Letters announcing information meetings never got mailed

BY TOM CARTER

An official city letter failed to reach more than 800 off-sale liquor license owners, so only 15 of them attended classes on the nuisance standards imposed on them by an ordinance designed to clean up troublesome neighborhoods.

"Only 15 to 15 have attended these classes," Assistant City Attorney Neli Palma said in a report on the ordinance to a Safety Forum Dec. 12 at Tenderloin Police Station. "It's said. We are renting rooms at Bill Graham Auditorium and no one attends." The ordinance by Supervisor Sophie Maxwell was passed in March. It creates a "deemed approved" status for all off-sale licenses, subjecting them to fines and license suspensions if they don't comply with the ordinance. Maxwell was trying to clean up gritty liquor and grocery store scenes in the Tenderloin, Bayview-Hunters Point and the Point and the Mission that attract dope dealers, prostitutes and bums, she said. TL has 62 off-sale liquor licenses.

The city scheduled 20 informational meetings in September, October and November to explain the background, purpose, requirements and penalties for noncompliance, and to answer questions. On Sept. 7, the Department of Public Health ostensibly sent the owners letters with the dates and times.

"There is limited space as the room holds between 50-100 people," the letter said. "Please be advised that if the room fills to capacity that you may be asked to wait until the next meeting."

But that letter wasn't mailed. And before the mistake was discovered, representatives from Maxwell's office, the city attorney's office, the Police Department and DPH who attended the meetings sat idle. No meetings were canceled.

"Something happened," Virginia Smyly, DPH director of Community Programs, told The Extra. "Somehow they were never sent." Smyly said. "It was a challenge for the Tax Collector's office that you may be asked to wait until the next meeting." The city sent liquor license owners three letters. The first was from the Tax Collector's office that explained the ordinance's standards and contained an invoice for the mandatory $240 fee. The second letter, from DPH, had the informational meeting dates. The third rectified the second by adding new dates in December because letter No. 2 was never sent.

"Something happened between

Continued on page 3

Training seniors to be grassroots guerrillas

BY TOM CARTER

Ma MMOsA Renteria said she didn't speak good English but, yes, she did have a story to tell the more than 40 seniors who had just finished lunch in the dining room at Dorothy Day Community. It was midway through Session 1 of Senior University, the first of four days over four weeks, a free course in community organizing.

The moderator asked Renteria to stand and speak. Tell it like she was testifying at City Hall, he prodded. He asked for help David Santos Cortes, a native of Nicaragua and a retired San Francisco City College Spanish instructor, volunteered to interpret. He came to Renteria's side. The smartly dressed woman in her 60s stood and, through Cortes, calmly said:

"I'd like the sidewalks in my neighborhood to be fixed. I fell down once. Repair the holes in the sidewalk."

"Muchas gracias," said the beaming moderator Anh Le, who was concluding the Public Speaking segment of Senior U.

Renteria, a city resident since 1962, got a nice round of applause, having demonstrated the ingredients of a succinct advocacy message. She stated the problem, explained how it affected her and offered a solution. Also, in a more subtle lesson on empowerment, she had gotten help in a team effort and had been roundly supported by her peers.

Continued on page 4

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Continued on page 4
**The real costs of “free wi-fi”**

By Marjorie Beggs

A s citywide wireless Internet service becomes a reality, reps of the S.F. Department of Telecommunications and Information Services are out in the field, bringing the wireless technology rolling for supporting even in places like the Tenderloin, where they admit, delivering free wi-fi to Tenderloin residents will be a huge challenge.

Since 2004, Mayor Newsom has been delivering free or inexpensive wi-fi as a way to bridge the digital divide. Turns out the cyberbridge may as much as 25  — a big bite for people on fixed incomes who may not be able to pay for services.

Our “TechConnect initiative found that of 2,000 San Franciscans lacked Internet access in their homes.”

The problems we anticipate are inside apartments and above the third floors of buildings. Tseng told Collaborative members, “the very places where most of them work and live. ‘Here in the Tenderloin, and in Chinatown, these are real concerns. If the light pole transmitter doesn’t reach you, then you can’t reach out to the cloud, you’ll be stuck with the paid monthly service — and that’s quite a bite.”

Tseng later explained to The Extra that these CPEs (customer premises equipment) pull in the signal much like old TV antennas and, generally, are placed near a window. They come in many shapes and “strengths,” she said, retailing for $50 to $100, but will cost them in the paid package.

