

# GOOD NEWS for...

**COURT WATCHERS** San Francisco Superior Court has gone cyber with Moving Justice Forward, its new blog: [sfcollaborativejustice.blogspot.com](http://sfcollaborativejustice.blogspot.com). The site has information about the city's collaborative justice programs — Behavioral Health Court, Dependency Drug Court, Proposition 36 Court, Juvenile Drug Court, Community Court and its newest, the proposed but not-quite-for-sure-yet Community Justice Center at 555 Polk. Links abound — to the Office of the Controller's 34-page April assessment of the center; to all of the city's collaborative justice programs; to state and national community justice resources; to a national roundup of media stories and agency reports; and to a category called "Offbeat & Controversial," which currently features a CNN.com story, "Judge: Learn English or go to jail." (That was a Pennsylvania judge's order to Spanish-speaking robbers, not an editorial on the judge's language skills.) You can subscribe to the blog and get email notifications when it's updated. Blog contributors include Jennifer Pasinosky, coordinator of Dependency Drug Court; Danica Jardini, Moving Justice Forward coordinator; Lisa Lightman, director of collaborative justice courts; Leslie Cogan, assistant district attorney for the Behavioral Health Court; and Kathleen Lacey, citywide case manager for Behavioral Health Court.

**MUSIC LOVERS** Free live music, part of People in Plazas' noontime summer concerts, begins July 11 at newly renovated Mint Plaza, on Fifth Street between Mission and Market, and continues every Friday till the end of summer. Local artists perform reggae, jazz, swing and salsa; there also are special events, discounts and promotions. Get the complete lineup of events — sponsored by the new Central Market Community Benefit District and Friends of Mint Plaza — at [peopleinplazas.org](http://peopleinplazas.org), [mintplazasf.org](http://mintplazasf.org) and [central-market.org](http://central-market.org).

**FAMILY FUN-SEEKERS** In May, the Asian Art Museum launched First Free Sundays — free admission the first Sunday of every month. It replaces Target Tuesdays, the popular free admission day sponsored by Target that began when the museum opened in 2003. Besides admission, also free on those Sundays will be family programs such as drop-in art classes for kids and parents, storytelling, and Yogi Kids, where yoga guru Lorna Reed brings sculptures from the museum's South Asian galleries to life through active movement and mudras (mime and dance gestures). Information: 581-3500 or [asianart.org/programs.htm](http://asianart.org/programs.htm).

If you have some good news, send it to [marjorie@studycenter.org](mailto:marjorie@studycenter.org) or [tom@studycenter.org](mailto:tom@studycenter.org).

# Justice Center holdup

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

LISA Lightman, collaborative justice courts director, came to the May meeting just hours before facing the supes' Budget and Finance Committee — the next hurdle for the nascent Community Justice Center.

Last year, the supes put \$500,000 in reserve for the center. Besides the two holding cells for people nabbed in the Tenderloin and SoMa for misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies, the center also would have a courtroom and Superior Court judge to hear their cases, and social service providers on site to try to break the miscreants' expensive habit of cycling in and out of jail. With fanfare, in December city officials showed off their chosen site for the center, 555 Polk, which they want to lease from building owner California Culinary Academy.

Lightman described her expectations for the center and that day's committee meeting.

"We're asking for that setback — it will pay for the cells plus the buildout of the second floor," she said. "I'm here asking the community to support us, to validate the center now, today."

Asked how she expected the supes to vote, Lightman was upbeat: They were sure to release the funds, she said, because it would be "extraordinarily short-sighted of the city to end this project now and not go forward."

But that afternoon, Supervisors Chris Daly, Jake McGoldrick and Ross Mirkarami, citing the city's dire financial situation, proposed carrying the \$500,000 to next fiscal year, temporarily killing it. Supervisors Carmen Chu and Sean Elsbernd, voting against the rollover, were, well, rolled over. Next day, the mayor was reported to be talking about a November ballot initiative to get the center up and running. The following week at the full board meeting, center supporter Supe Bevan Duffy introduced legis-

lation to fund the center; it is expected to be heard June 10.

## GLIDE HOUSING LOTTERY

Deborah Whittle, executive director of housing for Glide Economic Development Corp., brought news of Glide's newest building — 125 Mason St.

