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BAY AREA

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Tenderloin church's \$12 million remake

New look overwhelms faithful at reopening

By **Ryan Kim**

CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Ministers of the faith are supposed to believe in miracles.

Even so, the priests at St. Boniface Church in San Francisco's Tenderloin district said they have been quietly humbled by the \$12 million restoration and retrofit of the historic church, which has exceeded their wildest dreams.

On Saturday, congregants of the Catholic church gathered to bless the venerable building, which will reopen today with a celebratory Mass.

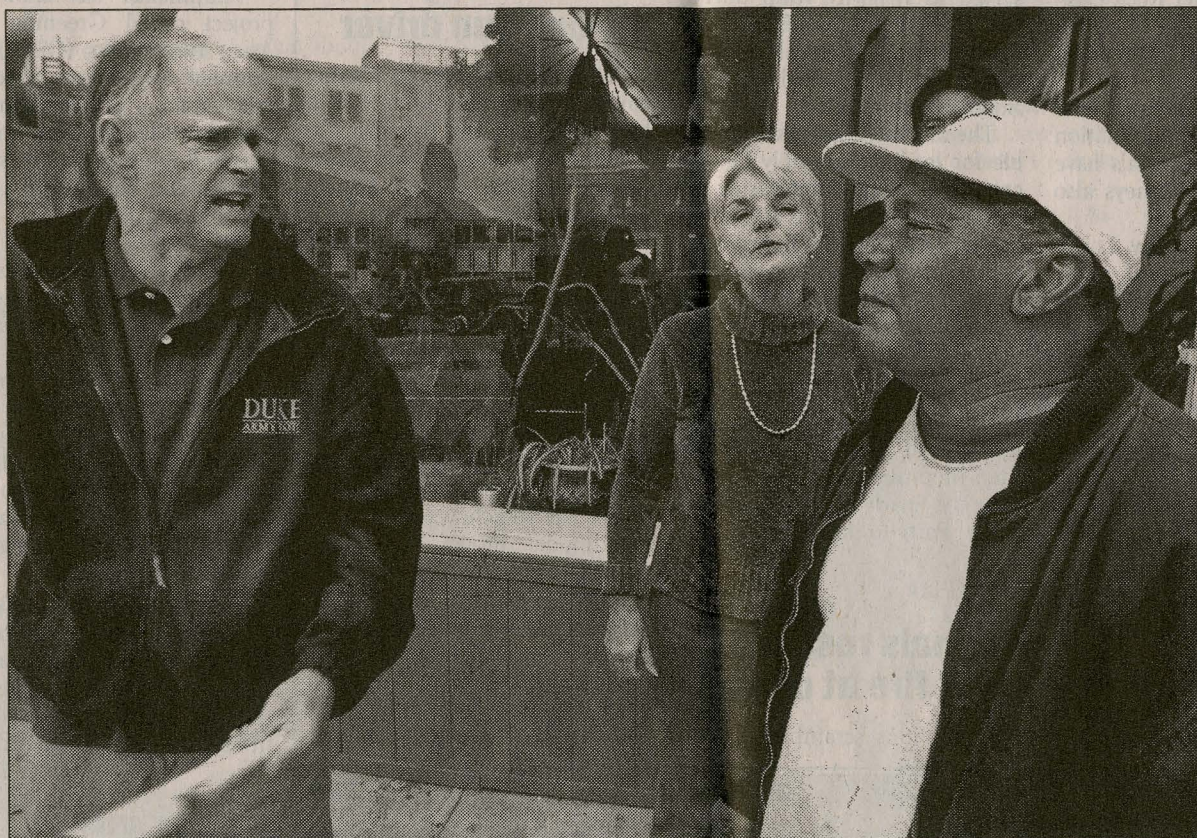
The building needed a drastic makeover to meet seismic safety standards, and when the project started five years ago, many parishioners wondered how they'd pay for the project.

