the city hadn't extended any AIDS help to the Tenderloin, although studies showed it was the neighborhood with the highest incidence, Hope said. And the Ambassador, then a crummy, privately owned SRO, had a number of PWAs. Many were African American men. No one showed up for the first four months or so, until the listening program gained credibility, Hope said.

Now, doubling as a library, the Listening Post is open three or four times a week from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Volunteers, including Hope, show up to listen. No one knew whether Mr. Miller had ever dropped in.

But despite his limited time at the Ambassador, Hope said, "he had quite an impact."

—TOM CARTER

UPDATES: Historic district goes Uptown

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out a formal petition, there's no arraignment — that's an uncharged case."

In June, a Superior Court FAQ sheet on the proposed Justice Center called community courts a "mediation program" that was likely to be included in the Justice Center's list of services.

The center, however, is not going to be the one-day deal Newsom envisioned where offenders would be brought to 555 Polk, meet with a public defender, have their case reviewed by a prosecutor from the D.A.'s office, see a judge and get services for substance abuse, mental illness or homelessness.

The current 45-day time lag from violation to adjudication may be reduced to five to 10 days, Henderson estimates, at least when the center is staffed and operating smoothly.

A center coordinator is to be hired early in 2008.

—TOM CARTER AND MARJORIE BEGGS

CHEAP EATS AT THE LUNCH STOP

That low-slung, boxy structure next to the Federal Building that wears the bizarre metal hairnet has evolved as a neighborhood eatery. The Lunch Stop 98 Café opened Oct. 3. Nothing identifies it outside, though. Open from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., it serves breakfast and lunch. The Extra found it clean, cheap and spacious. For \$2.85 you can choose three breakfast items: two eggs, sausage and hash browns (with toast), for example. With a card, every 10th breakfast is free. It's even got a menu of 99-cent items, including a hot dog and a burger.

Chili and revolving soups are made daily. Sandwiches and omelettes are under \$5; daily specials such as Teriyaki Salmon with pilaf and veggies go for \$6.50. A take-out chicken Caesar salad is \$4.85. Despite the decent prices, the world — let alone the

1,500 Fed building employees next door — has hardly beaten a path to the café's door.

"We look like a pump station on the corner," Lunch Stop Vice President Wayne Goulding Jr. says. "Nobody knows we're here." The San Jose-based franchise doesn't have that problem at its other city venue inside Mount Zion Hospital. The café's next move, Goulding said, is signage.

FUTURE HOLDS HISTORIC HANDLE

Back in 2006, Tenderloin Housing Clinic Director Randy Shaw started the process to get the neighborhood named a hotel and apartment district on the National Register of Historic Places, reviving a failed effort by

preservationists in the '80s.

Nov. 20, Shaw announced in BeyondChron that he had just filed the papers with the state Office of Historic Preservation nominating for historic status 16 blocks bounded by Taylor, Turk, Larkin and Geary plus "irregular extensions."

More exciting was the news about its name — Uptown Tenderloin Historic District — a label, he wrote, "that provides the positive identity consistent with [the Tenderloin's] jazzy past and its increasingly hopeful future."

Shaw predicts final word on the nomination in the spring, approval by summer. ■

—MARJORIE BEGGS

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CRN #	Course Title	Days	Times	Location/Room #
40873	ESL (Begin)	M-F	8:15-10 am	750 Eddy St., 301
42428	ESL (Begin)	M-F	10:15 am-12 noon	750 Eddy St., 304
40884	ESL (Begin)	M-Th	6:30-8:35 pm	750 Eddy St., 306
40874	ESL (Begin)	M-F	10:15 am-12 noon	750 Eddy St., 304
40998	ESL (Intermediate)	M-F	8:15-10 am	750 Eddy St., 103
43957	ESL (Intermediate)	M-F	10:15 am-12 noon	750 Eddy St., 303
44770	ESL (Intermediate)	M-Th	6:30-8:35 pm	750 Eddy St., 206
45358	ESL for Hair Salon	MT	12:45-3:15 pm	750 Eddy St., 203
45990	GED	M-Th	6:30-8:35 pm	750 Eddy St., 203
45286	Typing (Begin)	M-F	8:15-10 am	750 Eddy St. 102
40874	ESL (Begin)	M-F	8:15-10 am	4301 Geary St., Basement
40886	ESL (Begin)	M-F	10:15 am-12 noon	4301 Geary St., Basement
40935	ESL (Begin)	M-Th	6:30-8:35 pm	3151 Ortega St., 107
44771	ESL (Intermediate)	M-Th	6:30-8:35 pm	3151 Ortega St., 100