The Extra that they are planning on using the technology to reach out to a community, a 25% of our households in the Tenderloin. Tseng Jerry said he was concerned about TechConnect’s strategies. “It seems like the city will be making Internet service more accessible to those who already have it, not to those who don’t. It also helped if funding would have been available to help develop.”

Tseng, referring to Wi-Fi, “the new buildings or those being renovated for wireless access.”

They come in many shapes and “strengths,” she said, retailing for $50 to $100, but will cost them in the paid package.

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New TL police captain a short-timer

BY TOM CARTER

TYRELL ON the foot patrols that started in the Tenderloin on Nov. 24 may resort to bicycles for better mobility, according to the new but likely temporary TL station commander, Capt. Gary Jimenez.

Two- or three-officer teams are working the day watch 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and the swing watch, 3 p.m. to 1 a.m., ply Market Street from Hyde to Powell, including McAllister, Golden Gate, Turk and Eddy.

By regulation, foot patrols must be in uniform, but the most effective officers are the plainclothes police officers, Jimenez said.

In November, Jimenez replaced Capt. Kathryn Brown, who was TL's commander for three years. Jimenez now heads Homeland Security and Youth Services for the department, Jimenez said Brown, who requested the TL post, had served on the TL Task Force in the 1990s and claimed it was where, as a sergeant, she learned to be a good cop.

Jimenez came from Park Station, where he made captain. He says he is temporary.

“I asked for new business cards but they told me to hold off on that,” he said. In the TL Station’s community newsletter, he said the next community forum would be Jan. 30. “I am all here.”

“But I’m giving 15%,” Jimenez said. “I’m confident I’ll remain through the end of the year.”

Jimenez joins a group of eight captains in 1970 when Alotizo was mayor. He was a sergeant at Central Station covering the Tenderloin 1989-90. For two more years he was on Turk Station at the Tenderloin police station at 1 Jones St.

In 1999, then-Sgt. Jimenez was taking a man arrested for cocaine possession in his squad car when the handicapped man broke out of the back seat. Jimenez returned to the Dalt Residence on Turk Street. Jimenez pursued him inside and, as the man was running upstairs, Jimenez shot him twice in the back.

Jimenez was quoted in an Examiner story five years later saying he thought the man might have been unarmed and could have been injured where he thought elderly tenants would be in danger.

As the wounded man collapsed on the third floor, Jimenez jokingly said to Palma in 1999, “Thank you very much. You just made me a lot of money.”

The man recovered and the city settled his lawsuit for $35,000. Jimenez, cleared in the shooting, was reprimanded for not securing the man in the car.

Use of lethal force is probably one of the hardest aspects of our job because it’s not always a black and white cut,” Jimenez was quoted in the Examiner. “I don’t think any of us want to hurt some- body.”

Jimenez has already tried to make a major change in the neighborhood. He requested a fulltime officer at U.N. Plaza, less than describes as a “high crime, high shopping center for drugs and stolen goods. It meant overtime and headquarters refused, citing budgetary reasons. Even so, U.N. Plaza is getting heightened attention.

“Our night watch patrol hits it four times between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.,” he said. “BART (police) will start walking it a park ranger.”

With 15 years ago, he said, the Tenderloin has changed for the better and attributed that to Care Not Cash, the mayor’s program to house the homeless. He guessed there are only half the number of homeless people on the streets now.

“It’s a great improvement,” he said. “but the crime is worse.”

His predecessor Capt. Brown, Jimenez talked as if police were making arrests as fast as they can but can’t staunch the flow of drug dealers.

“We arrested 355 drug dealers, buyers and users in October and 367 in November,” Jimenez told an Alliance for a Better District 6-sponsored Safety Forum attended by around 50 people at the police station.

“We are addressing this constantly on every street, every corner.”

But some sophisticated sellers use text messaging and know when the police are coming, he said. “Because they’re greedy they’ll sell to anyone and they’ll sell to us (plainclothes),” Jimenez said. “It’s still very lucrative, and as soon as we arrest one, two oth- ers are there to take their place.”

Many of the drug dealers among the 722 cases sent to the district attorney go to drug diversion pro- grams meant for addicts, Jimenez said, “an expeditious way to deal with cases.” The DA needs a bigger budget to resolve the issue, he said. “The solution can’t come from the SPFD.”

