

Crime climbs, arrests fall in Tenderloin

Drug busts lead the way in 2005 report

BY TOM CARTER

IT was 7 p.m. sometime in mid-March when a man with two bullets in his back staggered a hundred or so feet down the sidewalk from the St. Boniface Church gate where he was shot collapsing at the door of the Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center.

TARC staff called 911. Police and an ambulance were there right away. Witnesses described the shooter to police, then rode in a patrol car to U.N. Plaza looking for the suspect. They spotted him and he was arrested. The episode didn't last 30 minutes.

Hank Wilson, TARC Community Center manager, told the story to the Police Commission when the commissioners met in the Tenderloin at 201 Turk St. on March 29. Wilson was illustrating how the community works with the police against serious crime in the area.

"People came forward at once," Wilson said, "and police were there at once. It's a great example of community policing. When multiple witnesses come forward, more will come."

The commissioners seemed impressed by this and the supporting comments of a half dozen other residents

who praised TL Capt. Kathryn Brown's approach to community policing while complaining about the relentless dope dealing and lack of cops on the street. Ultimately, the commissioners heard what they already knew: More uniforms equals less crime.

The strolling beat cop is practically a thing of the past in the Tenderloin. Brown says she can't staff the three TL foot patrol sectors because of budget constraints. Manning radio cars is first priority. Those officers frequently get out of their cars to be on the street, she says, although they can't venture far from their radios. Rarely, and only with overtime dollars, can Brown put a cop on a beat, she says.

Drug trafficking is the major reason the Tenderloin had the second most arrests among San Francisco's 10 police districts in 2005, though TL's population is a fraction of the others, according to statistics Capt. Brown presented to the commission. It was her annual neighborhood crime report, and she went over the highlights.

Figures showed crime in most categories up in 2005, and calls to the police were up, but arrests overall were down slightly.

TL police, sometimes working with the narcotics detail, the state Bureau of Narcotics, the FBI, DEA and other law-enforcement agencies, made 4,823 arrests in 2005, 6%

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

NO. 56

PUBLISHED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO STUDY CENTER

MAY 2006

NEW HOUSING ON MASON

Pavilion finally laid to rest

PAGE 2



ELECTING GRASSROOTS POLITICIANS

Party time for Central Committees

PAGE 4

OBITUARIES FROM THE 'HOOD

PAGE 7

CENTRAL CITY

EXTRA

SAN FRANCISCO

NEW HOPE FOR BINDLESTIFF



PHOTOS BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Bindlestiff board members Alex Torres (left) and Bryan Pangilinan in the Sixth Street theater.

STIFFED!

City knocked artists for \$1 million loop

BY TOM CARTER

THE threadbare band of young Filipino artists who in the 1990s gave life to Bindlestiff Theater in the grimy Plaza Hotel on Sixth Street couldn't have imagined how the plot would twist — and their fortunes turn — in their struggle to keep the space.

At one point in 2000, a sweet deal from

SOUTHSIDE

a nonprofit developer offered Bindlestiff a pristine 99-seat theater for \$1. But Mayor Willie Brown stepped in and nixed that. Months later, with the nonprofit developer out of the picture, the artists said they faced a bill of \$1 million. That's the amount Bindlestiff figured the Redevelopment Agency would eventually want for improvements to the theater shell, although the agency's estimate four years ago was \$750,000.

Now, all deals are off until Bindlestiff, the nation's only Filipino performing arts theater, gets a new contract from the Redevelopment Agency Commission. In a newfound relationship, Bindlestiff will be working with Redevelopment Agency staff to replace the three-year contract that expired Dec. 31. Then Bindlestiff will have to find nearly \$500,000, a renegotiated figure, to bring the new theater to fruition. To raise that amount, the first source they'll consider will be the Rincon Hill Community Stabilization Fund, which the Redevelopment Commission authorized the agency to pursue last month.

Meanwhile, the theater shell earmarked for Bindlestiff at 185 Sixth St. under the new 115-unit Plaza Apartments lies fallow like a high-ceiling bomb shelter.

In 2000, the agency, busy reviving the Sixth Street Corridor that passes for skid

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



The box office is just behind the storefront of the theater at 185 Sixth St.