

## Filipino WWII vets let down again on payout

Congress fails to pass bill that would benefit 325 in S.F.

BY TOM CARTER

**A** DOZEN veterans from the war in the Philippines showed up Oct. 8 at the Veterans Equity Center at Sixth and Mission streets asking where to get forms to apply for their long-awaited benefits for fighting the Imperial Japanese forces during WWII. They'd read in the paper that Congress had approved the war benefits.

"I can't remember where they said they read that — I don't read newspapers because I don't trust them," said Luisa Antonio, the center's executive director. "Maybe it was the Philippine Tribune. But there are no forms and the government has never issued guidelines."

So the vets' big win was bogus. "And the issue's dead for this lame duck Congress," Antonio said. "I had to tell (the vets) that the Senate wouldn't go for it."

Associated Press had reported that the House had overwhelmingly approved a bill that would make one-time payments of \$15,000 to Filipinos who are U.S. citizens and \$9,000 to noncitizen Filipino veterans.

**"The Republicans stopped it. They say... Iraq is the priority, not the Philippines."**

Luisa Antonio  
VETERANS EQUITY CENTER

But the story didn't say the Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2008 had passed, only that it needed the upper house vote. And the Senate didn't like the House bill. It wouldn't even allow the convening of a conference committee to fashion a compromise. Thus the latest attempt, in a failed series of benefits bills that started in Congress 15 years ago, died.

Antonio two weeks earlier had met with a group of 50 Filipino vets and their spouses to update them on the legislation's progress. The center has served more than 2,500 vets, spouses, widows and seniors in its nine years. Antonio is their advocate. She testified before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee last year

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PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

**Ceferino Damil** and brother **Felix** are among the dwindling 1940s vets.

## STRIP CLUB MANAGER ON SPOT

Pink Diamonds will straighten up, he vows

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## TL HEALTH CUTS HURT HOMELESS

Put pressure on other programs

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## BLIND ARTISTS EXHIBIT AT CITY HALL

Art Beat finds show visionary

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# CENTRAL CITY

# EXTRA

SAN FRANCISCO

## PRIZE-WINNING HOTEL



PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Art Deco-tinged buildings at 125-29 Hyde St. were film exchanges for the Hollywood studios.

# ECHO OF DECO

## Art movement and Hollywood leave mark on TL

BY ANNE MARIE JORDAN  
URBAN DESIGN REPORTER

**A**N interesting footnote to Hollywood history still exists in the Tenderloin. It comes by way of a few addresses on Hyde Street, between Golden Gate and Eddy, that were known familiarly as film exchange buildings.

Constructed mostly in the 1920s, these buildings, mainly situated in the 100 and 200 blocks of Hyde, were used for 40 years or so as convenient storage and distribution centers for Hollywood's blockbusters of the day — and the not so great movies, too.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 20th Century Fox, Paramount, Columbia, RKO and other studios required safe and convenient temporary facilities for their films once they arrived in key cities and before the distributors got bookings at local theaters. For fast and easy exchange of movies from place to place, it made good sense to put the film exchange buildings within metropolitan hubs.

Though the original role of the old film exchanges is long gone, some buildings still survive in San Francisco. Those on Hyde offer a bit of glamour in the way of their distinctive Art Deco architecture — a style now so closely identified with old Hollywood.

(There were also film exchanges on Golden Gate Avenue — but their architecture is not Art Deco.)

The Hyde Street film exchanges are in no way as impressive as the many significant downtown Art Deco buildings, such as the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Building at 140 New Montgomery St., the Shell Building at 120 Bush and the 450 Sutter medical dental office building. But one Tenderloin hotel — The Hamilton — was honored this year for its Art Deco contributions.

The film exchange buildings on Hyde represent the style in a simplified form. They are not massive, but probably were made of steel and precast concrete. Most are a mere two stories high, with ordinary flat-top roofs.

And because they existed exclusively for the use of the film industry, they were never intended to be grand public places either inside or out. The Paramount Theater in Oakland does that job well enough.

Still, because of this specialized Hollywood connection, it is reasonable that the architects and their movie business clients wanted to have some streetside style incorporated into their looks — at least, on the exterior. For instance, not many other small office buildings in the city have majestic lion heads for decoration. At 259 Hyde St., where the Central City SRO Collaborative is now, there are eight such projecting plaques — think MGM — that wrap around the building's roofline from Hyde to the Eddy Street side.

And its neighbor at 255 Hyde, once the local branch of 20th Century Fox, has on

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