$8.5 million Boeddeker makeover under way
Park will close 16 months during the transformation

by Tim Carter

STATE AND LOCAL officials joined Tenderloin leaders at Boeddeker Park to ceremoniously break ground and lead the park’s future, but it took a 13-year-old to tell what the often-criticized park has meant to a kid growing up in the tough, dense neighborhood.

The acre patch with the broad brick walkway running through it, small playground, single hoop basketball court and badly designed clubhouse had been Nedu Anibogu’s personal refuge.

“Nine years ago when I was in kindergarten,” he went on, “it was hard to make friends at first, but I did. I always had a good feeling about the park. It was a shining light. It was 30 new kids in school and we need more of their bodies around here, instead of sneaking into movies.”

The park’s importance to the city’s poorest neighborhood is waned for open space was never clearer. But its light that shined for Anibogu is expected to grow far brighter after the renovation, to be finished in spring 2014. The final tab will be $8.5 million. That includes the $5.3 million construction contract approved by the Board of Supervisors in October and “soft costs” over five years of rising prices, hiring designers, planning and even fundraising, according to rising prices, hiring designers, planning and even fundraising, according to the nonprofit trust for Public Land, which is the town’s state director and the event’s ambassador resident who had a huge heart.

“Nothing is more reflective of our mission than Boeddeker Park,” said Sam Hodder, TPL’s state director and the event’s MC. “The community was remarkably en-

POET’S TENDERLOIN TOUR

by Ed Bowers

THE MAIN BRANCH of the San Francisco Library is at 100 Larkin St. You can’t sleep there; but if you can keep your eyes open, you can read books and rest your feet. There are restrooms and a coffee shop downstairs that sells good food.

At the Main Library, a federal repository of books, one of the main attractions is the bank of computers people use for free. Ed Bowers tells why else the library is such a special place.

At the Main Library, a federal repository of books, one of the main attractions is the bank of computers people use for free. Ed Bowers tells why else the library is such a special place.

Main Library, a special place

Words come from silence. The House of Words has silence built into its foundation. Visiting the library is like entering a giant head containing all the words in the world put into different combinations and at the center of this Universal Wisdom is the silence after an eternal question mark.

In the library you will get answers to questions that be-

There is no escape from yourself in the library. To enter here is to admit your ignorance; so be silent and learn. It’s what we don’t know that brings us together.

In the library you will get answers to questions that be-

There is no escape from the ignorance of words, except with aRenahonat [Mer itor of] [None List] and at the center of this Universal Wisdom is the silence after an eternal question mark.

In the library you will get answers to questions that be-

There is no escape from the ignorance of words, except with a
J.L. MARRIBLE  
BIG MAN, HUGE HEART

More than 70 mourners filled the mezzanine community room of the Ambassador Hotel to say farewell to one of its most popular residents, the irrepressible exroot. J.L. Marrible. All the seats were taken and a dozen people stood, some leaning against the wall, a few sniffing as they reached for a handkerchief. The “big man with the big heart” who could light up a room with his smile. To anybody who ever met him, there was clear: Mr. Marrible could light up any door. His smile. His heart. He was the last ambassador. Nine years. Now, “it’s hard to imagine” the Ambassador without him, someone said. Many nodded.

Mr. Marrible, originally from Arkansas, was an avid participant at the Listening Post, a small room just down the hall open weekday afternoons for residents to hang out and talk about their troubles and all with whomever’s there and someone from Network Ministries, often Rev. Glenda Carter. She said Mr. Marrible wanted to make a point for him to say, “all eyes on me.” His friends recalled laughter and exuberance. His name, J.L., said a friend, his mother gave him. It didn’t stand for anything, they said. “I’m just going to call him J.L.”

“Mr. Marrible, the Tenderloin 40 years and I’ve done hundreds of moraines,” Hope told the group. “I can’t remember but three or four where this many showed up. It says a lot.”

“J.L. had opinions, you know,” and again, the listeners nodded. Someone, said laugh out loud. She continued: “He could be a royal pain sometimes. Or he could be that’s okay. None of us is without sin. He was very easy there. And I think that’s why people loved him.”