"I encourage providers and other workers in the 94102 area to apply for the slots in this building," Whittle said. Glide's handout calls it "affordable work-force housing in the heart of downtown San Francisco."

You'd need a job to afford one of the 81 apartments in the 14-story building, bright red with accents of yellow, white, green and blue. Rent for a one-bedroom will be \$1,079; to be eligible, a single person can earn no more than \$39,600 a year, or 60% AMI. For eight people, the maximum yearly family income is \$72,250 with a four-bedroom apartment costing \$1,425.

The building will be ready for occupancy in late September. Glide will take applications for four weeks, starting mid-June, then hold a lottery in July that gives preference to applicants living and working in the city. Hotline for more info: 674-6121.

## FARMS IN TENDERLOIN?

No one who lives or works in the Tenderloin would be surprised at Kevin Bayuk's finding: The TL has the fewest empty lots of any neighborhood in the city. Bayuk, an urban gardening activist who works with the San Francisco Permaculture Guild, told the

Collaborative that he wants city dwellers to turn nonproductive spaces — whole lots or portions of lots — into places to grow food.

His survey found 1,051 privately owned spaces in the city that fit the bill; 40 are in the Tenderloin. And if they'll be vacant at least a year, he'll ask property owners for permission to bring in gardeners and plant food crops. The owner would have no liability, and the gardeners would even pull weeds.

Bayuk says he has to refine his database of owners before he plows forward. Meantime, he ran down a list of other programs that green-thumbers might want to get involved in:

- Greening sidewalks through Plant\*SF, a project of San Francisco Parks Trust ([plantsf.org](http://plantsf.org)), removes excess sidewalks and beautifies with ornamental, low-maintenance, native and drought-tolerant species.

- Victory Gardens 2008, a project of Garden for the Environment and the city's Department for the Environment, will choose 15 households to participate in the two-year pilot. A team helps install the garden and provides ongoing support. The idea is to turn backyards, front yards, window boxes, rooftops and unused land into food production areas.

"It would be great to have one of the households be from the Tenderloin," Bayuk said. "I think they'd have a good chance, since they're looking for diverse settings." See [svictorygardens.org](http://svictorygardens.org) for information and application. ■

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Editor:

I really enjoyed reading your article on the Essex opening. I must admit that I liked the captions under photos of me and Mayor Newsom, especially the part about the mayor admitting I was right. However, I want to clarify that the tiff you were referring to in the story had nothing to do with the Essex. Everyone in City government, including the mayor, was very supportive of the Essex right from the start. The tiff I referred to in my speech was regarding the allocation of HUD funding for homeless programs that the city receives each year. During his speech at the Essex opening, the mayor acknowledged that the organizations I was repre-

senting won the battle over how that HUD funding was allocated. However, I do not believe the mayor thinks we were right. As I said during the opening, regardless of our various disagreements, it is nice when we can all come together to develop more housing and services for very low-income San Franciscans.

In any event, I really liked the article and have already arranged to have it framed! Thanks to Tom and everyone at the San Francisco Study Center for publishing the Central City Extra, it is a wonderful community resource.

Jeff Kositsky, Executive Director  
Community Housing Partnership



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

**PHONE:** (415) 626-1650  
**FAX:** (415) 626-7276  
**E-MAIL:** [centralcityextra@studycenter.org](mailto:centralcityextra@studycenter.org)  
**EDITOR AND PUBLISHER:** Geoffrey Link  
**SENIOR WRITER/EDITOR:** Marjorie Beggs  
**REPORTERS:** Tom Carter, Ed Bowers, John Goins, Anne Marie Jordan, Phil Tracy  
**DESIGN AND LAYOUT:** Lenny Limjoco  
**PHOTOGRAPHER:** Lenny Limjoco  
**CONTRIBUTORS:** Diamond Dave, William Crain, Mark Hedin, John Burks  
**DESIGN CONSULTANT:** Don McCartney  
**DISTRIBUTION:** Leticia Sanchez and JohnDavid Nuñez  
**EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** David Baker, Michael Nulty, Debbie Larkin, Nicholas Rosenberg, Brad Paul, Tariq Alazraie

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