"It seemed like a hopeless task; they were talking millions of dollars," said the Rev. Louis Vitale. "It's just incredible what's happened. It's a sign of faith."

St. Boniface's restoration is the latest chapter in an inspiring history. The church opened in 1860 on Sutter Street and moved to its current location at 133 Golden Gate Ave. in 1902. It was nearly destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and rebuilt two years later.

In the decades since, the church has steadfastly served some of the city's neediest residents, including the homeless, drug addicts and those with HIV

North Beach's homegrown homeless center raises ire of some residents



JOHN STOREY / The Chronicle

Richard Hanlin (left) argues with Joe Vaughn, who is homeless, in front of the North Beach Citizens homeless center as Executive Director Charee Lord looks on. Some residents are upset with the 2-year-old facility.

Storm over the shelter



Matier & Ross

128th time: Angry drunk in tank, again

Chronic drinker soaks up police, hospital resources

Heeeeeee's back. **Paul Sanchez**, the public drunk who had been picked up a dizzying 124 times in San Francisco the last time we counted, is back in jail again — having clocked up another four arrests for some form of public drunkenness.

Sanchez now resides in the medical wing of the County Jail, doing a 130-day stretch for resisting arrest after throwing an empty vodka bottle at a cop. The cop had revived him while Sanchez lay passed out in a doorway near Castro and Market.

Sanchez is a legend among the city's beat cops and paramedics — and he's become Exhibit A for the growing problems caused by the city's street people.

His latest arrest, while hair-raising, was also typical for Sanchez.

It all started Sept. 25 when the cops got a call about a drunk passed out in a store doorway where Sanchez has repeatedly

Back in custody

One of the most egregious examples of San Francisco's homeless problem is the system's difficulty in dealing with Paul Sanchez, who has been arrested 128 times and taken to the hospital 50 times.



and AIDS.

Saturday's grand reopening had special meaning for parishioners, many of whom also came for the 13th Annual Blessing of the Animals ceremony.

"This place is blessed, it's a sanctuary," said Anna Aureoles, 54, a longtime member who brought her Labrador retriever-German shepherd mix named Henry Miller to be blessed. "The church really thinks about people in the Tenderloin and serves the community here in every way possible."

In 1992, the church's future was in doubt after a city ordinance required brick buildings to be retrofitted for seismic safety or face closure.

The congregation of more than 1,000 largely immigrant and poor families responded with a fundraising drive. During the past five years, they've received more than 4,000 donations ranging from a few nickels to \$1 million.

"It's really a miracle that we could come up with \$12 million," said Vitale. "How?"

The money has helped strengthen the building and refurbish an adjacent middle school building, the basement theater and the church's friary. During the two-year construction period, the parishioners met during the

► **BONIFACE:** Page A30 Col. 1

By Ilene Lelchuk
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

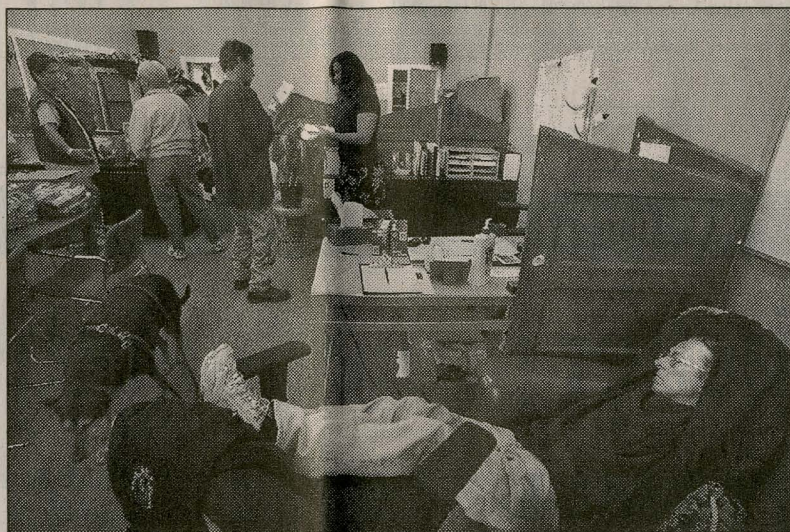
In North Beach, between an Italian restaurant and a cafe on Columbus Avenue, the quintessential San Francisco fight boiled over to the sidewalk well-trod by tourists. Smokey Joe, who has lived on the streets for 15 years, was drunk and angry. North Beach resident Richard Hanlin was steaming mad, too.

