Extra staffer brutally attacked during delivery
Suspect arrested in sidewalk assault

By Tom Carter

A LEADING CENTRAL CITY EXTRA reporter since the newspaper began in 2000, serving additionally as its distribution director, was brutally clubbed from behind on his rounds in a cowardly act stemming from a road rage incident minutes before.

Newsmen Mark Hedin, for six years also our delivery guy, collapsed unconscious on the sidewalk Oct. 8 after crossing O’Farrell Street carrying bundles of Extras to deliver to several of the 200 some distribution points in the Tenderloin.

“The next thing I know I wake up in an ambulance taking me to S.F. General,” Hedin, 56, said.

Days later, suspect Darryl Bolden, 37, of San Francisco was arrested, Tenderloin police said.

The attack put Hedin into critical condition. He was in S.F. General’s intensive care unit for three days with a traumatic brain injury and nose and skull fractures from his fall, the result of being hit with a blunt object allegedly wielded by the man he previously had words with.

Hedin had driven his car down Jones Street at about 5:15 p.m. with a load of Extras in the backseat and started to back into a tight parking spot in the 500 block.

“I pride myself in being able to (negotiate) tight spots, but (to inch in) you have to tap the car in front and the one in back,” Hedin said.

And in back was a brown Mercedes-Benz. When Hedin’s car gently tapped it, its only occupant, in the driver’s seat, went “crazy,” Hedin recalls. Seeing a larger space up the street, Hedin drove off and parked there. A 6-foot-4 man with dreadlocks between 35 and 40 “jumped out” with a camera to take pictures of Hedin’s license plates.

“I don’t see any damage here,” Hedin, a wiry 6-2, said he told the man, looking at where the cars had touched. “That’s why they call them bumpers.”

“I got the whip lash,” Hedin said the man replied.

Hedin responded and I went about my business — up Jones Street, then back to the car and across Jones to the Coast Hotel and Joey’s Laundromat on O’Farrell. When I came back for more papers, he wanted to see some ID I ignored him. There was nothing going on here,” Hedin crosswalked the street with a bundle of papers in each hand en route to the San Francisco Senior Center O’Farrell Towers and the Winton Hotel.

The lights went out.

“I woke up in an ambulance, confused,” he said, with no idea what had happened or how long he had been out.

Sgt. Alex Rodato of the Tenderloin Station visited the crime scene after officers had found Hedin unconscious and the Mercedes gone. Rodato appeared at Hedin’s hospital bedside that night with six mugshots to look at.

But the former Chronicle copy editor didn’t recognize anyone. Rodato told Hedin that the police had a video.

“I’d like to see that video,” Hedin said.

“The tip of my spine still hurts, and I want to see how I fell,” an SF Gate report called it a “road-rage fight” over a “fender bender” — a minor accident — because the soup kitchen cuisine never requires spoons, eliminating a logistical complication in the complex operation.

“I was embarrassed,” Sanchez now recalls with a grin as he gazes at today’s pot of chunky salmon stew. “It was an epic failure.”

By all accounts, though, Sanchez’s episode, which he laughs about now, has been the exception since St. Anthony’s opened its new dining room a year ago.

The dining room has been on the same Tenderloin corner, Jones Street and Golden Gate Avenue, since 1950. Originally it was in the basement of an old auto repair shop. That structure, demolished in 2012, was replaced with a new $22.5 million building.

The dining room, open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily, seats 300 and serves up to 3,000 free meals a day. Guests can have as many free meals a day as they wish.

The dining room has had operational challenges in its first year — such as how to get food trays from the dining room back to their drawers. St. Anthony’s feeds up to 3,000 people daily.
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Jesse Cottonham
Human Performance Senior Specialist

I grew up in San Francisco and am proud to still call this city my home. I like being able to put a personal face on the company to help my neighbors understand all the work we’re doing to provide safe, affordable and reliable service.

