

# Curtain falls on Pink Diamonds

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without a food and drink license, staying open after 2 a.m. without an after-hours permit to do so. Police cited the club for these violations on two occasions in September and closed it once for overcrowding. The first-floor entertainment area capacity is 231.

More troubling was the violence. Also in September, police had to quell a raucous after-hours crowd outside when gun shots were fired — terrifying neighbors.

Threet asked Alan to do something about it.

"Please immediately provide this office with your written plan to address these public nuisance activities," Threet wrote Alan on Oct. 17.

Alan responded by phone, not in writing, Threet told The Extra, and on Oct. 29, Pink Diamonds management, reacting to the rising neighborhood uproar, held a community meeting inside the strip club. It was attended by several city officials, including Entertainment Commission Executive Director Bob Davis, Tenderloin Capt. Gary Jimenez, club manager David Muhammad, retired police Capt. Richard Cairns and about 50 neighborhood residents. Muhammad had a beautiful dancer greeting guests at the door and hors d'oeuvres for everybody.

Alan, Pope and Smith did not attend, nor did Threet.

Cairns, Muhammad announced, was going to plan outside security to handle trigger-happy patrons with drugs and guns in their cars, so the neighborhood could rest in peace.

Jimenez, an old friend of Cairns', told the group he nevertheless feared the specter of "a dead body on the street" before a solution — if any — could be found.

And it almost happened.

A block away, on Saturday, Nov. 22, about 4 a.m., a man was shot twice in the torso and once in the leg at Jones and Golden Gate, Jimenez said in a crime bulletin he emailed to neighborhood activists. Witnesses heard the shots and said a "black male was standing over the victim just prior to jumping into the passenger side of a double-parked white Cadillac Escalade that immediately fled eastbound on Golden Gate toward Market Street."

The victim was a Texas man visiting his brother in Menlo Park, according to police. He had gone to get his car and left his brother in front of Pink Diamonds. The unscathed brother clammed up and wouldn't talk to police about who might have shot his brother or the motive.

The victim was recovering in the intensive care ward at S.F. General and there were no suspects, Jimenez said. He added that the police were responding to the violence with "saturated patrols." The TL is Zone One in Chief Heather Fong's Violence Reduction Plan for the city's hotbeds.

Last year Threet replaced Deputy City Attorney Neli Palma, who for years handled TL code complaints before taking a job in the private business sector. Months before she left, she said she was ready to move against The Vixen, but Alan closed it down before she could.

If a new business opens at 220 Jones, the record

is wiped clean. But for the police, the venue's history lingers like a bad taste. Jimenez indicated that any club opening there will be closely watched.

Some officials and residents are skeptical that any new strip club could do any better. The nearby Market Street Cinema and New Century strip clubs, not to mention the Mitchell Brothers — seven blocks away at Polk and O'Farrell streets — don't rack up police citations like 220 Jones does. They are not in the heart of the notorious Tenderloin, but are peripheral area clubs in busy, better-lighted business districts.

Although he doesn't dispute the difference in numbers of citations, Jimenez told The Extra he thinks location is less a factor than whatever it was Pink Diamonds offered in its "extended hours" that drew "an extremely violent type guest." He hastened to add that the club's hours between "2 a.m. and 6 a.m. proved a tremendous drain on the Tenderloin police station's limited personnel."

The captain and others say a new club under different management will pop up in 2009, but details could not be confirmed. Alan did not return phone and email messages. Adding to the venue's blemishes: Its \$810 property assessment for the TL CBD is in arrears, according to the CBD annual report.

The neighborhood, with the memory of the latest shooting still fresh, waits apprehensively for the third club at 220 Jones to open in a little more than a year.

"There were a lot of promises at the (Oct. 29) meeting," said Assistant District Attorney Brian Buckelew, who attended and was at the November police meeting, too. "I walked away with the feeling something (bad) was going to happen. And as the captain indicated, it has."

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## Deficit in billions delays Post Office upgrade in TL, no date in sight

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

THE economic downturn is reaching deeper into the neighborhood. In June, activists got the grubby 101 Hyde St. P.O. a makeover and reopen it as a full-service post office — with longer hours and staff at two windows selling stamps, weighing parcels, handling rental boxes, serving general delivery patrons and accepting passport applications.

"We had hoped to have held the grand opening party for the Civic Center Post Office by the beginning of the holiday season; however, that is not going to be the case," wrote USPS public affairs rep James Wigdel in an email response to Michael Nulty, representing Post Office Patrons, a group of central city box holders.

The reasons: Volume is down and costs are up, Wigdel wrote.