A dozen speakers mentioned how crazy Mr. Marrible was about his daughter, his only child, and that he also loved his son-in-law. Both were in the front row next to his girlfriend of five years, Kelly Noon. The Daugh- ter, Janise Washington, with her hus- band Andrew Washington at her side, was dressed in white and dabbed her eyes throughout. They live in the Sun- set and Mr. Marrible had visited them on Thanksgiving.

“He was feeling a little dizzy; re- covering from the flu, but he ate ev- erything on his plate,” Janise Washing- ton recalled afterward. She said he called him Nov. 28 and he was okay. But Mr. Marrible died of unknown causes two days later. Nov. 30, in his sixth-floor room. He was 59.

He was “exuberant,” one man said, “robust about life.”

“He changed my life,” said another. A former Ambassador assistant manager said he had known thou- sands of residents over the years and Mr. Marrible was one of his favorites who, just being helpful and cheerful, “made my job a lot easier.”

Two mourners read notes from others not in attendance and one read a poem.

“He was the only one to help me when I first came here,” said a woman.

“I was so important. And I thought if he could get over things, well, I could, too.”

Mr. Marrible sometimes went to Cecil Baker’s room to pet Baker’s cats, Charlie and Johny, who once made the cover of Paws magazine. “And when I had trouble moving,” Baker said. “He would help me.”

“When I lost my mother I felt so bad I didn’t want to go on,” said Horace. “But he talked to me and I felt better. Then once he did me a favor. When I got a plasma television, he gave me his old one. It was so nice of him.”

One man seemed to sum up Mr. Marrible’s unusual gift: “He uplifted people,” he said.

— Tom Carter

SHERRYE BAILEY  
A LOVING GRANDMOTHER

Sherrye Bailey was a quiet woman at the Ritz Hotel except around a few friends, and then she always talked about her family that got so much of her love and attention.

Mrs. Bailey would take BART or a bus from San Francisco to Daly City to see her daughter, Fantasy Silva, and her three grandchildren. Destinee, 15, Zane, 12, and Damien, 11.

“My mom spent a lot of time with me,” said Silva. “She always came to see her grandchildren and sometimes stayed for weeks at a time. Once she stayed a year, and she paid her rent at the hotel.”

Mrs. Bailey read the Bible and other books to the children and played with them. During the years passage was the only child she bought ice cream, also taking her to shows, concerts and parks. Recently, she was teaching the 5-year-old new words.

“She had quite a vocabulary,” her daughter said. “And they wrote things together.”

She lived in love with her grand- children and trying to give them what she thought was necessary to live their lives. She had a strong foun-
Virginia Reyes loved family, giants

Virginia Reyes would have had her Giants baseball cap on, whooping it up in front of her television set, her son said, if she had only lived through the team’s postseason comeback that culminated in a World Series sweep.

She had been an avid fan even before her late husband played baseball for a U.S. team in the Philippines, before they moved to America in 1983, her son, George Reyes, 67, said at her memorial in October at the 990 Polk St. senior apartments. A four-year resident, Mrs. Reyes had been in and out of UCSF Medical Center in recent months with complications from diabetes and hypertension and died there Aug. 9. She was 87, among the oldest in the 110-apartment complex where her son and daughter-in-law lived.

She always followed the Giants games,” he said. “Mom was a sports fanatic.”

Mrs. Reyes had a daughter and four sons, two preceding her in death. She was seen as the caring matriarch of an extended family. In her final months, more than a dozen relatives visited to see her health and keep her company.

A social worker announced that illness had kept Rev. Glenda Hope from officiating at the memorial and invited the 10 attendees to share their feelings about Ms. Reyes. They described her as very religious, smiling, loving and helpful to others because she herself needed care.

“You could see how much her family loved her,” said one man, “and it all came back to her.”

Her generosity of spirit radiated in daily living at the apartment building, and affected people she saw at social gatherings and meetings, they said. She strengthened the building’s community, said Marco Tuculanza, property manager. “It comforts me that she brought love here; and she will always be loved.”