Jimenez was asked about a number of quality of life issues caused by street people, but he said police can only detain people to talk to them and can only frisk them if “there’s probable cause.” Officers are doing very little about the dangers of skateboarders and bicyclists on sidewalks, he said, and admitted he was almost clocked by a skateboarder that week. But it’s a minor of low priority, he indicated.

At the end of the meeting, Dina Hilliard was introduced as the new Safety Network community organizer. The Alliance also gave recognition awards to Deputy City Attorney Neli Palma for her work in code enforcement, Francis and Chi Ying Pong Cheung, who have run a convenience store at Hyde and Turk streets since 1989, and activist policeman Jim Thompson for his many contributions to the neighborhood.

No one knew about snafu till too late

Continued from Page 1

our office and the Tax Collector’s office,” said Smyly, “and the letters were never sent.”

When no one showed up at the compliance meetings, which run all day on Sept. 20 and Oct. 2, the snafu was dis- covered and letter No. 3 was sent the third week in October. Smyly said some records were lost or misprocessed.

“I got the list of (off-sale license holders) from the state Alcoholic Beverage Control department and it was four months old,” Smyly said. The major- ity of license holders were notified, she estimated, but some owners weren’t reached at their place of business and others, she surmised, misplaced or ignored the mail.

“We got a lot of calls,” she said. “Some were angry and some said they no longer used their license.”

“We held the meetings was downtown, too,” she said. “These are small businesses owners and maybe they couldn’t get away during the day. We screwed up. We didn’t know what we were doing, and we need to find the best way to communicate with them.”

After the police station meeting, Palma said a small group of Arab American grocer came to the Nov. 15 meeting. “But usually at other meetings it was mostly Syrian and Turkish owners,” she said. “Some- times, no one showed up. I have no idea why. And people just sat around waiting.”

The cost of compliance’s administration, including $111,000 for education and public out- reach, is to be covered by the $240 annual fee. But there are also hidden time and material costs for all departments, according to Smyly. A member of the seven-member Oakland team that oversees a small license business said in 2002 that San Francisco’s ordinance was “way underfunded.” Oakland charges its 400 license holders a $1,500 fee.

The San Francisco legislation largely duplicates state and federal licensing. It holds store-owners responsible for keeping order inside their busi- ness and outside on the sidewalk, and allows no more than a third of the surface of windows and doors to be covered. What’s new is the administra- tion requirement that provides for noncompliance hear- ings if the standards are violated, and an appeal system. Penalties range from $500 to $1,000 and escala- tions if the standards are violated.

Maxwell said the purpose of the ordinance is to “educate all of the liquor store owners on how to be good neighbors.” The Youth Leadership Institute, a youth advocacy group with offices in San Francisco and San Rafael, came to Maxwell almost five years ago with a survey it had done on San Francisco liquor stores showing many viola- tions. The two worked with an attorney to draft stan- dards.

“A lot of the papers were sent to the district attorney go to drug diversion programs,” he said. “But it passed and we intend to fully comply with every part of it. We want our members to come to meetings and get their questions answered.”

He blamed the paltry attendance on the comмуnications snafu and said different scheduling could have attracted owners who were “inconvenienced” by daytime meetings.

Shamieh attended a Nov. 15 meeting, he said, after being notified by letter No. 3. But more than 800 store owners missed the opportunity they were entitled to under the legislation.

Every license holder who pays the fee deserves “a-face-to-face” explanation of the measure but the DPH budget for outreach couldn’t afford it. Smyly told The Extra Last February. “We suggested group meetings in neighborhoods as a compromise,” she said. But the final plan was to schedule meetings at Civic Auditorium.

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Classes for activists: Seniors lead

The event focused on seniors and their needs. It championed their causes and celebration was palpable as they paused at 9:30 a.m. at a hospitality table with coffee, juice and snacks reserved for the speakers. The seniors’ anticlimax report using 2000 census figures. The majority live in the eastern part of the neighborhood, which has the highest density of SROs. But Senior Action Network liberally defines a senior as 50 or older, and invites disabled folks of any age to participate. Anh Le, a charismatic director and organizer, brought out a heavyweight contender, melodramatically like a tuxedoed announcer introducing the subjects to be covered, questions that will be posed, plus answers, and brief bios and contact lists of local, state and federal elected officials. Class materials have been evolving since 1994 when the University started here at Dorothy Day. Now the courses are offered four times a year in neighborhoods with high senior and disabled populations.

