

**PATRICIA CARLOS**  
**Everyone's friend at the Senator**

**Patricia Carlos**  
*with Senator resident, the late Dan O'Connell, and his dog Ruby, during a work day.*

It was fitting that Patricia Carlos ended up at the Senator Hotel.

She grew up on the Salt River Pima Maricopa reservation near Scottsdale, Ariz., before fate brought her to the SRO on Ellis Street when she was 32.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLIAM DONLON

The Senator became famous as a harbor for American Indians when, on June 11, 1971, it welcomed the last of the American Indians from various tribes that federal marshals evicted from Alcatraz after their 19-month occupation. The hotel furnished them rooms overnight, plus the lobby for press conferences.

Ms. Carlos was present at the hotel's June 9, 2006, "Remembrance and Resistance" ceremony. It commemorated the 35th anniversary of the Indians' "last stay among the residents of the Tenderloin," a wall plaque near the front door says.

And in her second-floor room, Ms. Carlos kept her heritage close. A flag showing the "End of the Trail" solitary horseman — sculptor James Earle Fraser's famous uncopyrighted image — dominated one wall and pictures of handsome chiefs decorated other walls, according to her next-door neighbor William Donlon, 72.

But there was only one identity the 20 mourners who jammed her Sept. 8 memorial in the hotel's small community room cared about: first and foremost, she was a friend. Men and women passionately described the short, stout Pima Indian as a wonderful, cheerful spirit among them, a person who brought joy to their daily lives and someone who listened.

Ms. Carlos died Aug. 26 in UC Parnassus Hospital of cirrhosis of the liver, Donlon said. She was 51. Her health had been declining for a couple of weeks.

She was one of the hotel's longest-term residents. The Senator reopened as an SRO in 1992, according to its Website, but Donlon remembers Ms. Carlos being there several months before he moved in, in the summer of 1991.

Ms. Carlos was lively and inspiring, a person with "cute energy" who never complained, her friends said.

A gray-bearded man in a wheelchair struggling for words remembered her good sense of humor. Jessie, a black-bearded man, recalled how well they got along and said his loss hurt like getting "shot in the back." Tony Davidson, a large black man, was grateful for the eight years he knew her and said her personality brought the hotel's community closer. She often told him a "turtle story" that reminded him to slow down. A young black woman stood and sang "How Great Thou Art."

"My dog bit 14 people, especially alcoholics," said a tall, white man who had walked in with a black dog. "And if the dog didn't bite her, well, she had good qualities."

"She was the best friend I ever had," said another man standing in front and facing the crowd. "I'm separated from my family in Alabama and I'm happy to have had a

friend who was nurturing and supportive. It breaks my heart to lose a friend like that."

Ms. Carlos received the reservation's twice-a-month newspaper, AU-AUTHM Action News, in the mail and returned periodically to her roots. Her father visited her on occasion, too. A few years ago, he and his daughter and Donlon went to Muir Woods in Marin County.

"She loved to travel and went to Thailand twice and Hawaii once," said Donlon who helped clean her room. "We were going to go to Disneyland but we never made it."

"They sent her body back to the reservation. She was proud she was Indian." ■

—TOM CARTER

**PANDORA BEDNAR**  
**'Stood up for down-and-out'**

For the second time in less than a month, residents and staff mourned the loss of a parent who lived among them at the Senator Hotel. Four years ago, Pandora Bednar moved into the hotel with her 6-year-old daughter, Destiny. They lived there until Ms. Bednar's death Sept. 6. She was 39.

"The bond between her and her daughter was wonderful to see," Janice Knight, a Senator resident for the last year, said at the Sept. 15 memorial. "I loved Pandora and I'll miss her, but she was in a lot of pain."

Staff Counselor Kelly McNeil said that while Ms. Bednar "had some barriers" in her life, she was loved by many.

"If you needed something, that became Pandora's greatest task," recalled Robert Webber, who knew her for a year and a half and was close to her. "She stood up for the down-and-out — she even took in others who needed a place to stay."

Taking care of her daughter was most important to her, and she often had pizza parties for Destiny and her friends, Webber said. Ms. Bednar grew up in the Bay Area, he added, and had been a drug and alcohol counselor at Walden House, which provides residential, outpatient and prevention services.

"I know that she had had some kind of brain trauma, but I don't know if that was the cause of her death," Webber said.

A Senator resident was visibly shaken as she recounted being with Ms. Bednar the day she died: "She was a good friend. We'd had a tuna sandwich together. We smoked a cigarette together. Then she went out."

Hotel staff said that Ms. Bednar's daughter has gone to live with her grandmother in San Francisco. ■

—MARJORIE BEGGS



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