

GOOD NEWS for...

TL TEENS The proof is in the numbers: Last year, four Tenderloin Clubhouse members were college-bound after taking advantage of programs at the neighborhood's Boys & Girls Club of San Francisco site. This year, the number jumped — spectacularly — to 17. Six will be going to City College, four to S.F. State, two to Skyline College, and one each to Holy Names University, UC Riverside, San Jose State, UCLA and San Diego State. The club, said Brittany Johnson, Boys & Girls Club marketing and PR manager, makes the youth “future ready, helping them develop the values, skills, attitudes, character and behavior that enable them to succeed.” Among the club's offerings are programs that help them apply to college and look for a job, public speaking and leadership skills. Membership, \$10 a year, is open to 6 to 18 years old. Call 445-5481 or visit www.kidsclub.org.

TRACK TEAM Ten members of the MacCanDo Tenderloin Youth Track Club made team history by qualifying for the 2009 AAU National Junior Olympics Aug. 1-8 in Des Moines, Iowa. Last year, none qualified. Coach Rob McDaniels, a TL Rec and Park director who founded the team with his wife, Yuko, almost four years ago, immediately began fundraising for the \$5,000 to finance the team's trip to the Midwest. An early response came from TL Capt. Gary



Simon Xie, Rob McDaniels and Capt. Gary Jimenez with \$1,000 check.

Jimenez. His station's officers, with the Police Officers Association, gave the team \$1,000 July 29 during a fundraising lunch at Boeddeker clubhouse. The athletes and their specialties: Christian Eik, 13, shotput, discus, javelin; Dominic Eik, 12, 100-meter; Elena Wang, 12, long jump; Barbara Nguyen, 13, long jump; Joseph H. Morrison Jr., 12, 200-meter hurdles; David Nguyen, Aaron Lam, Arnel Molina and Simon Xie — all are 15 and run the 4x100 relay. Xie is team captain and also runs the 800-meter, as does Michael Baun, 11. In near 100-degree weather, six members qualified in a Tulare track meet in June and four more in Reno over the July 4 weekend. But nobody sweats quite like the coach when a lot is at stake. “The hardest thing is to keep them focused and disciplined when we're competing,” McDaniels said. “I was stressed, but I'm really proud of them. And we salute them and their families for all the hard work and dedication to come this far.” ■

TL school: How far it's come

394 students, 12 languages, free dentistry

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

It's always good to get a refresher on the children who live in the Tenderloin, what they need and who's helping them get it. Midge Wilson, co-founder of Bay Area Women and Children Center, took a few minutes at the July Collaborative meeting to update members about the 28-year-old BAWCC, how it started and what it's doing today.

Its earliest and still biggest accomplishment was the 10-year campaign to build the Tenderloin Community School on Turk Street, just below Van Ness, a public elementary school for the only neighborhood in the city that didn't have one of its own.

Today, the school, which opened in 1998, has 370 K-5 kids, plus 24 preschoolers. School staff speak six languages, and many live in the neighborhood. BAWCC operates nine programs on site, many of them requested by parents who helped plan the school: Rosa's kitchen, used for kids' cooking classes and community events; two gardens to teach about how food grows; a family room for parenting classes; adult education, computer and counseling centers; more than two dozen after-school clubs and sports programs.

“Parents at the school also said one of the things they needed was a dental clinic,” Wilson said. “So in the basement we established a UCSF pediatric dentistry partnership — every kid who needs it has access to dental help during school hours.”

Tenderloin Community School may be one of the only schools in the city where every child gets his or her teeth cleaned twice a year without fail — and for free if the family has no insurance. The clinic, which does all dental work, not just cleaning, is open one day a week.

Wilson said that BAWCC also serves more than 600 families a month directly out of its 318 Leavenworth site: a weekly play group for preschoolers and their parents, children's and women's clothes, a food pantry, and a drop-in center for help with medical, educational, food, housing, employment, child care, legal and other needs. BAWCC publishes a resource directory, sponsors the monthly Tenderloin Network of Children, Youth & Family Services meeting, and has helped launch five community playgrounds.

“Our annual budget is \$500,000 to \$600,000 a year, and we have no government funding,” Wilson said proudly. Support comes primarily from private foundations and corporations, United Way and individual donations.

TL resident David Baker asked Wilson about the demographics of the children in the neighborhood.

“There are 3,500 kids here. Since 1984, we've done a Tenderloin kid count four times — we go building to building, door to door — and that number's been consistent,” she said. “There are more Latino and Filipino families now, but really, we don't have a lot of families moving out. Ethnically, more than half the children are still Asians, Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders.”

Asked what was on her wish list for the future, Wilson didn't skip a beat: She'd like to have a stronger



PHOTO BY NANCY ONG/BAWCC

Kids on one of BAWCC's after-school sports teams play rugby.

math program for the school and be able to put more effort into literacy.

“There have been classrooms of 20 kids where 12 different languages were spoken.”

HASTINGS' GARAGE OPENS

Hastings opened its new garage at Golden Gate and Larkin in June. Now there's the little issue of filling it, CFO David Seward announced.

“There are 393 stalls, and the garage has been about 40% filled since it opened,” he said. Most of the parking spaces are intended for students and faculty, with the public parking in whatever spaces are left.

It's hard to judge the financial success of a parking garage that opens in the summer on a college campus — even one located in the busy central city. But Seward seems confident that once Hastings' fall session begins Aug. 24 and the economy upticks a bit, the stalls will fill, and “if you build it, they will come” will be apt.

More of a concern is the 9,800 square feet of ground-floor retail space along Golden Gate Avenue.

“We have no tenants yet, though several are looking at the space,” Seward said. “There's enough room for five or so different tenants, and we'd like some to be open at night.”

One idea that is almost a done deal is for the YMCA to use some of the space for its senior and youth programs while it's waiting for construction to start on its new facility, which will occupy the lot right next door to the garage.

“The economy is so bad,” Seward said, “it could be two or three years before the Y can build.” Having classes there would ensure that the corner is lively and would give the Y a connection to its future site.

Lauren Weston, the Y's development director, said the proposal would be to rent about 5,000 square feet of space — some on the ground floor and some in the 2,500-square-foot storage area in the back of the building. A letter of intent from the Y to Hastings has been signed.

Activities would include almost all those currently offered at the Y. For kids, there'd be after-school

computer center, homework study, tutoring and creative arts.

“It depends on the buildout, but we like to have the kids' culinary activities, too,” Weston said. “We're also hoping to be able to bring in a piano so we can continue our once-a-week-or-so live music program for seniors.”

Other seniors activities would be low-impact exercise classes, like tai chi and sit-and-be-fit, as well as computer instruction and Internet access.

Buildout will take 90-120 days, Weston says, so the classes would be ready to roll by the first of the year. ■



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