At the end of the federal fiscal year, Sept. 30, the Postal Service announced that it had lost \$2.8 billion. According to a USA Today story Nov. 17, USPS delivered 9.5 billion fewer pieces of mail than last year, a 4.5% drop, primarily because mailing by banks, retailers and real estate companies was down. It has cut service hours, offered 156,000 employees early retirement and might cut routes.

"We realize this is a disappointment for the community and also for us," Wigdel wrote. "Because of the realities of the Postal Service's financial situation, the [101 Hyde upgrade] process is taking longer than expected. We do not know at this point how long this process will take."

"We apologize for the delay." ■

## Things that can go wrong on Christmas

"ON Tuesday 12/25/07 Officers Dong and Cueba were on patrol when they saw a car going the wrong way down a one way street," Capt. Daniel McDonagh reported in his Jan. 2 Southern Station district newsletter.

"They performed a traffic stop and discovered that the driver did not have a valid driver's license and had the wrong license plates on this vehicle. The Officers are required to tow the vehicle in a case like this.

"While doing an inventory of the items located inside the vehicle for the tow, the Officers noticed a Vizio flat screen television. Officer Ramos was on scene and took an earlier report of a burglary in which a Vizio flat screen television was stolen. The Officers connected the cases; the television was later returned to its rightful owner. The Officers also found computer equipment that belonged to another victim of another burglary.

"As if there was not enough evidence, the suspect was already on probation for, you guessed it; burglary." ■

—TOM CARTER

## Newsom's popularity wasn't enough to push his agenda through

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K, 52% against.

"I think people at first found it confusing because of the way it was written," said Hope. "But as people got more informed, they realized there was a lot more to it."

Hope says efforts to address prostitution in the city will continue. "Many people in the No on K coalition are working to draft legislation that will help the sex workers, rather than the pimps, johns and traffickers," she said. She's not sure what form the legislation will take; the group is studying what other countries have done, but Hope emphasizes that she does not support legalization. "People don't understand street prostitution," she said. "This is not 'Pretty Woman.'"

• Measure L, funding for the Community Justice Center, flopped citywide with 57% voting no and 43% in favor. Funding was already a fait accompli, however. The mayor had submitted L for the ballot before the center on Polk Street had secured its local and federal money.

Every precinct in the Tenderloin voted against L — and in West SoMa, too. But, somewhat less enthusiastically than the city as a whole, the TL voted 43% no and 36% yes. The closest margin occurred in precinct 3621, a redrawn, sawtooth area anchored southerly by Market Street that voted 41% no, 36%

yes. But with 669 people voting, the second highest number of any TL precinct, that was more than double the 306 from the precinct who voted in the 2000 general election.

"The politics of L was interesting," said Corey Cook, a political analyst and assistant professor of politics at University of San Francisco. "Newsom was obviously pretty confident (about its passage). I'd say it was a sharp defeat for the mayor."

Cook notes that despite Newsom's popularity, he hasn't been able to commandeer the votes he needs to push his agenda through. "Newsom has been shown to have very minimal coattails in this city. We saw that with the community justice center, the board seats, and with other ballot measures."

According to Nulty, Measure L "was an unnecessary measure. It didn't need to be on the ballot because the Community Justice Center has already been funded by the supervisors and the (feds). L was just a gimmick to raise money and get a message across."

The center's court is to open in March and address quality-of-life violations in the Tenderloin, which have so often incited public harangues from merchants and residents. And which a year ago were prohibited from being tried by the Justice Center judge.

So with the mayor slashing services left if not right, he will allow \$1.2 million of mostly federal money for a Justice Center that most voters don't

want to remain in the budget.

• Two-thirds of the city's residents are renters, so it came as no surprise that Measure M — another Daly ballot measure, which prohibits landlord harassment — became a centerfield homer, garnering 59% of the vote. The high-density TL, the city's poorest neighborhood, was hot for M, voting 66% yes, 17% no.

Opponents dissed M as the "Full Employment for Greedy Lawyers" measure because, they said, it will whip up more action and cost renters and landlords a bundle in fees. The opposition's other objection was that existing law already prohibits underhanded tactics by landlords.

However, in Sean Elsbernd's Supervisorial District 7 where 32,372 votes were cast, Measure M failed by 350 votes. In Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier's District 2, which includes the Marina, Pacific Heights, Cow Hollow, 42,240 votes were cast and it won by 48.

• Measure T, which provides for free and low-cost substance abuse programs, was another ballot item where the city showed as much heart as the neighborhood populations affected by the programs. Citywide, voters approved M with 61% voting yes and only 39% opposing. The TL was 60% yes, 21% no. ■

John David Nunez helped crunch the numbers for this election analysis.