Together, Building a Better California

pge.com/SeeOurProgress
New city homeless czar grew from grassroots

Years of organizing in TL SROs primed Dodge for the job

By Marjorie Beggs

S

AM DODGE SQUEEZED a lot into the half-hour before his weekly meeting at the Navigation Center with staff of city departments and nonprofits. He checked his watch, then stood at the front desk supervising the living room/kitchen coordinator, checked out the condition of a few center “dormitories” where up to 75 people can be housed, and talked on his cell phone, putting out fires and sounding every inch the new director of the Mayor’s Office of Housing, Opportunity, Partnership, and Intergovernmental Affairs. Dodge spent most of 2014 as deputy to HOPE Director Sam Dodge, the homeless czar then, when Daddy announced his retirement Oct. 12, Dodge was appointed on the spot.

The 7-month-old Navigation Center, Dodge’s brainchild, has become the centerpiece of HOPE. Located on Mission Street off 16th, it will take in entire encampments of homeless, plus their pets, providing beds, food, clean bathrooms and no strict curfews. And they can stay until a case manager finds them more permanent housing, which now is taking an average two months.

Clients are staying at the center an average 51 days before they “exit” to permanent housing or shelters, family or friends, or have an “unsuitable exit” — mostly just walk back to the streets.

The center is Dodge’s baby, and he’s quick to acknowledge its links.

“Most of the meeting was taken up by representatives from DPH, HSA, DPW, SFEPD, Budget Office, the Controller’s Office, Episcopal Housing Alliance, and HOPE — we spent some time going over the metrics the controller is thinking of imaging running at the Navigation Center’s work,” he said. Among them are weekly stats on housing placements and exits and numbers of those still at the center after a year.

In the meeting talked about individuals who moved out the previous week and the next groups moving in — “16 people from six camps from the center the Chavez/101 area and 11th and Mission.”

Dodge also said, “we also dived into some issues Navigation Center staff have been dealing with, like documentation, IDs, working with injection drug users.”

Those are problems and client populations that the congenial, conscientious Dodge, 40, has tended to for most of his career among the down and out.

After two years as a union organizer for the California Nurses Association and the SEIU, he became a fixture in the Tenderloin, beginning in 2000 as a Ten- derloin Housing Clinic tenant organizer and a year later founding and directing THC’s Central City SRO Collaborative. He supervised 12 staff and 30 peer organizers who advocated for force SRO landlords to keep their residential hotel safe and habitable, trained tenants in organizing skills including how to monitor for safety hazards, and convened annual tenant meetings.

“Sam’s someone I really trust in his position,” says Sara Shortt, executive director of the Housing Rights Committee of S.F. who was Dodge’s colleague during those years. “He comes from a perspective that’s very aware of the realities of people on the street. He’s also compassionate and a real role modeled person. It’s a great combination. She adds: “He has heart and understanding, plus he’s a pragmatic problem-solver.”

Dodge says his work in Tenderloin SROs primed him for the new job: “SROs are at the nexus between homelessness and housing,” he says — but what he did afterward honed his skills.

He left the city in 2007 and spent a year helping a badly set up a bee operation on his Oregon farm. Next stop: New York City, the proverbial city that never sleeps.

Dodge probably didn’t sleep much for the five years he lived there. He took classes nights and weekends at Colum- bin University toward a master’s in pub- lic policy, and much of that time also worked full-time for the city Department of Homeless Services in its Manhattan Street Homeless Solutions unit, which shelters nearly 60,000 nightly. And he got married. And his first child was born.

When he returned to San Francisco in 2014, Dodge worked as a DPW anal-yst, helping investigate issues at home- less encampments coordinating with social services and collecting data, but soon Daddy talked him to his deputy director.

“My time in New York really set me up for this San Francisco job,” Dodge says. He notes that the similarity of the two coastal cities — super high rents that push many into homelessness is overshadowed by weather differences.

The seasons have a big bearing, the extreme cold and heat there; he says. A court settlement in 1979 gave people “the right to shelter,” and New York now has 58,780 people in 255 shelters compared to 1,200 here.