"I'd wish you'd go away," Hanlin, a neighborhood landlord, said last week as he walked past Smokey Joe, who wore a stained gray sweatshirt and stood outside the North Beach Citizens homeless center.

Smokey Joe, a.k.a. Joe Vaughn, narrowed his eyes at Hanlin in his Duke University jacket and spat: "I served in Vietnam."

Smokey Joe is a regular at the center, an innovative neighborhood answer to the city's growing homeless population. It's also North Beach's latest controversy.

The small center on Columbus Avenue was opened two years ago by prominent North Beach residents, pulled together by Oscar-winning director Francis Ford Coppola, who were tired of waiting for city govern-



BRANT WARD / The Chronicle

North Beach Citizens center offers Robert Fisher, and other homeless people, a place to nap. Tiny the dog wanders by Fisher's makeshift bed.

ment to solve the intractable homeless problem.

But instead of opening to rave reviews, this production is meeting neighborhood resentment.

That's the rub in a city with at least 8,000 homeless people, where frustrated residents and merchants complain about panhandlers, drug abuse and mental illness on the streets—but don't want the social services in their

backyards.

The argument between Hanlin and Smokey Joe wasn't personal. Smokey Joe wants a place to hang out during the day and get a hot breakfast of instant soup or oatmeal. And Hanlin, an outspoken critic, says that place is attracting more homeless drunks, drug addicts and mentally ill people to the tourist-heavy commer-

► **HOMELESS:** Page A29 Col. 1

passed out in a store doorway where Sanchez has repeatedly been picked up in the past.

Officers showed up and found Sanchez, sleeping in his own excrement. They woke him up and told him he was violating the stay-away order imposed on him five arrests ago.

"F—the judge! I can stay here if I want to!" Sanchez screamed, according to the police report. Then he picked up the empty vodka bottle and threw it at the cop.

More police were called—and so was an ambulance. Sanchez tried to spit on the cops.

When they got there, medics had to wrap Sanchez in a bio-hazard bag and a blanket, then tie him down with restraints before putting him in the ambulance.

From there, he was taken to San Francisco General Hospital, where medical crews cut off his clothing—and burned it—sponged him off, checked him out and sent him off to jail.

The ambulance that brought him in had to be deloused.

All in all, it took up a good part of two cops' day, plus the ER staff at San Francisco General, plus the ambulance ride, which alone cost the city about \$1,000.

And that pretty much sums up Sanchez's 128th trip to jail—and

► **M&R:** Page A29 Col. 5



Aug. 24, 2001



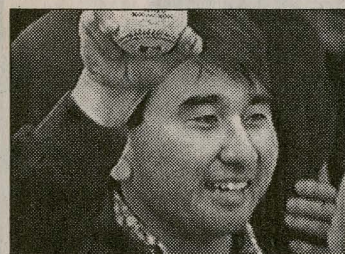
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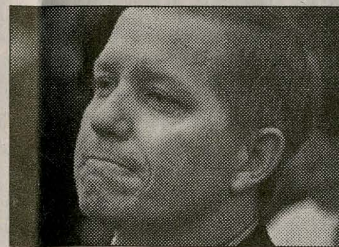
Aug. 25, 2002



KNTV

Patrick Hayashi holds the infamous ball aloft last Oct. 7.

73rd homer ball — will ruling hammer fans?



ERIC RISBERG / Associated Press

Alex Popov says he had the ball first; therefore, it's his.