The family laid out a tableful of food for the mourners — fruit, cold cuts, chow mein and lumpia. Management provided cookies and coffee.

— Tom Carter

Vis Valley edges TL for lowest voter turnout

BY JONATHAN NEWMAN

VOTERS in the Tenderloin’s 16 precincts turned out in significantly smaller numbers last month than the citywide tally, as they typically do.

The Department of Elections reports that 364,875 of the city’s 502,841 registered voters cast ballots in the Nov. 6 election — a turnout rate of 72.56%. In the Tenderloin, the turnout hovered at about 58%.

Only Visitacion Valley voted at a lower rate than the Tenderloin, but barely — the turnout there: 56.82%.

Voter by mail, which includes early voting at City Hall as well as military and overseas voting, outpaced precinct voting by more than four percentage points.

President Obama was the choice on 83.4% of the ballots cast citywide; in the Tenderloin he topped 84%.

Sen. Diane Feinstein beat a citywide high of 88.8% in winning re-election to the U.S. Senate, but dropped to 81.8% with TL voters.

Prop 30, the state tax increase, succeeded with 76.93% citywide and 85% in the Tenderloin.

Prop 32, which would have harmed unions by eliminating payroll deductions to support political action committees, was rejected by 72.95% of voters in the city. The TL voters rejected it — 4,795 of the 7,835 ballots voted no — by a 61.2% margin.

Prop 34, which sought to abolish the death penalty, was defeated statewide, but San Francisco voters approved it by 70.11%. TL voters approved Prop 34 at 64.07%.

San Francisco voters endorsed the successful Prop 36, the proposed changes to the three strikes law, by 84.53%. Tenderloin, voters agreed by a margin of 74.81% — 5,860 out of 7,835 ballots.

Measure A, the proposal to increase funds for City College through parcel taxes, passed with citywide approval at 72.9%. 75.9% of TL voters approved it.

Measure C, Mayor Lee’s affordable-housing fund, passed citywide by 65.15%. TL voters approved the measure at 73.10%.

Prop 7610 — bound by Van Ness, Market, Larkin and Hyde Streets — had the highest turnout of all Tenderloin precincts: 73.75% of registered voters cast ballots.

The lowest turnout was in Precinct 7615 where only 247 of 576 registered voted — 45.75%. The Lower Eddy precinct is bound by Leavenworth, Golden Gate, Jones and Eddy.

The Knox and Bayanihan House SRs provided by the Tenants and Owners Development Corporation (TODCO), has an open meal list for low-income affordable housing.

If you are looking for a safe and comfortable place to call HOME surrounded by compassionate residents and a caring staff, The Knox and Bayanihan House are designed with you in mind.

All of our rooms have a two-burner stove, refrigerator, single or full size bed with a closet, along with outstanding amenities in each building. The income limits for these affordable properties are as follows:

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<td>Knox</td>
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<td>1 person</td>
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For more information or to pick up an application for The Knox and Bayanihan House, please stop by the lobby of the TODCO Marketing Office located at 246 - 6th Street in San Francisco.

If you have a disability that prevents you from fully participating in this process please call (415) 427-4027.
21 Club
With a twist of grime

When your spaceship lands in the Tenderloin, you might need to be around a diversity of people inside a simple room where you can relax and get to know each other slowly over a stretch of shipwrecked years.

The 21 Club, corner of Taylor and Turk, might work for you. It did for me many years. But don’t drink too much.

Pace yourself like a well-trained dog, so sometimes he’s bored. He’s standing behind the bar. Talk to him. He knows everything.

Frank, the owner, speaks softly, speaks slowly, with a twist of grime.

He’s seen Frank, the owner, speak softly, speak slowly, with a twist of grime.

Ed Bowers reads at the 21 Club, a dive bar that is "small as a sneeze and big as a heart."
climb out of their bodies by dreaming. The golden sun geneflicts at the wooden doors before entering. Inside, cells sleep in pews and on the floor. The holy ghosts crash here.