Surprisingly, however, the two cities count the same number of street homeless, 3,500 (San Francisco reported a total 6,666 homeless in January, but of those, 3,100 were considered “sheltered,” living in public or private shelters, cars, or other places “not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accom- modation for human beings.”)

To me the comparable street homele- ss numbers say New York’s right to work won’t work,” he says. But New York also has a parallel system, transitional shelters they call “safe havens,” that are comparable to our Navigation Center.”

New York’s 10 safe havens have more than 670 beds.

As deputy director of HOPE Dodge got the opportunity to use that East Coast model. An anonymous donor came to him, he says, and offered $3 million “with no strings if the city would do something about the street homeless.”

The conceptual idea and framework for the Navigation Center were his, he says, and he scouted and found the location helping supervised the construction with DPW and managed the budget of the $2 million, two-thirds went to center buildout and operations, one-third to permanent housing for those leaving the center.

He found the site in December — a 26,000-square-foot parcel — on a small lot bing fresh painted portable build- ings, five of them dorms, ringing a large courtyard filled with picnic tables under white tents — and the center opened three months later. Marshall Elementary School, then Phoenix Continuation High School, occupied the site, which had been vacant since 2002. Dodge credits Daddy with leading the way in getting Mission District residents and business owners to accept the center “NIMBY is a big issue — it always is — but Bevan got them to not only accept but welcome the program.”

More centers are needed In Sep- tember, the mayor allocated $5 million in city funds to expand the program and approved plans to mass 500 SRO units to house people leaving the Navigation Center. Dodge heads up this Streets to Homes initiative. Too. Among SROs slated for that program are the Crit- ic-Center and Drake hotels, he says.

Short is confident that Dodge, giv- en his ability to work within the system, social justice background and “position against criminalizing homelessness,” will get high marks from public and private stakeholders.

“The time in New York really set me up for this San Francisco job.”

Sam Dodge, HOPE director, left, uses the minutes before the weekly Navigation Center meeting to answer calls in the courtyard — an airy, activity place ringed with portable buildings where clients and staff above, can meet, eat and socialize.

Newsmen brutally attacked

Continued From Page 1

The hospital released Hedin Oct. 11, gave him back the two bundles of Extras he was carrying and caused him to limit him the time he spent watching TV or using his cell phone, computer or read- ing.

“Nothing like this has ever hap- pened to me,” Hedin said recently in some pain and walking gingerly. “I have always liked the neighborhood I get around it and see a lot of smiling faces. People thank me for the papers.”

Hedin, also a bass player in several bands and a substitute teacher for San Francisco Unified School District, figures being laid up will have cost him at least month of work.

But, wobbly still, not even two weeks later he helped get the rest of the October edition distributed.

Police told him he couldn’t view the street surveillance video, in case he has to testify in court, because it could affect the recollection of the incident.

Belden is scheduled to appear in court on the “battery with serious inju- ry” charge the day before Thanksgiving.

“I’ve never been hit before,” Hedin said. “This was a real eyerunner.”

Photos by Paul Dutton

Sam Dodge, HOPE director, left, uses the minutes before the weekly Navigation Center meeting to answer calls in the courtyard — an airy, activity place ringed with portable buildings where clients and staff above, can meet, eat and socialize.

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA is a member of the SAN FRANCISCO NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION — SOCIETY OF PUBLISHERS, PERIODICALS, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER — AND SAN FRANCISCO PRESS CLUB.
Inside new dining room with chefs, guests

Cooking for 3,000

The dining room obtains most of its food from three sources: individual and corporate donors, the S.F.-Marin Food Bank and Bittner Produce Distributors. This year saw an increase in the number of corporate donors.

"We have the whole Tenderloin sounding like a Burger King," Marsden said, noting that at the old dining room chefs were unable to grill food.

That hamburger experiment was wildly successful but hasn't been repeated too extensively. A typical meal with beef costs $2.50. Marsden said the executive chef, who spent her career in the restaurant business before joining St. Anthony's, plans menus a month at a time.

She normally has about 60 combinations of meals to choose from and bases her decisions on food she knows will always have — such as adobo chicken and hot dogs — and then augments the meals if special items magically come her way.

"My reservation book (for guests) is always full here," Marsden said. "Dining room staff and through all the sites it feeds on their health, offering food that is both tasty and nutritious."

"We are using more fresh and even frozen foods and vegetables than we used to," she added.

And the dining room's guest book is full.

"There are not a lot of storms," she said. "There are not a lot of storms."

"We have more medicine and more fruits and vegetables than we used to," she said, "and now we're opening the kitchen's clean, ready for the next day."

"If we could just keep the kitchen's clean, ready for the next day."

"The kitchen crew begins preparing each day's meal at 6:30 a.m. to be able to start serving at 10:30 by 2:30 p.m. so the kitchens are cleaned, ready for the next day."

"We are never resting, there is always something to do."

Part of that may be due to all the new-dangled appliances he and his colleagues have at their disposal — both new and nifty.

"We have more equipment now and are able to produce more food more efficiently," Marsden explained. "It's pretty much a combination of fresh, ready to be used, it makes it easier to cook."

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"A food bank in its mission is to accommodate the fluctuating population. Meals now are more comfortable, and when you're more comfortable, you're more positive."

The new dining room was needed to accommodate the "changing face of hunger in the Tenderloin," Marsden said. "Anthony's communications associate for the Tenderloin is a community place to come in and eat in community. People that are fed in the space in which they're eating is really important. And because the dining room is not as tight, folks are more comfortable, and when you're more comfortable, you're more positive."

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Residents Small

A man who called himself Jihad Salamad died Oct. 9 at St. Francis Hospital at age 45.

In his early 20s, Mr. Salamad adopted Islam and a new name. In adulthood, jihad means struggling or striving, salamad is peace.

By all accounts, Mr. Salamad spent many years as a child in foster care and for years was homeless as an adult. At the end of his life he was wheelchair-dependent.

A memorial service for Mr. Salamad unfolded Oct. 22 at Sixth Street's Balw

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OBITUARIES

ANGEL MORET

Macho and tender, too

Angel Moret probably would have appreciated the low-key scene in the spacious lobby of his longtime home, the Seneca Hotel on Sixth Street, as his memorial service got under way.

No photo of him graced the little altar, moved at the last minute from being on the wall to the back home, “I believe he didn’t want anybody,” she concluded.

There were two Angels

Ralph Brown, his case manager at the Seneca, said: “There were two Angels one was an old school Cuban, maco,” the other he said: “was one of the sweetest guys you ever met. He cared about everybody else on his own, he thought about his health until he couldn’t hide it anymore. He went out the same way his old stubborn self.”

Mr. Moret moved into the Seneca in the early ’90s and was in his 60s when he died Aug 17. Brown told The Ex: “I believe he has children somewhere,” he said.

Because of his machismo, he was very very proud,” Brown recalled. “He would get livid. ‘You guys don’t understand, you guys don’t do this’.”

Brown remembered telling Mr. Moret how his attitude left social workers in a no-win position.

But then Brown, said there would be “very tender moments. He would put his pride to the side, you could see how much it hurt him, even just to accept food.” Brown said, “In all my years — 10 — as a social worker in the TL, I’d never seen that before.”

“I know I get mad, yell and scream a lot, but I appreciate you,” Brown said.

Mr. Moret would sometimes tell him. “Never stop fighting for me.” “The last time they were together, Brown said. Mr. Moret made a point of expressing his appreciation one more time.”

“I know that moment, it was probably the last time. I’m glad he was able to give me some type of peace. It could have been the other Angel,” Brown said.

“God bless you, Angel,” she concluded.

Obituaries

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“If it was being too good,” he said.

Brown also said that Mr. Moret kept the latest newspaper in the lobby for reading. Often he’d be the first person I talked to.”

Many others also spoke of how Mr. Moret had been sort of an unofficial mayor of the SRO’s often present in the lobby or the corner on the outside, saying everyone was there to get some socialization, that was the Tuesday dinner or the distribution of hot meals, proceeded in a fair and orderly fashion.

