

GOOD NEWS for...

B-I-N-G-O After a three-year hiatus, Senior Bingo is back every Tuesday and Thursday, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Boeddeker Clubhouse, 240 Eddy St. Besides good fun and socializing, there are prizes and refreshments. "Everyone over 55 is welcome," says Recreation Director Melvina Hill. "We usually



PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Sharon Ray fills out her winning bingo card.

do four or five games — regular, T-shape and four corners." The clubhouse is looking for prize donations. Favorites, Hill says, are scented lotions, calendars, teas, toothpaste, costume jewelry, chocolates, men's and women's handkerchiefs and plants. Donation drop-offs are fine, Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. For more information, contact Hill, 424-7577 or octo04@sbcglobal.net.

THE CENTRAL YMCA has ended its search for a temporary home and will open its doors at 387 Golden Gate Ave. in January, resuming activities for youth, seniors and adults that ended in 2008 after it sold its building a block away to TNDC. The YMCA signed a five-year lease with UC Hastings Law School to occupy 5,500 square feet on the ground floor in the school's new five-story parking garage at Larkin and Golden Gate. Hastings students and faculty will have access to the Y, as part of the deal, and the Y will develop the vacant lot it owns next door at 333 Golden Gate Ave. as a multiuse, outdoor sports court. In time, the Y will build a 50,000-square-foot facility there with full fitness activities, including gym and swimming pool. "While we sustain this presence, we're keeping an eye to the future and need con-



PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Jesus Uriostegui anchors the YMCA sign to the Hastings garage.

tinued support to make the new facility a reality," Y President and CEO Chuck Collins said in a news release. The Y had occupied its former 220 Golden Gate building since it was completed in 1910. It had 103 hotel rooms, an auditorium, gymnasium and pool. TNDC plans to convert it into a medical clinic and housing for the formerly homeless.

If you have some good news, send it to tom@studycenter.org or marjorie@studycenter.org

Federal Building Post Office customers fear it will close

BY TOM CARTER

IF customer loyalty alone could save a post office, then the patrons of the Federal Building post office at 450 Golden Gate Ave. needn't worry about the branch's closure by the cost-cutting U.S. Postal Service. But they are sweating.

The changing dynamics affecting postal service in the Tenderloin over the last 18 months continue, and no one's sure of what will shake out or how permanent solutions will be.

Postal authorities, as they scramble to stem billion-dollar losses nationwide, held a town hall meeting Nov. 16 to get customer feedback on the Federal Building's full service branch. It could be shuttered because of its declining revenues.

About 50 patrons attended the meeting in the Federal Building and several spoke fervently to keep the branch operating, especially law offices, lawyers and others in the building that count on the fact it's in the basement for last-minute mailings. One attorney suggested that his office's six lawyers have been so dependent on the office for so long as part of their rental agreement that closing it might be a breach of their lease with the General Services Administration.

More than half of the audience filled out a three-page Postal Service questionnaire asking how they used the branch and requesting comments.

The response was "overwhelming," said spokesman James T. Wigdel. "The the general consensus is they use it and they want it to stay open and remain as is. But I didn't look at every one."

Branch consolidation is one of many economies the Postal Service is mulling. In June, the Federal Building, McLaren and Bernal Heights offices were on the agency's list of 413 branches nationwide under consideration.

But four months later — and just days after the November meeting — McLaren and Bernal Heights were spared. The new list of 241 branches dropped them but kept the Federal Building under scrutiny.

San Francisco Postmistress Noemi Luna said in a news release that after considering the community feedback on the two branches, their finances and lease agreements, it made sense to keep them open. The feedback came through letters, but Wigdel wouldn't say how many. No town hall meetings were held for those communities.

At the Federal Building meeting, Wigdel directed that the discussion and questions focus only on the Federal Building branch. First he read a news release reporting that the Postal Service lost \$3.8 billion in its 2009 fiscal year ending in October and predicted — as mail volume continues to decline — a \$7.8 billion loss for 2010.