Socks are handed out from the closet in back sometimes, a wonderful miracle. But the socks run out fast, as miracles are wont to do. Hygiene kits and razors and garbage bags are next in the hierarchy of blessings given freely in this tower built from the lowest of the low and the highest of the high, principalities of light and darkness, politics and spirit, money and remembrance, war and peace, sainthood and hypocrisy.

This room, schizmorphic as everything else, is basically good, at least for those who know what it is like to have nothing and then lose it. Anything is better than nothing when all you have is nothing, just you.

A silent understanding is shared among those sleeping in the pews that the word ‘autonomous’ does not exist. You will always need something or someone other than self; call it money or drugs or love, or call it a god, you will always need one way or the other. That is simply a fact.

In that respect the sleepers here are awake.

Of course even here tempers flare. There’s war everywhere, inside and outside, just try staying up all night to sleep in a church and you will see how irritated you too can be.

I am impressed, though, with the natural saintliness of crack addicts, alcoholics, junkies, the mentally ill, the disenfranchised. If I was them... well, in a sense I am; but I’m a poet not a saint.

Most of the sleepers are bastard-angels of gratitude, so when they say bless you or thank you for giving them toothpaste they mean it. There is no politesse here.

The staff, good shepherds who work here, maintain the order of the day with dignity and firm kindness, their lack of glamour making them a neglected mystery.

Their kindness and wisdom, firm and unobtrusive as a diamond concealed from light is seen and appreciated by the broken hearts coughing in these hushed holy shadows.

This church built in 1900 has one hundred and fourteen years of whispered prayers and tears and curses etched on its stained glass, while many forms of hell party outside its gates.

If this church could talk it would write not Bible stories but sad poems written by vulnerable people who die. A series of simple one-liners walking in and out inside an infinite performance space.

The highest of the high and the lowest of the low come here to collaborate on the impossible task of being human.

Doing the impossible is a job you as a poet must get used to doing. So feel at home here.

This is a chamber filled with unanswered prayers; but if you volunteer here you can hand out free hygiene kits, toothbrushes, razors, socks and blankets (if they have them) and that’s better than nothing. Good job for a poet whose poetry is free for anyone who will listen. Brother, can you spare an ear?

Yes, this is the last call before closing time in Heaven and the concrete reality of time and space sucks into its maw thousands of tiny homeless others who call themselves ‘you.’

6:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. visit 135 Golden Gate Ave. and see your self there.

If you are homeless or a poet or a homeless poet you can sleep in the pews or on the floor of a Tenderloin church.

Or you may volunteer your time to work in service to all the ripped discarded poems attempting to be read in this dangerously literate world of sad, lonely, broken words and little lives written in the shadows of Cathedrals and Parliaments.

It’s good that here the teachings of Jesus are being taken literally in the right way for a change.

Try it out.
gaged.' He singled out Betty Traynor's steadfast leadership of Friends of Boeddeker Park as a key element qualifying the park for TPL attention. Its Parks for People program upgrades underscored or devoting parks in dense urban neighborhoods that have children and active volunteer organizations.

Nearly 50,000 people live within walking distance of Boeddeker,' said Jane Kim, District 6 supervisor. 'The park needs to be a thriving and inevitable part of the Tenderloin neighborhood.'

The 26-year-old Boeddeker, the only adult park in a 50-block area, has got

ten a bad reputation over the years for dope dealing and gambling in its dark corners. Named after the late Father Alfred Boeddeker, who founded St. Anthony's Dining Room, the park has needed constant attention from the police sta-
tion catty-corner across the street.

Critics blamed many of its problems on Boeddeker's design, including brick-echoed, separate sections, a club-
house without sightlines for monitor-
ing outdoor activity, and thick, iron fencing that made it look like a fortress.

'Boeddeker Park is currently one of the most poorly designed parks in the city in a neighborhood craving vibrant, healthy open space and recreation,' said Phil Ginsburg, Rec and Park gen-
eral manager. 'The new park will have state-of-the-art play areas for kids and lots of amenities for adults, too. It will be a treasure for all.'

He thanked the trust for doing what the city could not.

Six years ago, TPL began looking for parks in need in San Francisco. Then Trust Project Manager Jake Gilchrist, now with Rec and Park, found Friends of Boeddeker Park, and came away im-
pressed, especially with Traynor's lead-

ership and success with park projects and getting grants.

Boeddeker was ripe for a makeover and so was Hayes Valley Playground and Balboa Park for a campaign that TPL could lead, with Rec and Park and the city's approval. Early heavy-hitting donors to join in were Banana Repub-
lic, Levi Strauss Foundation, McKesson Corp., PG&E and Wells Fargo. Each put up $1 million. Other corporate and foundation funds eventually followed, plus state bond money and a state park grant.

The three-park project cost totaled $16.5 million. The $3.4 million Hayes

park is 16 months from turning its life around

6 trees Boeddeker has now both in-
side the park and on the sidewalks. A few of the tall, stately poplars that still compiles in Bay Area meets. But the strip was also known derogato-

erly as a path that skittish strollers took.
COME ON AND TAKE A FREE RIDE

Celebrate Muni’s 100th Anniversary

A Muni Motor Coach and Streetcar 128 take passengers to the end of the S Line to visit Playland at Ocean Beach, March 20, 1927. Photo by Horace Chafee.

RIDE ANY MUNI VEHICLE FREE ON DECEMBER 28!*

*Free service available from 5 a.m. Dec. 28 through 5 a.m. Dec. 29

For Muni route, schedule, fare and accessible services information anytime:
Visit www.sfmta.com or contact 311

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Special Events
Glide holiday events, Dec. 19, 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., give away of 5,000 bags of groceries; Dec. 22, 9-11 a.m., toy giveaway; Dec. 25, 11 a.m., first prime rib Christmas lunch. Dec. 25, 7-9 a.m.: Breakfast, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., lunch, 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Christmas celebrations. Info: glide.org.

Interfaith memorial service, Dec. 20, 9:30 p.m., Civic Center Plaza across from City Hall. Co-sponsored by the Coalition on Homelessness and S.F. Neighborhood Ministries. Bring a candle to remember all the city’s homeless dead. If you have names to add, bring them to the service or call 928-6209.

Monti’s holiday present to San Francisco residents and visitors free rides all day Dec. 20 to celebrate its 100th anniversary. When it was founded as the nation’s first publicly owned transit system, rides cost a nickel — worth about $1.15 today.

27th annual Japanese new year bell-ringing ceremony and activities. Dec. 30, Asian Art Museum, 11 a.m. It’s free to ring in the new year on the museum’s 2,700-pound, 19th century japonese bronze bell that will shock 108 tolls — out with the old, in with the good. Free with museum admission (children under 16 admitted free). Info: assistan.org/ringinghim.

Other Lifting Leavening Institute open house, Jan. 24, 9-11 a.m., 1001 Folsom St. See www.qli.com for schedule and contact. Info: support interfaith and social justice initiatives.

14th annual meeting, Jan. 25, Alliance for a Better District 6, 6 p.m., 201 Turk Street Community Room, guest speakers, election of officers, awards ceremony, door prizes, refreshments and more. Info: 820-1560.

Art Events
Movies at the Main Library, noon-2 p.m., Dec. 20, Gh. Brother: Where Art Thou?

Death in the Tenderloin, Jan. 14, noon-2 p.m., Main Library, Latino/Hispanic Community Room, lower level. Central City Extra staff talk about Death in the Tenderloin, the new anthology from Study Centre Press featuring 99 obituary and four essays from the pages of The Extra. Info: studycentre.org and 626-1650.

Heath and Mental Health
CBUS Consumer Council, 3rd Monday of month, 5-7 p.m., 1380 Howard St. room 507, 255-3665. Consumer advisors are available to help groups and mental health consumer advocates. Public welcome.

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of month, 770 Mission St., Bay Area Volunteer Center, 11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home services, expanded eligibility for home care, improved discharge planning. Light lunch. Call James Chisholm, (707) 792-0186.

Mental Health Board, 2nd Wednesday of month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., City Hall, room 276. CBUS advisory committee, open to the public. Call: 255-3474.

Safety
Soflo Police Community Relations Forum, 1st Monday of each month, 6:30-7:30 p.m., location varies. To receive monthly email info: 538-8100 x2222.

Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting last Tuesday of month, 6:30 p.m., police station Community Room, 301 Eddy St. Call Sara Black, 342-7380. Neighborhood safety.

Neighborhood Improvement
Alliance for a Better District 6, 3rd Thursdays, 6 p.m., 201 Eddy St. City Hall Community Room, board meets 2nd Tuesday of month, Hotel Whitcomb, 1231 Market St., 3 p.m. Information: 862-3888, http://central-market.org.

Friends of Buendker Park, 2nd Wednesday this month, 3 p.m., Police Station Community Room, 301 Eddy St. Plan park events, activities and improvements. Contact: Betty Spear, 507-1135.

Gene Friend Recreation Center Advisory Board, 3rd Thursday of month, 5 p.m. Works to protect SF Recreation and Parks Department resources for all residents. Contact: info@sfrecandparks.org.


Ongoing Events
Community: Regular Schedule
Housing
Tenants Association Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of each month, noon, 201 Turk St. Community Room. Contact Michael Nulty, 339-9237. Resident unity, leadership training.

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Day: Tuesday, December 18, 2012.

City and County of San Francisco is seeking qualified respondents to submit proposals for ReGrant SoMa. This opportunity is a collaboration among local government agencies to improve the San Francisco neighborhood. Your gift will make possible important artistic programs and projects. Amount: Up to $30,000 (matching funds required). Cap: No. Proposals. Proposals will be accepted until March 15, 2013. Two meetings to review proposals will be held on February 22 and March 22, 2013. Information: 415.554.6710. The VACF is a program of Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund. Be part of why San Francisco is known around the world as an extraordinary arts destination.

The Port of San Francisco is seeking submittals on proposals to rehabilitate and re-tenant the Pier 38 bulkhead structure and a limited portion of the Pier 38 shed. Contact John Dotl at john.dotl@sfport.com RFP Submittal Deadline: February 23, 2013. Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund Support San Francisco’s vibrant arts community by donating to the Voluntary Arts Contribution Fund (VACF). Since its inception in 1994, the VACF has provided $1.2 million in vital support for hundreds of the city’s most beloved arts organizations, serving every San Francisco neighborhood. Your gift will make possible important artistic programs and services, including safety improvements and facility upgrades. Be part of why San Francisco is known around the world as an extraordinary arts destination — support the VACF. For more information, and to make a donation, visit www.shifth.org or call 4 15-5994-6710. The VACF is a program of Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund. Department of the Environment
The SF Department of the Environment introduces RecycleWhere (www.sfonvironment.org/recyclewhere): Whether you’re working or living in San Francisco, Palo Alto, San Jose, Cupertino, or anywhere in the Bay Area, RecycleWhere is the place to find your recycling rules and most convenient recycling, reuse, and disposal options for everything from plastics to couches, and much more! RecycleWhere is a collaboration among local government agencies to help each and every person reduce waste. Time for an oil change? The 3,000 mile rule no longer applies to most vehicles. You can Check your vehicle model and make at www.recyclewhere.org: Whether you’re working or living in San Francisco, Palo Alto, San Jose, Cupertino, or anywhere in the Bay Area, RecycleWhere is the place to find your recycling rules and most convenient recycling, reuse, and disposal options for everything from plastics to couches, and much more! RecycleWhere is a collaboration among local government agencies to help each and every person reduce waste. Time for an oil change? The 3,000 mile rule no longer applies to most vehicles. You can Check your vehicle model and make at www.recyclewhere.org.

City and County of San Francisco is encouraging public outreach. Articles are translated into several languages to provide better public access. The newspaper makes every effort to translate the articles of importance to the City and County of San Francisco for the newspapers for errors and omissions.

To register for courses go to www.csccsf.edu/schedule