Lawyers say ballpark culture will change; teams say not a chance

By Joe Garofoli
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

On Monday, a year to the day after Barry Bonds swatted his record-breaking 73rd home run of the 2001 season into a ravenous pit of wannabe millionaires, the two men who think they should own the ball will finally have their day in court.

A San Francisco judge will begin hearing testimony from former major league umpires, eye-

witnesses, official scorers, accident reconstruction experts and baseball-spouting legal scholars, and review the much-seen news footage of No. 73's final airborne moments. The trial is expected to last two weeks.

Which is good news for Alex Popov, the 38-year-old Berkeley restaurant owner who first got his mitt on the ball and is now suing to try to get it back. He has sunk well over \$100,000 into legal fees. With the meter still running, he

elected to have a judge hear the case instead of a jury to save time and cash.

And even though a civil court judge dismissed claims of assault last month against Patrick Hayashi, the 37-year-old Sacramento-area resident who ended up with the ball, Hayashi still feels he must clear his name in court. And, said some legal observers, with his attorney working on a contingency fee, the chance of a late-inning compromise may be a-waaaay

back and gone.

After all, the ball could be worth more than \$1 million to its eventual owner.

Minus attorney fees.

For the rest of the world without a financial stake in the outcome of Popov v. Hayashi, the past 365 days have offered a season's worth of opportunities to be entertained.

The story of who owns No. 73 has become fodder for document-

► **BONDS:** Page A27 Col. 1

CAMPAIGN 2002

First and only debate a Monday matinee

Voters get hour to see Davis, Simon together

By John Wildermuth
CHRONICLE POLITICAL WRITER

Democratic Gov. Gray Davis and Republican challenger Bill Simon meet Monday afternoon in what's likely to be the only debate of the campaign.

The hourlong, noon debate, which will be televised live across the state, will be the only chance for voters to go beyond the flood of 30-second ads and get an unfiltered look at the men who want to run California for the next four years.

The political scrimmaging that

► **CAMPAIGN:** Page A29 Col. 1

Debate coverage

The Los Angeles gubernatorial debate between Democratic Gov. Gray Davis and Republican Bill Simon will take place from noon to 1 p.m. Monday.

► **Television:** Broadcast live in the Bay Area by KTVU-TV, Channel 2, and in Sacramento by KXTL-TV, Channel 40. San Francisco's KQED-TV, Channel 9, will rebroadcast the debate at 2 p.m. Monday.

► **Radio:** KQED-FM, 88.5, will broadcast the debate live. KCBS-AM, 740, will rebroadcast the debate at 8 p.m. Monday.

Davis, Simon to star unscripted in one-hour debate

► CAMPAIGN

From Page A23

has thus far minimized the number of debates to a single matinee appearance cheats voters out of a real opportunity to assess the candidates, analysts said.

"I think candidates owe voters a look at what they'll do as governor," said Barbara O'Connor, director of the Institute for the Study of Politics and Media at California State University at Sacramento. "A debate provides a unique window into the candidate's soul. At the very least, it's an hour of nonstop exposure, absent his handlers."

The single debate, sponsored by the Los Angeles Times, is a disappointment for Simon, the

challenger who had called for a series of pre-time meetings with the governor. But Davis balked at plans for more debates and refused Simon's call for an evening event that would have included Green Party candidate Peter Camejo.

"It's going to be a short debate and we wish there were more," said Mark Miner, a Simon campaign spokesman. "But we're just hopeful that (Davis) will show up."

There's nothing unusual about an incumbent shying away from debates.

Four years ago, when Davis, the lieutenant governor, was challenging Republican Dan Lungren for the open seat, the two men

met four times in the months before the election. But in 1994, incumbent Republican Pete Wilson agreed to only a single debate with Democratic challenger Kathleen Brown.

"Unless an incumbent really enjoys the environment around the debates, he usually isn't going to be too interested," O'Connor said. "The conventional wisdom says that you're only giving free media time to your opponent."

