COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS

League of Women Voters Ballot Measure Forum, Tue., May 12, 6 p.m., Alexander Residence Community Room, 230 Eddy St. Hosted by Alliance for a Better District 6 with community partners S.F. Elections Department, S.F. Mental Health Association, St. Anthony's Foundation, Tenant Associations Coalition and affiliates, Tenderloin Housing Clinic, TNDC. Info: 820-1560.

Boeddeker Park renovation meeting, Wed., May 13, 240 Eddy clubhouse, 7-9 p.m. First of a series of meetings to discuss the park's redesign, funded by a grant from Trust for Public Land in partnership with Rec & Park. Refreshments. Info: Jacob Gilchrest, 495-5660 ext.344, or Jacob.gilchrest@tpl.org.

5th Annual Asian Heritage Street Celebration, Sat. May 16, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Larkin Street near McAllister, in front of the Asian Art Museum up to Little Saigon district. Artists, DJs, martial arts, Asian pop culture performances, j-cars, Muay Thai kickboxing ring, food, karaoke contest, arts and crafts, anime, free community health screenings and prizes. Free. Info: www.asianfairsf.com.

Volunteer Symposium, May 19, Le Colonial restaurant, 20 Cosmo Pl., 6-8:30 p.m. Free. Sponsored by S.F. Young Democrats, highlights 10 citywide organizations that need volunteer help. Learn about public service opportunities. Refreshments. Proceeds from sponsors will be donated to S.F. Food Bank. Info: http://sfyd.org/symposium.

NEW ART EVENTS

12th Annual United States of Asian America Festival, opening reception May 7, SomArts Cultural Center, 934 Brannan St., presented by Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center. Visual arts, storytelling, film, free. Through May 31. Info: apiculturalcenter.org.

Official opening of Tenderloin National Forest, Cohen Alley between Leavenworth and Ellis streets, Sat., May 9, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., a project of the Luggage Store. Music, dance, spoken-word performances and interactive activities throughout the day plus a celebration of the completion of "Cultural Geometry," hand-carved stone mosaic walkway, by Rigo 23. Info: luggagestoregallery.org.

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune by Terrence McNally, directed by Michael Haven with Ben Ortega and Cheryl Smith. EXIT Theatre, 156 Eddy, Thur., Fri., Sat., 8 p.m., and Sun. at 2 p.m. through May 24. Romance of a waitress and a short-order cook in New York City. Tickets $15 ($12 students, seniors): BrownPaperTickets.com.

The In Betweens by Margery Fairchild presented by Dark Porch Theatre. Live music, dance, comedy set in 1885, starring Stuart Bousel and Christopher P. Kelly. EXIT Stage Left, 156 Eddy, Thur., Fri., Sat., 8 p.m., through May 30. Tickets $15-$20: BrownPaperTickets.com or email darkporchtheatre@gmail.com.

Tour of Patrick Dougherty Sculpture, plaza in front of City Hall, first Tuesday of the month through November, 12-1 p.m.. Free docent-led tour of "The Upper Crust," 18,000 pounds of willow saplings woven into the plaza sycamores. Info: www.sfartscommission.org/pubartcollection or 252-4638.

In Our Own Pictures and In Our Own Works, through June 19, Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-8 p.m., ground floor City Hall, artwork from The Sixth Street Photography Workshop and Central City Hospitality House. Presented by S.F. Arts Commission's Art at City Hall Program.

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE

HOUSING

Supportive Housing Network, 3rd Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., location TBA. Contact: Kendra Fuller, 421-2926 x304.

Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of the month, noon, 201 Turk, Community Room. Contact Michael Nulty, 339-8327. Resident unity, leadership training, facilitate communication.

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

CBHS Consumer Council, 3rd Tuesday of the month, 3-5 p.m., CBHS, 1380 Howard, room 537. Call: 255-3695. Advisory group of consumers from self-help organizations and other mental health consumer advocates. Open to the public.