Seniors who pick up the gauntlet become community activists. Some at the event already have experience under their belts. But whatever it is about the program — the focus on their empowerment, the coziness of a peer group, the gregarious, charismatic director and organizer Anh Le, or just the free lunch — the seniors keep coming back. A third are repeaters, a few are taking the course for the third or fourth time.

In Dorothy Day’s tidy, main floor dining room, tables were arranged in a horseshoe with chairs around them, the open end reserved for the speakers. The seniors’ anticipation was palpable as they paused at 9:30 a.m. at a Hospitality table with coffee, juice and snacks reserved for the speakers. The seniors’ anticlimax report using 2000 census figures. The majority live in the eastern part of the neighborhood, which has the highest density of SROs. But Senior Action Network liberally defines a senior as 50 or older, and invites disabled folks of any age to participate. Anh Le, a charismatic director and organizer, brought out a heavyweight contender, melodramatically like a tuxedoed announcer introducing the subjects to be covered, questions that will be posed, plus answers, and brief bios and contact lists of local, state and federal elected officials. Class materials have been evolving since 1994 when the University started here at Dorothy Day. Now the courses are offered four times a year in neighborhoods with high senior and disabled populations.

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learn to be grassroots guerrillas

activist.

Mecca has a voice that could reach to the other end of the room from the stage where he stood.

“How do we organize to lobby?” he asked, and turned to write the flow of responses on butcher paper on the wall. Several senators had taken this course before and were among the emboldened. The room came alive with energy.


“These are all great ideas,” Mecca said, as momentum built.

He took the seniors through determining their issue (broken sidewalks), the persons to be lobbied (a vote decides that it’s the mayor), and who will speak for the seniors (self-nomining volunteers).

One man wanted to reverse the process.

“I can’t agree with you,” he said. “I trust Chris Daly. He does me right. I live in his district. I’d go with him.”

But it was too late.

“We’ve already voted,” said Mecca. “You can’t change the mayor; he’s elected.”

A woman at the back of the room asked why they couldn’t change the mayor.

“Because he’s well loved,” Mecca shot back.

He encouraged anyone who hadn’t spoken to put in their two cents. Le stepped in to call on some by name. John Michael Barquera, who lives at Dorothy Day, wanted to be assistant to the play-acting mayor. Jacqueline Bryson, the voluble SoMa resident who has had her problems with sidewalks, the group consented.

Someone said the mayor deals with bigger issues than this. But Mecca said no matter, he’d chance it because he’s a public official, responsible to the citizenry.

Ava Handy Beckham, who lives at the Mission Senior Center on Golden Gate Avenue, started the dialogue as a member of the committee visiting the mayor.

“I’m handicapped,” she said. She’s in a wheelchair. “I represent Senior University and my complaint today is broken sidewalks. They are a hazard to older people and people in wheelchairs and to the blind and the lame. We’re asking your cooperation.

“Tenderloin,” the aide, Barquera, said. “But we have budget problems. We’ll try to do our best.”

The exercise that was created out of thin air had coalesced into a powerful, moving action. From it, the seniors felt a ripple of excitement that trumped the laughably disappointing responses from officials.

In the evaluation, the seniors liked Takahashi’s scurrilous, the tourism angle, the connection with the mayor (‘he understands the problem now’), and said the amount of time the committee spent explaining the issue was good. But others disagreed and said the presentation was rambling and wordy. The work to be done needed a deadline, someone said.

But the key element was missing.

“A solution,” Mecca says. “You don’t go in just presenting problems. You offer solutions. You’ve got to have them. But the role playing was really good.”

Le ran the next segment, How to Conduct an Effective Meeting, and right off the seniors agreed that where they were was about the best place imaginable.

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Minnie Fry, the deaf lady. “Let’s get one so everybody can hear what’s going on.”

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Tenderloin and its SROs making of a historic district

Revising bid to get neighborhood listed on National Register

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

Tenderloin is unique. It has the smallest number of historic sites in the world,” says Tenderloin Housing Clinic Director Randy Shaw, who plans to nominate a portion of the neighborhood for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, Tenderloin Apartment and Hotel District.

