

January 3, 2018



from The President's Desk

by Henry Karnilowicz

December was a month of contrasts. Along with the usual Holiday festivities the city suffered a shock after the sudden passing of Mayor Ed Lee. The following represent a few of the issues and events that SFCDMA supported and participated in during December.

Mayor Lee's passing



It was with shock and profound sadness that I heard the news that our Mayor, Ed Lee had suddenly passed away from a heart attack on December 12. Mayor Lee was a tireless advocate for small business in San Francisco, particularly for his work in partnering with SFCDMA on Shop & Dine in the 49. I will never forget the ribbon cuttings for small businesses, the kick-offs for Small Business Week, the presenting of awards to businesses and his being a guest speaker at our Annual Gala and Awards Dinner. I was truly honored that Mayor Lee always took the time to recognize SFCDMA at the many events in which we participated. Whenever I had a concern about anything he would make sure that one of his aides contacted me. I will always remember his infectious smile and his cheerfulness. We have lost a good friend who was a dedicated public servant and a man who believed that equality, friendship and acceptance of diversity are what makes this city so great.

Construction Mitigation

Our committee, with assistance from Joaquin Torres, Managing Deputy Director from the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), met with representatives from PUC, DPW and MTA at Two Jacks Nicks Place legacy restaurant in lower Haight. We were joined by owners of small businesses in lower Haight Street - a neighborhood that has undergone a few years of construction woes. During this period much of the area's street parking has been made unavailable and there has been constant dust and noise for merchants to contend with. One of the owners said that his business has dropped off dramatically and that he had to take out a second mortgage on his home to survive. It was agreed that the committee will be meeting with all the representatives again early this year.

Firefighters Toy Drive

I was honored to join Albert Chow of People Of Parkside Sunset, Vas Kiniris of Fillmore Merchants, and Adam Thongsavat and Matt Middlebrooks of Airbnb, at the San Francisco Firefighters Local 798 celebration of the opening of the San Francisco Firefighters' new toy program building. The speakers at the event included the late Mayor Ed Lee, former Mayor Willie Brown and members of the Board of Supervisors. The firefighters had just recently purchased this building, which has a first class commercial kitchen. There was plenty of delicious food and an antique fire engine parked inside the building, which we had fun



clambering over and having our pictures taken on. I am happy to announce that this event resulted in a highly successful toy drive.

Excelsior Merchants Walk



The late Mayor Ed Lee, along with an entourage from OEWD, joined us for an evening Holiday Merchants Walk in the Excelsior district, along with the district's Supervisor, Ahsha Safai, and Joelle Kenealey and Stephanie Cajina of the Excelsior Action Group. The walk took us past many beautifully decorated store front windows and concluded at the lovely Stevens Books bookstore on Ocean Avenue. Mayor Lee remarked that all vacant storefronts should decorate their windows to make them attractive to neighborhood foot traffic.

Warriors Holiday Hoops Luncheon



We were honored to be invited as guests of Lyft to this event, which Vas Kiniris and I attended. The luncheon convened leaders from the business community and the Warriors to spearhead a drive to give back to San Francisco. Hosted at The

Westin St. Francis Union Square, over 600 business leaders joined players, legends, coaches and fans of the Warriors to commemorate the work being done by the Warriors Foundation and to celebrate a team that binds the Bay Area together. In partnership with SFPD and SFFD, over 150 toys and books were collected at the luncheon! Attendees who brought items to donate were entered into a drawing to win a prize package featuring a one-night stay at The Ritz Carlton in deluxe accommodations, and lunch for two at Parallel 37.

SFCDMA Holiday Party



Our annual Holiday Party was held at the majestic Airbnb Headquarters. It was a really fabulous event with a great turnout. The Tod Dickow Duet provided the musical entertainment and Vas Kiniris ensured the venue was decked out with festive decorations. Ted's Market catered the party with mouth-watering food and beverages. Airbnb's Adam Thongsavat took a few lucky guests on a tour of the facility. I extend a sincere thank you to our hosts, Airbnb, and to everyone who attended.

Executive Board Meeting



To wind up the year the Executive Committee met for breakfast at Cassava restaurant. We reflected on the health of the small business community in San Francisco in 2017 and discussed what we can do to help small business be successful and grow in 2018. We are getting a lot of interest from sponsors, so we will at last have the funds to spend on promoting and marketing our member associations. We realize that many challenges lie ahead. We will need to keep our eyes and ears open and take action as soon as we become aware of issues that impact our associations and their members.

Thank you to all those who continue to promote small business in San Francisco. I will keep you - our Membership - in touch with my January schedule of meetings and events in my next monthly newsletter - "from the President's Desk".

Henry Karnilowicz President

San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations
henry@sfcdma.org



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