The California Broadcasters Association helped put on a pair of debates during this year's Republican primary and has been involved in numerous debate discussions over the years.

This fall, the association had reserved space for debates at Sac-

ramento State and at California State University at Fullerton. But no agreement could be reached with the candidates.

"All we can do is make an offer," said Mark Powers, who was involved in the negotiations. "But both campaigns have to decide what's best for their candidate."

Voters choose governors for more than just their stands on the issues, O'Connor added. They want to feel they know the people they're voting for, to feel their charisma, which comes across better in an unscripted debate than in a carefully planned TV ad.

Both campaigns expressed confidence in their candidates' abilities to use the debate to their advantage.

"It's an opportunity for Bill Si-

mon to tell people about his vision for California," said Minor, the campaign spokesman. "We're confident that the more people who see him and hear his plans, the more people who will vote for him."

The governor has similar plans.

"Gray Davis is hoping to get across the clear differences that exist between his vision for moving California forward and Simon's conservative ideology that would take the state back into the past," said Roger Salazar, a spokesman for the Davis campaign.

While candidates like to talk about how important the issues are in a debate, it's almost a given that at some time during the

hour, they'll try to draw blood from their opponent.

Going by his television ads, Davis is likely to jab Simon over the Republican's opposition to abortion and his record as a businessman. On the other side, Simon will probably bring up questions about the governor's fund raising.

In a short debate, O'Connor warned, it's easy for the attacks to overshadow everything else.

"Voters want to know what they will do differently to benefit the people of California," she said. "I don't think anyone wants to hear about how bad their opponent is."

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Masa Hirayama cleans the sidewalk on Columbus Avenue in front of the North Beach Citizens homeless center.

Photos by BRANT WARD / The Chronicle

Pelosi a hero, but without illusions

► M&R

From Page A23

from what we hear, his 50th ambulance trip this year to the ER.

"Which is really something," said one cop, "considering he's spent half of this year in jail already."

The last time we wrote about Sanchez, he was on arrest No. 124, which included an assault charge on a nurse.

The arresting officer in that case, Lisa Frazer, personally walked the case down to District Attorney Terence Hallinan's office and tried to get Sanchez — who is showing signs of alcohol-induced dementia — put into some kind of locked rehab program.

The judge took one look at Sanchez — who, having sat in jail for weeks, was cleaned up, quiet and sober — and decided he didn't warrant commitment. The judge gave him a choice between a six-month jolt in County Jail or going to an unlocked alcohol rehab program.

Sanchez said he didn't want to be "dogged" by any program and

to deal with the Paul Sanchezes of the world. They're just too tough."

LOCAL HERO: Rep. Nancy Pelosi says she has no illusions about beating back President Bush's Iraq war resolution but insists, "I'm as confident as ever about my position, and it's not simply an anti-war position."

When we caught up with the House's second-ranking Democrat late Friday — between a funeral in Hawaii and a fund-raiser in Arizona — Pelosi said she hadn't had time yet to gauge the public's reaction to her breaking ranks with her friend and Democratic House leader, Rep. Dick Gephardt.

Pelosi cites three key reasons for her call to hit the brakes:

► No evidence that Iraq poses "an imminent threat" to the United States.

► Fear that an attack will "jeopardize our war on terrorism" and endanger both U.S. soldiers and citizens around the world.

► And concern that a war would be a blow to the U.S. economy.

From the looks of things, her constituents agree.

North Beach business owners in eye of homeless storm

► HOMELESS
From Page A23

cial district, Washington Square park and around nearby schools.

"As well-intentioned as this center is, it's misguided," said Hanlin. "The easier you make it to be homeless, the more homeless you have."

There are plenty of other opinions, pro and con, around the neighborhood. Last month, more than 100 people answered Coppola's invitation to meet at the landmark Saints Peter and Paul Church in North Beach to discuss his controversial center.