The historic designation would place the Tenderloin in the same category as other neighborhoods located within five miles of the Civic Center, such as the Market Street Theatre and Loft District, added to the National Register in 1986, including 20 buildings, and the Tenderloin, its upper reaches, above Post, Church, and the Rev. Cecil Williams on behalf of the Salvation Army. The city took three years to approve the nomination, but it was a step in the right direction, Shaw said.

While the proposed historic district listing covers Tenderloin, its upper reaches, above Post, Church, and the Rev. Cecil Williams, on behalf of the Salvation Army, the city took three years to approve the nomination, but it was a step in the right direction, Shaw said.

The application inventoried 55 Mason, built in 1922 by architects Earl B. Scott and K. McDonald, features quoining at the corner, ornamental lintels over windows, block modillions supporting the deeply projecting cornice, and horizontal belt courses, which are state of the art.

The building was listed on the National Register in 1976, and San Francisco’s Mills Act property is also marked on it.

In late November, Shaw had spent about $30,000 on paperwork alone. The next step is to submit a notarized statement that becomes part of the nomination package commissioners vote on. Owners in a nominated historic district may change code requirements, but the owners would need to file a certificate of change with the city. In late November, Shaw had spent about $30,000 on paperwork alone. The next step is to submit a notarized statement that becomes part of the nomination package commissioners vote on. Owners in a nominated historic district may change code requirements, but the owners would need to file a certificate of change with the city.

Getting listed on National Register

I If Shaw’s nomination succeeds, the Tenderloin will become the city’s 24th historic district on the National Register of Historic Places. Notable others include the Civic Center, Telegraph Hill, Mission District, Alcatraz, and the Market Street Theatre and Loft District, added to the National Register in 1986. It includes 20 buildings, 55 Mason, built in 1922 by architects Earl B. Scott and K. McDonald, features quoining at the cornices, ornamental lintels over windows, block modillions supporting the deeply projecting cornice, and horizontal belt courses, which are state of the art.

Westfield paid off, and the project’s final EIR. Westfield paid off, and the project’s final EIR. Westfield paid off, and the project’s final EIR. Westfield paid off, and the project’s final EIR.

The major perk is the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive — not a deduction but a straight federal tax credit equal to 20% of the rehab costs. The historic district boundaries would be the Tenderloin, its upper reaches, above Post, Church, and the Rev. Cecil Williams on behalf of the Salvation Army.

By January 2007, Shaw said he will spend about $15,000 on paperwork alone. The next step is to submit a notarized statement that becomes part of the nomination package commissioners vote on. Owners in a nominated historic district may change code requirements, but the owners would need to file a certificate of change with the city.

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Photog of the mundane, artist of the moment

BY ED BOWERS

On display at the Faithful Fools Court Gallery is an exhibition of digital photography by photog/poet Ramu Aki that is unique, due not only to the intensity of the work, but also because of its innovative presentation.

This show is billed as a “progressive” exhibit. Over the course of its run the photographer will be adding images to his exhibit, causing his presentation to grow organically, much as the flowering of a plant.

The photos on display are not museum pieces as much as living, breathing parts of a continually changing whole. The viewer can see this show once, but probably not ever see it exactly the same way again.

This adventurous concept that Aki has added to the art of gallery exhibition I find fascinating and much admire. It breathes life into what ordinarily would be regarded as a finished product, static and unchangeable; this progressive method piques curiosity and adds an open-ended quality to the normal presentation of art.

Anyone who lives in San Francisco should view this exhibit. Aki considers San Francisco to be the most beautiful city in the whole wide world and his photographs express that belief. They glow with vibrant colors, clear transparent images, and take in the length and breadth of what many refer to, ironically given current U.S. history, as Baghdad by the Bay.

The moment is alive only for a moment, as fast as the speed of light, possibly not even long enough to register by the conscious mind, so most of us remain trapped inside them that could explode any second and escape. This is one show that you shouldn’t miss. Aki considers San Francisco to be the most beautiful city in the whole wide world and his photographs express that belief. They glow with vibrant colors, clear transparent images, and take in the length and breadth of what many refer to, ironically given current U.S. history, as Baghdad by the Bay.

Aki expresses visually the philosophy of animism where anything that is, is alive. His walls breathe, trees stretch their trunks to the azure sky and filter human words between their grasping limbs. Each photograph addresses the viewer with a radiant individual life force.