Health & Wellness Action Advocates, 1st Tuesday of the month, 5-7 p.m., Mental Health Association, 870 Market, Suite 928. Call: 421-2926 x306.

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of the month, Quaker Center, 65 Ninth St., noon-1:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home and community-based services, expanded eligibility for home care and improved discharge planning. Light lunch served. Call James Chionsini, 703-0188 x304.

Hoarders and Clutterers Support Group, Mental Health Association, 870 Market, Suite 928. Call for dates and times: 421-2926 x306.

Mental Health Board, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., City Hall, room 278. CBHS advisory committee, open to the public. Call: 255-3474.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill-S.F., 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Family Service Agency, 1010 Gough, 5th Fl. Call: 905-6264. Family member group, open to the public.

SAFETY

Safety for Women in the Tenderloin, every 3rd Wednesday, Central City SRO Collaborative, 259 Hyde St., 4-6 p.m. Informal, friendly environment, refreshments, gender sensitive to LGBTQ community and sex workers. Discuss how to make Tenderloin SROs safer for women. Information: Alexandra Goldman, volunteer campaign coordinator, 775-7110 x102.

Neighborhood Emergency Response Team Training (NERT). Central city residents can take the S.F. Fire Department's free disaster preparedness and response training at any neighborhood location. See Website for schedule and training locations, www.sfgov.org/sffdnert, or call Lt. Arteseros, 970-2022.

SoMa Police Community Relations Forum, 4th Monday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m. Location changes monthly. To receive monthly information by e-mail, contact Meital Amitai, 538-8100 x202 or mamitai@iisf.org.

Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting, last Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., police station Community Room, 301 Eddy. Call Susa Black, 345-7300. Neighborhood safety.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., 230 Eddy. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or sf_district6@yahoo.com, a districtwide improvement association.

Boeddeker Park cleanup, 3rd Saturday of the month, 9-noon, organized by the Friends of Boeddeker Park. To RSVP to work or for information, call Betty Traynor, 931-1126.

Central City Democrats, meets four times a year, 301 Eddy St. Community Room. Addresses District 6 residential and business concerns, voter education forums. Information: 339-VOTE (8683) or centralcitydemocrats@yahoo.com.

Central Market Community Benefit District, board meets 2nd Tuesday of the month, 989 Market St., 3rd Fl., 3 p.m. Information: 882-3088, http://central-market.org.

Friends of Boeddeker Park, 2nd Thursday of the month, 3:30 p.m., Boeddeker Rec Center, 240 Eddy. Plan park events, activities and improvements. Contact Betty Traynor, 931-1126.

Gene Friend Recreation Center Advisory Board, 3rd Thursday of the month, 5 p.m. Board works to protect SoMa resources for children, youth, families and adults. Gene Friend Recreation Center, 270 Sixth St. Information: 538-8100 x202.

North of Market Planning Coalition, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., 301 Eddy. Call: 820-1412. Neighborhood planning.

North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District. Call District Manager Elaine Zamora for times and dates, 292-4812.

SoMa Leadership Council, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., The Arc, 1500 Howard St. at 11th. Emphasizes good planning and good government to maintain a diverse, vibrant, complete neighborhood. Contact: Jim Meko, 624-4309 or jim.meko@comcast.net.

South of Market Project Area Committee, 3rd Monday of the month, 6 p.m., 1035 Folsom, between 6th & 7th sts. Health, Safety and Human Services Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday after the first Monday, 1035 Folsom, noon. Information: 487-2166 or www.sompac.com.

Tenderloin Futures Collaborative, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m., Tenderloin Police Station community room, 301 Eddy. Call 358-3956 for information. Network of residents, nonprofits and businesses taking on neighborhood development issues.

SENIORS AND DISABLED

Mayor's Disability Council, 3rd Friday of the month, 1-3 p.m., City Hall, room 400. Call: 554-6789. Open to the public.

Senior Action Network, general meeting, second Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon, St. Mary's Cathedral. Monthly committee meetings, 965 Mission #700: Pedestrian Safety, third Wednesday, 10 a.m.; Senior Housing Action, third Wednesday, 1:30; Information: 546-1333 and www.senioractionnetwork.org.

Angry activists at meeting rip into liquor store owner

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Top Market and a statement about his proposed business upgrade and how eager he was to work with the neighborhood and the authorities. All he wanted to do was to transfer his off-sale liquor license from Grand Liquors to Tip Top Market, a few doors away.

A majority opposed the transfer. They blamed the harrowing street scenes on booze and were skeptical that Tip Top would be any different. Villa-Lobos said a compromise might be found.

"I see no benefit of having another liquor store there," said the most vocal and insistent voice, David Chin, manager of Hotel Metropolis at Turk and Market. "What assurances do we have that it won't attract bad elements? We have to call the police all the time now."

Some opponents conceded Rantisi was really trying to be a good neighbor, but they worried that nothing would change as long as alcohol was involved.

But resident and disability advocate Ed Evans was happy about Rantisi's move to the Tip Top and pleased with the store's plan for "plenty wide" accessibility.

"It's a quality store," Evans said. "And it's better than having an empty property that attracts people to hang out in doorways."

Leonard Priestly, a former TL resident, said Rantisi is a businessman who has "always tried to make the community safe." Alliance for a Better District Six President Michael Nulty said Rantisi had been a good neighbor and has contributed to the neighborhood.

A majority of the crowd walked to the new site where Rantisi revealed in an interview that he's spending $200,000, using a line of credit.

Even dusty and under construction the space is impressive. Rantisi has installed a huge 17-door cooler at the east wall, two freezers, a place for a meat market, a 36-foot section for fresh produce. Nulty said such a market was specified as a prime community need in the neighborhood's seminal planning document Tenderloin 2000.

The tenor of the next meeting a week later was different, quickly growing hot and angry. More than 40 people had filed into the police Community Room when Rantisi spoke, Hallinan at his side. He said his lease was unexpectedly canceled and reiterated his intention to upgrade his business and eliminate cheap booze sales,

Newspaper vendor Clyde Conrad fired the first volley from the second row. In a loud voice he grilled Rantisi about his check-cashing policy. Rantisi reluctantly admitted to a 3% charge.

"One of your employees charged me 22%!" Conrad shot back.

In an apparent departure from the Community Benefit District's official position, Villa-Lobos stood and interrupted with a torrent of support for Rantisi. At the March TL CBD land use committee meeting, Villa-Lobos had been assigned the task of asking Aspen Apartments management to file an objection to the license transfer with ABC.

Villa-Lobos remained standing and advocating for Rantisi until SRO Collaborative's Buckley asked, "David, do you have a question?" As Villa-Lobos took his seat, Conrad shot back at him, "You can pick up your check outside."

Paul Hogarth, a Tenderloin Housing Clinic lawyer, took on Rantisi like an angry prosecutor. He demanded to know if Rantisi had disclosed on his applications to the Department of Building Inspection for building permits at 90 Turk St. that his market business would include liquor sales.

"What does DBI have to do with alcohol?" Hallinan interjected.

Rantisi calmly added that he felt he had complied with all the codes and had consulted often with Capt. Jimenez.

"We were aware of all these things," said the captain. He indicated that Rantisi has done nothing illegal. "But the issue rests with the Planning Commission. Then it'll go to the supervisors."

No hearing dates for Planning or the ABC have been set. Rantisi's is not a simple transfer because the Tenderloin became a Special Use District years after he got his license in 1992. He must get conditional use approval from Planning to move within the SUD.

To end the discussion, Jimenez said he had invited Tenderloin Liquors owner Ahmed M. Said, who does a brisk business in single-beer and malt-liquor sales, to say something at the meeting. Said stood, scotching a rumor that he was losing his lease at year's end, and announced he has 10 more years to go at 62 Turk St. ■