

For Immediate Release

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Hundreds of Tenderloin Families come out for Pony Rides & Local Celebrities in Little Saigon

Tenderloin, San Francisco, CA (October 13th, 2024): There were ponies in the Tenderloin on Saturday October 12th, 2024. Larkin Street between Eddy and Ellis was closed to traffic for the Tenderloin Family Fall Festival in San Francisco's Little Saigon. Hundreds of neighborhood families showed up for an afternoon celebration of the Fall Season at this urban farm experience that included pony rides, a free pumpkin patch, straw barrels, games, an inflatable ax throwing competition, a giant bounce house, a skateboard demonstration, free food and more. There were special appearances by local celebrity guests like [Last Black Man in San Francisco](#) film actor [Jimmie Fails](#), skateboard legend [Chico Brenes](#), and Golden State Warriors Champion [Festus Ezili](#).

“Growing up in foster homes and public housing in San Francisco I know first hand the challenges a lot of these kids face on a daily basis.” said Jimmie Fails, “Seeing all these kids smiling and having a good time, that’s what it’s all about. I’m glad to be here and participate.”

The festival was presented by [The Tenderloin Merchant and Property Owner’s Association \(TMA\)](#), non profit [Value Culture](#) (founded by SF native [Adam Swig](#)) with support from [The Civic Joy Fund](#). This event was inspired as a follow up for Value Culture in the Tenderloin who recently partnered with the Tenderloin Merchants Association and AW3 on [Love Fest SF](#), an electronic music and arts exposition in August 2024 on Larkin St. which had over 5,000 attendees and went viral by famously [“breaking the doom loop”](#) with former San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown.

“Pony rides in the Tenderloin equals happy kids. Happy kids are priceless,” says Adam Swig, Executive Director of Value Culture. “There’s approximately 3,500 kids living in the Tenderloin, many in stressful conditions. We gave them a joyous experience where they could safely run around, play and have fun enjoying their neighborhood and city. We wanted to let them know we see them. San Francisco kids are the best and are the future.”

Swig’s idea for pony rides was a complete hit with kids and adults alike. It was a surreal site for many passing by and a very welcomed site for kids astonished at having the opportunity for free pony rides. Many had never seen a pony before let alone gotten to ride one. As children joyfully rode ponies up and down the street, warplanes from Fleet Weeks air show flew overhead.

“Horses are known for being exceptional therapy animals.” said Carol Schurch, a volunteer at the event. “There’s many benefits from interacting with horses. They are healing. They can heal people.”

Legendary SF skateboarder Chico Brenes put on a skate demo. San Francisco City Librarian Michael Lambert was watching and asked to hop on the board then zoomed around and showed off some of his skills. “Great event today!” said Lambert.

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The Tenderloin Family Fall Festival took place on Larkin Street in Little Saigon, home to some of the area's most popular restaurants and shops. The Tenderloin Community First Responder Safety Ambassadors (CFRSA) monitored the event. The event had no crime or safety issues.

“This event was incredible for TL families and also easy to clean up for us because we gave everything away like pumpkins, fresh fruit, pizza, toys, pony rides; there were a lot of happy kids!” said Rene Colorado, Executive Director of the Tenderloin Merchants Association. “We’re grateful to our partners and event funders Value Culture and the Civic Joy Fund for caring about the Tenderloin and its families. We hope more people can see the positive impact these events are making for the city and can contribute.”

Photos from Tenderloin Family Fall Fest [here](#). Contact Francis Tsang for publication use.

[The Tenderloin Merchant and Property Owner’s Association \(TMA\)](#) gives Tenderloin business owners a new voice. Ours is the first and only Merchant and Property Owners Association representing the entire Tenderloin community. TMA’s membership reflects the diversity of the Tenderloin including its many immigrant owned businesses.

[Value Culture](#) founded in 2019 by award winner Adam Swig to make a larger positive community impact after years of community service. It’s received national recognition. The mission of Value Culture is to produce and support artistic, educational, charitable, and spiritual events to inspire the next generation to give back to their communities. Value Culture removes barriers to arts, culture, and philanthropy.

[The Civic Joy Fund](#) is an independent and apolitical non-profit, teaming up with local artists, musicians, small businesses, volunteers and community leaders. We aim to bring more art, music, color, energy and joy to our city streets - the most public of civic spaces - to assist in our economic recovery and diverse projects that make our city of San Francisco so great.