As for the photographs of people, ranging from the civic-minded with smiles on their faces to dilapidated, prematurely old junkies sitting on the street sucking on cigarettes, each is revealed as containing the same vibrating beauty as a tree, a skyscraper or a wall.

Everything is equal in Aki’s photographic memory. Everything is life. Everything is consciousness.

That’s what I’ve always loved about San Francisco. In spite of its problems, it’s so full of life. Most zones attempt to control and manipulate and drain the uncontrollable spirit out of its citizens for the sake of efficiency, productivity, commerce, and safety. But San Francisco cultivates a special relationship with this spirit that Mr. Aki has captured perfectly...
ROBERT CLARK
Worked for Lockheed
In failing health, Robert Clark, a Lockheed sheet metal worker for 23 years, moved into the Civic Center Residence in March so he wouldn’t be a burden to his family here in town, his friends said. He died in his seventh floor room on Dec. 5. Mr. Clark had multiple medical problems, including advanced diabetes. He was 72.

“He was so polite he was almost courtly,” social worker Barbara Fitzpatrick said at his Dec. 13 memorial at the hotel. “He was very well-liked but he was quiet and stayed in his room a lot.”

It was difficult for Mr. Clark to walk. He preferred inching along with shuffling steps to using a wheelchair, which he “hated,” according to his friend of a year, Johnny, who declined to give his last name. “It would take him forever to walk to the corner but he wouldn’t touch his wheelchair.”

The two spent hours sitting in the hotel conference room admiring the coffered ceilings and talking about architecture.

“He was an educated man,” Johnny said. “And when I look up there now I think of him looking down at me. You can’t say anything bad about that man.”

Johnny said Mr. Clark was at the hotel to not be a “burden” to his family and that his "beautiful wife and daughter" had come two days ago for his personal effects.

“I went to his room to remind him of flu shots and he didn’t answer,” said Fitzpatrick. “An hour later a young man from property management found him dead in his room. It was very upsetting. It’s the third death we’ve had in two weeks.”

“It’s that time of year,” said the Rev. Glenda Hope. “The earth is dying. The darkness comes early and there can be a heaviness, especially if someone we know has died.”

—Tom Carter

LACY GRIFFIN
Security guard
Lacy Griffin, a lanky and youthful-looking security guard who liked wearing button-down-collar shirts in his off hours, died peacefully in his sleep Oct. 17 at the Ambassador Hotel where he had lived more than 14 years.

“I didn’t know him well but he was quiet and polite,” said social worker Ivet Lemus. “He was very neat and liked wearing button-down collars. I thought he was in his 30s.”

Mr. Griffin was 52.

After his friend Jerry Kirby missed seeing him around the hotel for two days he asked management to check his room. New Assistant Manager Barry Stevens found Mr. Griffin lying on his bed, his head resting on a stuffed alligator that Kirby had given him.

“It’s very emotional to discover someone like that,” said Stevens. “Everything in the room was neat and tidy and he looked asleep. I clapped loudly. But I could see he wasn’t breathing. Then I closed the door and went downstairs and called the police.”

The social workers said it was neat and tidy and he looked asleep. I clapped loudly. But I could see he wasn’t breathing. Then I closed the door and went downstairs and called the police.”

The social workers said it was neat and tidy and he looked asleep. I clapped loudly. But I could see he wasn’t breathing. Then I closed the door and went downstairs and called the police.”

Stevens found Mr. Griffin sleeping. He was neat and tidy and he looked asleep. I clapped loudly. But I could see he wasn’t breathing. Then I closed the door and went downstairs and called the police.”

Mr. Griffin was an unusual SRO denizen because he seemed to have no problems or character blemishes. The 6-foot-2 former Air Force airman was employed full time as a security guard. He was not an alcoholic or addict, but smoked cigarettes, his friends said, and he never caused trouble. He liked movies, especially science fiction.

Kirby brought Mr. Griffin’s favorite shut to the memorial — not a button-down — and said to the four people in the room he had recently helped Mr. Griffin expand his wardrobe. He hung it on the window latch above a table on which sat a small vase holding three white lilies. Kirby lit a candle, too. The handsome short-sleeve shirt had deep red masks and red candles with yellow flames figured on a rich tan background showing Africa with its longitude and latitude lines.

They knew each other nine years, but Kirby said in the last three years he had intensified their friendship. He played a nousing gospel song they were fond of on a cassette player. “There’s a leak in this old building,” it began.