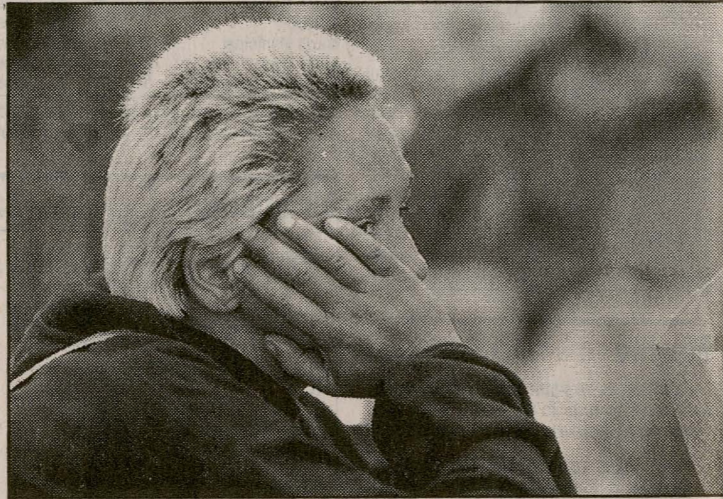
The center — a small storefront space with plants in the window, a table and shelves of used clothes and books — serves about 50 North Beach citizens.

"Francis' philosophy is people need to feel like they belong," Executive Director Charee Lord said on behalf of the filmmaker, who was unavailable for comment. "If they have a sense of belonging, they have a sense of ownership in the community."

The center's clients, who are issued North Beach Citizens photo identification cards, have a safe place to hang out between 9 a.m. and noon, an address to receive mail and access to voice mail. Clients also get a weekly shower at a local pool, medical appointments with volunteer doctors and help finding rehab, shelter and employment.

The Department of Public Works hires three people a week from the center to sweep streets, and neighborhood business owners throw the center odd jobs. Claire Carlevaro of the Art Exchange Gallery on Chestnut Street said she hires center clients to stuff envelopes and lick stamps for mailings.

Lord said she has already seen results. The program has enrolled 150 people in the last two years — all of whom have drug or alcohol problems — and reconnected about one-quarter of them with their families. The center has also



Heidi (no last name given) sits at the dining table in the center, which was initiated by movie director Francis Ford Coppola.

helped about 30 people move into housing, mostly residential hotel rooms, she said.

"Are we making it easier for people to be homeless? No," Lord said. "Are we keeping people from dying on the streets? I'd say yes."

The program budget is about \$190,000 a year. North Beach Citizens received \$100,000 in grants from the city during its first two years, but nothing this year. The money comes from Coppola and fund-raisers such as the Bay Area premiere this year of "Apocalypse Now Redux," the director's cut of his 1979 movie.

The card-carrying North Beach Citizens include Barbara Lucas, a 46-year-old woman who said she's a biochemist for the "University of Berkeley." Lucas said she sleeps on the streets because she's afraid of being locked in an apartment.

Thom McClusky, 42, said he became homeless this year after going to jail for cashing bad checks. He said he plans to get off the streets by marrying a Chinese bride for \$4,000.

Steven Cloman, 41, sleeps in a doorway around the corner from the center and earns a little cash by sweeping the streets for the Department of Public Works.

"People out here treat you so

much better," Cloman said. "This is a place where I can talk to people."

The admiration for the center isn't universal, however.

Luciano Repetto, owner of Graffeo Coffee Roasting Co. across the street from North Beach Citizens, complained that homeless services don't belong near areas with playgrounds.

"You have people who use drugs and alcohol milling about at the center," Repetto said. "They mean well, but it's not helping the neighborhood."

Jean Marc Gorce, who owns XOX Truffles on the same block as the North Beach Citizens center, has had mixed experiences with North Beach Citizens.

"A few weeks ago, they gave food to a guy who threw it on my store," he said. The center sent someone to clean it up.

