

50 cops called as unruly crowd at strip club turns violent

City official owns the building – club cited for violations

BY TOM CARTER

PINK Diamonds, the troubled Jones Street strip club that has changed its name and spots but not its nature, got shut down in the wee hours Sept. 21 after 50 cops from four police districts quelled a mean crowd outside where fights broke out and guns were fired.

No injuries were reported, said police, who made no arrests but cited the club for violating the Good Neighbor Policy and not having an after-hours permit.

Building owner Terrance Alan, an Entertainment Commission member and its former chair, last year closed the same location after a half dozen shooting incidents outside that police connected to the club, which then was called The Vixen. One victim suffered brain damage.

The early Sunday morning melee at 220 Jones was the worst nightclub scene in Tenderloin Capt. Gary Jimenez's tenure as station commander. "We've sometimes had

to call in help in my two years, but not this many," Jimenez said.

Cops from Northern, Southern and Central stations, plus the TL, were summoned by Capt. David Lazar, the city's roaming night supervising cap-

tain. His patrol responded to a report of gunfire, stepped in and eventually shuttered the club at 2:30 a.m.

The night Pink Diamonds was closed, according to Jimenez, Alan was on the premises and spoke with Capt. Lazar. Alan is also founder and chair of the San Francisco Late Night Coalition, an industry group promoting the city's late night culture.

"He (Alan) agreed that the club didn't have an after-hours permit and needed one — that's a violation," Jimenez said. But later Alan refused to talk about the incident or the club's track record.

"I have no comment," Alan said when The Extra asked for his reaction. "It's not my business. I am the

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PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Pink Diamonds, 220 Jones St., was the scene of a late-night melee.

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PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Residents pour through Boeddeker Park's gate and are offered free T-shirts by Ambassador Hotel social worker Rachel Thom (right), who helped organize the event.

PARTY TIME

1-day voter extravaganza registers 136

BY HEIDI SWILLINGER

POLITICIANS, pay heed: The sure way to potential voters' hearts in the traditionally low-turnout Tenderloin is through their stomachs. A block party at Boeddeker Park Sept. 20 to register voters featured live music, basketball, bingo and an inflatable bounce house for kids.

But it was the free food — including 800 pieces of chicken and 600 hot dogs and burgers — that drew most of the crowd of 1,400 and resulted in 136 newly minted registered voters.

Fourteen hundred meals in exchange for 136 voters may not seem like the most profitable trade, but Steve Woo was over the moon about it. "That's a huge amount for one day," said Woo, an organizer with TNDC, the party's main sponsor.

By comparison, he told of an earlier, much lower-key TNDC effort to promote civic participation that registered 250 over two months for the June election. Emily Lowe, field director at the San Francisco Democratic Party, said a recent five-day registration drive held during lunch hours at the Academy of Art University snagged 200 new registrants. Alec Bash, coordinator of

San Francisco for Obama, said his organization signed up roughly 300 new voters at the two-day Fillmore Jazz Festival in July.

Woo said TNDC planned to spend \$10,000 for the registration party but came in under budget, although the final receipts hadn't yet been tallied.

Tenderloin residents are notoriously absent at the polls. In the 2000 presidential election, for example, only 53% of the Tenderloin's registered voters cast ballots; in 2004, just 65% voted. Generally, only Bayview and Vis Valley are lower. Compare that with Noe Valley, where 74% voted in 2000 and 84% in 2004.

Why is the Tenderloin such a tough political sell? Residents and service providers rattle off the obvious answers: a highly transient and largely alienated population, health and legal problems, stress, apathy, ignorance of voting rights.

With its large number of immigrants, seniors, low-income and homeless residents, substance abusers and ex-convicts, the Tenderloin is in a constant state of churn, which makes staying current on voter registration more of a chore than it is for people who live at the same address for years on end, said Charles MacNulty, voter outreach manager at the Department of Elections.

Besides being a highly mobile population, each of the neighborhood's subsets faces additional challenges when it comes to voting.

Regulations vary throughout the nation, so homeless residents and former convicts may not be aware that in San Francisco they're allowed to vote. (See sidebar.) "Some people don't realize they actually

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