“I gave him a pedicure the day before he died,” Kirby said. “I am so glad I did. I kept some things of mine in his room. I cried when he died. I thought it was a dirty trick. We do feel it. We do hurt. And then I thought, oh, I am so glad someone cared about me.”

—Tom Carter

ZEBE BAPTISTE
Free spirit
Zebie Baptiste, a free-spirited former resident of the Camelot Hotel, died Nov. 18 at Saint Francis Hospital. She was 49.

“Zebie was one of the sweetest people I knew,” Shannon Hugon, the support services manager of the hotel, said. “She didn’t like being held down or confined. I miss her.”

Ms. Baptiste, a four-year resident of the Camelot on Turk Street, moved from the hotel Oct. 2, said Hugon.

A memorial at the hotel for Ms. Baptiste attended by 12 people was conducted by the Rev. Glenda Hope on Dec. 11. “We had a good working relationship,” Ms. Baptiste’s case manager said. “She always made me laugh. But the Tenderloin wasn’t for her. Life wasn’t easy.”

Ms. Baptiste was from San Diego and of Irish extraction, said her case manager, and she suffered from emphysema.

The Rev. Hope invited people to light small candles at the altar where a large bouquet of flowers and a photograph of Ms. Baptiste, who had green eyes and red hair, was placed.

“She was really a beautiful person — especially after treatment. She really tried to stay sober,” said one mourner. “Zebie kept a childlike heart.”

—John Goins
Sixth Street residents complain of late-night noise
No solution — 2nd meeting with Club Six scheduled

S
ith Sixth Street has become the place to be — night, especially on weekends, if you're young and want to party. And the most happening place is Club Six at the corner of Stevenson. It's owned by Angel Cruz, who says he bought the place in 2001 and has invested $1 million in the club, including $10,000 worth of soundproofing to tone down the 12-speaker sound system that booms out of the basement.

Open every night from 9 p.m. to about 3 a.m., Club Six offers a variety of music from house bands to reggae, with DJs and live performances, plus fashion shows and other hip events. An upstairs lounge has high ceilings and sofas, and in the basement is a dance floor. Capacity: 494.

But for the residents of nearby SROs, the club is loud and noisy. They say they can't sleep. One of them complained to the police, and others contacted the Central City SRO Collaborative. On Nov. 21, a group met at Club Six with owner Cruz and Capt. Denis O'Leary of Southern Station to air the complaints. About two dozen people were at the meeting.

"My room faces away from the club," said Rick Cleveland, who lives at the 200-room Seneca Hotel across the alley. "I can hear boom! boom! boom! and every lyric they play."

"Buddy, you want to know what it's like? You come here at 3 in the morning," said David Riley, a tenant of the Baldwin House hotel, a few doors down from the Seneca. "It might sound like a lot of fun, but let's face it, you wouldn't want to be here."

Riley carried a petition that included complaints from residents of the Seneca, Hilldale, Lawrence and Baldwin House hotels.

"I've installed $110,000 of soundproofing," Cruz said at the meeting, and it included layers of sheet rock for the walls and vinyl curtains for all of the doors. "At 11 o'clock at night those walls vibrate," said one tenant. "I've called the police several times. Cruz has never been cited."

O'Leary said in a telephone interview there had been only one complaint about noise lodged against Club Six in the last three months.

"We've received 50 to 100 complaints in the last two years," Dwight Saunders, an outreach specialist of the SRO Collaborative, said, adding that about six tenants won a court settlement against Cruz this year because of the noise, he said.

"He's absolutely wrong," Cruz said. "There was no settlement involving half a dozen people. One person took me to Small Claims Court for a few hundred dollars."

Club Six gets music lovers. We get a lot of artists and performers. You'll find that Claro's Pizza does a lot of business because of us," Cruz said. "I care about the neighborhood. We respect the residents here. I was born in Harlem — born and raised in the projects. I know what it's like."

Cruz, a board member of the nonprofit Urban Solutions, an organization working to improve the area, also mentioned other businesses in the neighborhood such as the city's SRO Collaborative, who facilitates the meeting, said the use of sound limiters for the club's music system might address some of the community's concerns.

"A sound limiter puts a ceiling on the output of a sound system so that the overall sound doesn't go above or below a certain level," said Vajra Grunelli, the sound inspector for the Entertainment Commission, who also attended the meeting.