Tony Rivera, owner of the nearby Caffe La Piazza, hosted a meeting of concerned neighbors earlier this year, and he said that someone egged his windows the next day.

"I've had to clean human feces off the front of my place," Rivera said.

San Francisco Police Officer Scott Gaines, whose beat includes Washington Square Park, said

he's noticed the homeless population grow in the last few months. But he blamed it on migration of the homeless from Market Street, where the police are cracking down on drugs and vagrancy, not the opening of the North Beach center.

At last month's emotional neighborhood meeting with Coppola, where most people in the room voiced support for North Beach Citizens, the North Beach Journal reported that the director's temper flared when residents criticized the center's response to neighborhood complaints about certain clients' behavior.

Coppola came up with the program, he told the group, after passing the same 10 panhandlers on his walk from his home on Filbert Street to his Zoetrope office on Kearny. He also helped local teens produce a documentary about the local homeless people.

Some neighborhood resentment toward Coppola has deeper roots than his new homeless center. His critics like to point out that he's only a part-time resident of the neighborhood with a big estate in Napa near his winery. He's also a wealthy man, critics say, but he asks North Beach merchants for donations for his center.

North Beach Citizens board of directors member Megan Levitan, a former neighborhood activist, said the critics need to move past the idea that the program is solely Coppola's.

"It's a neighborhood embracing a neighborhood issue," she said.

Despite the critics, the center is staying and Lord is hoping to win over more neighbors. She said the program is outgrowing its space, but she isn't in a rush to move and face new opposition.

"The neighborhood may or may not like us, but we are already here," she said. "We've already done that battle."

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opted to stay in jail, where by all accounts he was no trouble at all.

Four months later, he was out with good behavior.

And the very next day, the cops found him passed out in the same doorway where they'd picked him up four months earlier.

That same doorway is where we rejoined the Sanchez story at arrest No. 128.

As usual, Sanchez was initially charged with a slew of offenses, including creating a public nuisance, assault with a deadly weapon, assault on an official, disobeying a stay-away order and resisting arrest.

And as usual, most of the charges were pleaded down to one count — this time it was resisting arrest.

Sanchez was sentenced to four months in jail.

With good behavior, he should be out on Nov. 9.

And on Nov. 10?

If history is any indication, Sanchez will be right back in the same doorway — passed out drunk.

"The real story here is about a system that is broken," said D.A. spokesman Mark MacNamara. "Some people say it's because there's not enough money, some say it's because people just don't give a damn.

"But the fact is in various parts of the system there are people — even judges — who just don't want

An aide to Pelosi tells us her office logged more than 400 phone calls Friday in support of her opposition to the president.

And even before then, according to her office, calls had been pouring in against a strike at a rate of 200 a day.

It should make for quite a San Francisco homecoming for Pelosi when she shows up to host a big fund-raiser at the St. Francis Hotel tonight aimed at boosting Democratic chances of taking back the House next month.

Incidentally, it's not just Pelosi's office that's getting calls.

Rep. Tom Lantos, one Bay Area Democrat standing firmly behind the president, has also been logging hundreds of calls — but in his case, most are opposed to his stance.

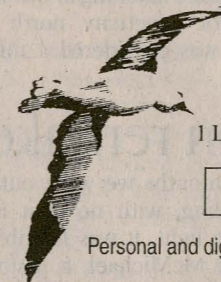
"We've been inundated in opposition," concedes one staffer at Lantos' San Mateo office, which also has been the target of anti-war demonstrators.

But, the staffer adds, most of the complainants are "not from the district."

Chronicle columnists Phillip Matier and Andrew Ross appear Sundays, Mondays and Wednesdays. They can also be heard on KGO Radio on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Phil Matier can be seen regularly on KRON-TV. Got a tip? Call them at (415) 777-8815. E-mail: matierandross@sfchronicle.com.

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- To provide an environment where you make choices based on your own personal values.
- To do things your way, not someone else's way.



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