From all accounts, and there were many, Mr. Moret was a kindly but tough fellow who appreciated people’s efforts on his behalf but never really got comfortable, or let anyone else get comfortable, with what he needed any thing from anybody.

“He didn’t want anybody to help him. He was stubborn,” recalled a woman who said they would each other about “cause I’m older than him.”

Before launching into a verse of a gospel song about “a land where we will never grow old,” she said they would joke about such a place, with Mr. Moret telling her: “You’re already there!”

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SRO – 1 person or Couple

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REGULAR SCHEDULE  

Housing  Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of each month, noon, 201 Turk St., Community Room. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or sf_district6@yahoo.com, 3rd Thursday of each month, 6 p.m., park clubhouse, Eddy and Jones. Friends of Boeddeker Park, 3rd Thursday of the month, 6-8 p.m., Latino/Hispanic Rooms A & B. Info: sfpl.org.

Health and Mental Health  CBHS Client Council, 3rd Tuesday of each month, 3-5 p.m., 1530 Howard, Room 515. Consumer advisers from self-help groups and mental health consumer advocates. Public welcome. Info: 250-3699. Call ahead if meeting location may change.

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of each month, 1010 Mission St., Bayanhana Community Center, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home services, expanded eligibility for home care, improved discharge planning. Light lunch. Call James Chinenova, 701-5580.

Hoardering and Cluttering Support Groups, weekly meetings at various times, conducted by Mental Health Association of San Francisco, 870 Market St., Suite 506. Info: 451-2969 or mentalhealthorg.org.


Mental Health Board, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., City Hall, room 217. CBHS advisory committee, open to the public. Call: 259-7474.

Tenderloin Healthy Corner Store Coalition, 4th Thursday, 3 p.m., Kelly Gulick Community Building, 200 Golden Gate Ave., 2nd floor auditorium or 9th floor gym. Public invited to discuss legislation that encourages corner stores to sell fresh food and reduce tobacco and alcohol sales. Info: Jessica Estrada, jessica.healthyretail@gmail.com, 581-2483.

ARTS EVENTS  “The Pandero Experiment” by magicians and EXIT Theatre artists, through Nov. 21, EXIT Stage Left, 156 Eddy St. Info: andria.brownpointskids.com.

“Portraits of the Imagination” by EXIT Theatre and the Annenberg Foundation, performed by a range of actors to help fund musical theatre production. Free event, donations accepted. The Cadillac, a historic SRO, hosts concerts weekly.

WORKSHOPS  Get Medi-Cal Enrollment Help

New Service Center Dedicated to You
7 Spring Street
Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 5:30pm

Tenderloin Community Benefit District
Full board meets 3rd Monday at 4 p.m., 55 Taylor St. Info: 292-4612.

Safe Haven Project, 4th Tuesday of each month, 3 p.m., 519 Eddy St. (Senior Hat). Contact: 560-3205, x115, or communitysafehaven@gmail.com.

Sofía Community Stabilization Fund Advisory Committee, 3rd Thursday of each month, 3:30 p.m., 1 South Van Ness, 2nd Floor. Info: Claudia del Rosario, 701-5580.

Tenderloin Features Concerts, 3rd Wednesday of each month, 11 a.m. room, Tenderloin Police Community Room, 301 Eddy. Presentations on issues of interest to neighborhood residents, nonprofits and businesses. Info: 820-1412.

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

Senior & Disability Action (formerly Planning for Elders/Senior Action Network), general meeting, 2nd Thursday of each month, 9 a.m.-noon, Universal Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St. SDA Housing Collaborative meeting, 3rd Wednesday, 11 a.m., Healthcare Action Team meeting, 3rd Wednesday, 1010 Mission St. (Bayanhana Community Center). For info about SDA’s Senior & Disability Action Network, call: 701-5580. Contact: susa.black@sfhp.org, ams@embracerics.org, or centralcitysafehaven@gmail.com.

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