The Federal Building branch receipts were down 28.5% over the last two years, Wigdel said. The building lost some of its employees to the new Federal Building at Mission and Seventh streets in that period. Later, Wigdel would not give any dollar figures or say the last year the branch was profitable, nor would he discuss losses at the other two branches on the list.

"I can't discuss financials," he said.

The Tenderloin depends on the Federal Building branch more than ever since the Civic Center Branch at 101 Hyde St. branch, which has never had retail services, took out its stamp machine and reduced lobby hours two years ago. Neighborhood activists rejoiced last year when the Postal Service said it was responding to community pressure for changes and vowed to renovate 101 Hyde and start full retail services. No timetable was given.

Earlier this year, the upgrade was called off, the post service citing its dire financial condition. The Civic Center branch has rental boxes and a general delivery window open daily except Sunday 10 a.m.

CORRECTIONS

IN the October issue, The Extra misstated the boundaries of the Tenderloin's alcohol Special Use District, which includes 90 Turk St., where Tip Top Grocery is located.

IN the November issue, "Marketing Mid-Market," we erroneously reported that David Addington owns the Market Street building housing Showdogs Restaurant. He does not own that building; he is co-owner of the restaurant. ■

Federal judge trims city's grounds on SRO mailbox suit

THE city's federal lawsuit challenging the U.S. Postal Service suspension of individual mail delivery to SRO residents survived its first challenge Nov. 5 when U.S. District Judge Jeffrey White denied a USPS motion to dismiss.

Judge White did dismiss the city's request for a ruling that would declare its 2006 Residential Hotel Mail Receptacle Ordinance does not interfere with federally regulated postal operations. He also shot down the city's claims against individual defendants — U.S. Postmaster John Potter, a Postal Service vice president, Michael Daley, and S.F. Postmistress Noemi Luna.

White ruled that the city's challenge can go forward on federal right of privacy and constitutional freedom of speech and assembly grounds.

Next up — a court-ordered mediation between the parties, which could conclude by the end of January. ■

—JONATHAN NEWMAN

to 2 p.m.

Adding to neighborhood angst has been the planned demise of the full service Fox Plaza P.O. at 1390 Market. Its building was slated to be supplanted by condominiums, but the down economy has scotched the plans.

At the Federal Building meeting, Wigdel said the day's community input would be weighed along with financial factors; the postmistress would then make a recommendation and higherups would make the decision, possibly in December.

But he assured everyone nothing would change before the holidays — 101 Hyde has a 120-day lease.

The lawyer from the office with five other lawyers seemed certain of his next move if the Federal Building branch closes. His attorneys don't have time go anywhere else, he said.

"We are locked into the postal system here," he said. "I feel we'll approach GSA to back out of our lease. I'm sure we're not the only agency affected this way." ■



NEWS IS A COMMUNITY SERVICE

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA is published monthly by San Francisco Study Center Inc., a private nonprofit serving the community since 1972. The Extra was initiated through grants from the S.F. Hotel Tax Fund and the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. It is now assisted by the Kosbland Program of the San Francisco Foundation, which funds the Southside coverage. The contents are copyrighted by the San Francisco Study Center, 1095 Market Street, Suite 601, San Francisco, CA 94103.

PHONE: (415) 626-1650

FAX: (415) 626-7276

E-MAIL: centralcityextra@studycenter.org

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER: Geoffrey Link

ADVERTISING: Heidi Swillinger

SENIOR WRITER/EDITOR: Marjorie Beggs

REPORTERS: Tom Carter, Ed Bowers, Anne Marie

Jordan, Jonathan Newman

DESIGN AND LAYOUT: Lenny Limjoco

PHOTOGRAPHER: Lenny Limjoco

CONTRIBUTORS: John Burks, Diamond Dave,

Mark Hedin, Phil Tracy

DESIGN CONSULTANT: Don McCartney

DISTRIBUTION: Office of Self Help

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE: David Baker,

Michael Nulty, Debbie Larkin, Nicholas

Rosenberg, Brad Paul, Tariq Alazraie

Central City Extra is a member of the SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION