

D.A.'s office gives \$30,000 to strengthen neighborhoods

Pair of grants will benefit Tenderloin

By JONATHAN NEWMAN

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S office has awarded 10 Neighborhood Justice Fund grants to raise crime prevention awareness and build community strength through public events. The grants, up to \$3,000 each, were announced Aug. 17 and totaled \$29,974.

Two grantees have a distinct presence in the Tenderloin — Glide, the newly minted brand under which Glide Memorial Church conducts a wealth of community programs, and Livable City, a nonprofit that promotes innovations in transportation, open space and accessible neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Justice Fund monies come from restitution payments made

by people found culpable of low-level misdemeanors in the 10 neighborhood courts District Attorney George Gascón initiated in 2012. The first-time offenders can atone for any harm through community work and fines, thereby avoiding a criminal record.

Glide's grant of \$2,992 will support the work of its Women's Center and its Center for Social Justice, which Aug. 21 debuted an eight-week workshop on human trafficking. To promote the workshop, photographs of sex

trade and slavery victims were displayed at Sunday morning services.

"It helps people to see the faces of the victims," says Stephanie Gonzales, the Women's Center's advocacy and outreach coordinator. "We encourage the workshop participants to name these victims, to personalize them as their daughters and sons, to restore their humanity. Part of the great difficulty for victims is the dehumanization. They live in constant fear of harm. They are told their families will be harmed if they try to break away."

Livable City will use its \$3,000 grant to hire and train neighborhood residents in support of Sunday Streets. Livable City had hoped to get the grant in time to recruit Tenderloin residents for the TL Sunday Streets, but the July 10 event came and went before the awards were announced.

Now, it will use the funds to hire Western Addition residents for that community's Sept. 11 Sunday Streets. Katy Birnbaum, director of the eight-year old Sunday Streets program, will be working with SuccessSF and the Western Addition Assistance Center to recruit and hire ambassadors.

"We've found it's a great boost for the event when merchants and residents are directly invited to participate by their friends and neighbors," Birnbaum said.

Despite such joyful civic celebrations, crime remains a pervasive city problem. Last year, the number of car break-ins in San Francisco increased 47%, an average of 66 a day citywide.

Fisherman's Wharf Community Benefit District and the Middle Polk Neighborhood Association both plan to develop and distribute auto burglary prevention materials to tourists, merchants and residents with their grants.

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CENTRAL CITY



SAN FRANCISCO

25TH ANNIVERSARY



David Kleinberg was a reporter for Stars and Stripes in Vietnam in 1966. "Hey, Hey, LBJ," his one-man show with stories from the front, is based on his experiences under fire in places like this outpost in Cu Chi. "How many kids did you kill today?" Shows are Sept. 10, 16, 17 and 22.

FRINGEAPALOOZA

Milestone cements the Exit's essential role in S.F. theater

By MARK HEDIN

SAN FRANCISCO'S FRINGE FESTIVAL is turning 25 this month, nice staying power for an organization with few rules or boundaries.

"It's all about the artists," Richard Livingston, EXIT Theatre managing director, said of the Tenderloin's longest-running, widest-reaching cultural event. In keeping with the Exit's mission of helping theater artists develop by providing them performance opportunities, all the money from ticket sales goes to the performers and their teams.

The S.F. Fringe is "non-curated," Livingston emphasizes, just like most North American fringe festivals, which form a sort of vaudeville-circuit style of venues. It means the festival lineup is drawn from a hat. This year, 140 performers' names were stuffed in the hat — and 38 were drawn out and offered the opportunity to perform at this year's milestone festival.

Artistic Director Christina Augello also expressed pride at hosting this "grassroots festival," and then, at the Aug. 20 "Sneak Peek" show, turned it over to host Mark Roman to present the lineup.

Michael Patrick Gaffney kicked things off

with an excerpt from "The Oldest Living Cater Waiter: My Life in Three Courses." He told of his thrill, not long after arriving in San Francisco, at landing his first acting job that got him in the actors' union. "I would be living my dream," he said. But there was a catch: "I had to take my clothes off."

In this excerpt from his autobiographical show, the waiter's apron Gaffney wore featured a life-size image of Michelangelo's iconic nude "David" printed on the front. It's for audiences who are at least 16 years old, the festival program cautions.

David Kleinberg presented his autobiographical "Hey, Hey, LBJ," about a smart-ass San Francisco kid finding himself wearing combat boots in the middle of Vietnam when the Cold War turned hot in the 1960s. "Hey, Hey, LBJ" has played all across the country, in Ho Chi Minh City on the anniversary of the fall of Saigon, and is booked in New York and Sydney, Australia, soon, too.

It also sold out a brief run at the Marsh last year. At Fringe, the 70-minute show plays Sept. 10, 16, 17 and 22.

Kleinberg was editor of the Chronicle's Pink section for decades and has another autobiographical show about living with sex addiction.

"The Fringe is open to anybody," Livingston said. Exit takes the performers at their word that they have something worth seeing, so anything goes. "There's a certain Dada-esque quality to it," he said, and it's hard to know ahead of time what to expect. "Whatever information we have, we put out there," Livingston said, "photos, descriptions, bios of artists or creators."

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