Cruz said his club has sound limiters. In an interview after the meeting, Cruz said he didn't think the meeting was fair.

"We bring in a number of people on the weekends who would never make it to Sixth Street. I have the right to run my business as I choose. Club Six has helped to make this neighborhood safe," he said.

There was no clear resolution to the tenants complaints. A follow-up meeting will be held at Club Six on Jan. 30 at 7 p.m.

By John Goins

TENDERLOIN HEALTH Outreach and Community Events January 2007

Health Promotion Forum
Topic: Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Speaker: To be decided
Date/Time: January 10, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

HIV Services Forum
Topic: Street Drugs and HIV meds
Speaker: Jay Fournier, Abbott Labs
Date/Time: January 24, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Client Advisory Panel
Come talk with Tenderloin Health's Executive Director and program managers about plans for Tenderloin Health. Also provide input on new services and how we can improve.
Date/Time: Wednesday, January 10, 11:30 am - 1 pm;
Wednesday, January 31, 11:30 am - 1 pm

Volunteer and Intern for Tenderloin Health
Orientation: Sunday, January 14, 12 pm - 3:30 pm
220 Golden Gate Ave., 3rd Floor
lunch provided
You must pre-register for volunteer trainings.
Stop in/call Emile (415) 954-1792.
For current groups' schedule or for more information call: 415.431.7476 or go to www.tenderloinhealth.org

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Attend a workshop and give us your feedback on plans to fix it.

Tuesday, January 23
6:30pm-8:30pm
Bill Graham Civic Auditorium
99 Grove Street

Wednesday, January 24
6:30pm-8:30pm
Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center
660 Lombard Street

Saturday, January 27
10 am to noon
Southeast Community Facility
Alex Pitcher Conference Room
1800 Oakdale Avenue

Get info, give input at sfsewers.org
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS
Annual Japanese bell-ringing ceremony, Dec. 31, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Asian Art Museum. Get tickets after 10 a.m. in South Court to be part of the 108 groups that will strike a 2,100-pound, 16th-century bronze bell with a log, symbolically welcoming the New Year and cutting the 108 bonno (mental desires) that, according to Buddhist belief, torment humankind. Information: 581-3500 or www.asianart.org.

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE
HOUSING
Supportive Housing Network, 4th Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., location TBA. Contact Alexa Hopper, 421-2925 x302.

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. Contact 1st Thursday of the month.

Health & Wellness Action Advocates, 1st Wednesday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m. Location changes monthly. To receive monthly information by e-mail, contact Lisa Block, 338-8100 ext. 202. Libblock@list.org.

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

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., 301 Eddy. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or sf_district6@yahoo.com. Districtwide association, civic education. Friends of Boeddeker Park, 3rd Saturday of the month, 9-noon, organized by the Friends of Boeddeker Park. To RSVP to work or for information, contact the Neighborhood Parks Council, 821-3360.

Central City Democrats, meets four times a year, 301 Eddy St. Community Room. Addresses District 6 and San Francisco. Voter education forums. Information: 339-1016 (8686) or centralcitydemocrats@yahoo.com.

Community Leadership Alliance, CLA Community Advocacy Commission monthly meeting, City Hall, Room 034. Subcommittee meetings and informational forums held monthly at the Tenderloin Police Station Community Room. Information: David Villellobos, admin@CommunityLeadershipAlliance.net.

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, 931-1176.

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: 564-9532

Mid-Market Project Area Committee, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 9:30 a.m., 1333 Mission #700. Pedestrian Safety, third Wednesday, 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, 1-3 p.m.; Information: 546-1333 and www.senioractionnetwork.org.

SUPERVISORS’ COMMITTEES
City Hall, Room 263
Budget Committee, Daly, Duffy, Peskin, Thursday, 1 p.m.
City Services Committee, McGuire, Duffy, Ma, first and third Monday, 5 p.m.
Land Use Committee, Maxwell, Sandoval, McGuire, Wednesday, 1 p.m.

The central city’s voice just got louder.

Central City Extra is now on SFGate. The Extra is one of the Gate’s new Community Blogs. The Chronicle’s SFGate is the 4th largest news Web site with 6.5 million views daily.

We are posting The Extra’s stories on our Gate blog, which we call Tenderloin Beat. We are also posting stories not printed in The Extra. Check out Tenderloin Beat at SFGate.com.