Several slayings on SFPD hot list are in District 6

BY TOM CARTER

The murder of a 9-year girl in her Tenderloin apartment building is among several cold cases in District 6 that homicide Inspector Joseph Toomey and his partner are investigating. Toomey told those assembled at the Tenderloin police captain's meeting Feb. 26:

The crime occurred nearly 24 years ago in the five-story apartment building at 765 O'Farrell St. DNA is expected to play a major role, if the special investigative unit created a year ago is to solve the case.

On April 10, 1984, Mei Leung and her 8-year-old brother, Mike, were returning home. As they got close to the building's steps Mei dropped a dollar bill. Police believe the bill blew under a door to the basement or somewhere inside the building.

Mei told her brother she was going into the basement and would look for the bill near the elevator. Mike took the elevator upstairs alone and went inside the family's apartment but didn't say anything to his mother. It was nearly 15 minutes before she noticed Mei was not around.

Mike went to the basement and found his sister dead, hanging over a water pipe in a bathroom.

Toomey and his partner Inspector Holly Pera work out of the Hall of Justice, relying heavily on lab work and a statewide DNA identification bank in Sacramento. Most felons arrested in California in the last two years have their DNA on file. DNA has been used in court more effectively than fingerprints since the 1990s, but Toomey said fingerprint technology has greatly advanced, too. Bloody prints on a wall were always easy to take. But now, a chemical spray can pop up invisible prints.

The team recently solved a 56-year-old case with the murder conviction of John Puckett, 74, a repeat sex offender, guilty of assaulting and strangling. He was arrested in Stockton after a $2 million fire started in the kitchen Oct. 12 when a $2 million fire started in the kitchen flue. It set off sprinklers upstairs in the five-story building. Busboys, porters and cashiers fled across the Moderne Hotel and water showered down through the ceiling. Waiters, cooks, and like so many in the neighborhood, hopes it will reopen.

Frank, owner and night bartender at the 21 Club near Original Joe’s, sorely misses the restaurant and like so many in the neighborhood, hopes it will reopen.

Tenderloin’s not the same without Joe’s

BY TOM CARTER

The Tenderloin has reeled ever since that hit in its solar plexus. Not just light. The smell of old booze and damp clothes hangs in the sweet and sour air. The bar’s colored advertising lights wink like a miniature carnival. Jimmy Buffett’s nostalgic tequila anthem, “Margaritaville,” wafts from the jukebox.

“I just wish Marie would open up,” Frank says, pausing at the end of the bar in a reference to Marie Duggan, the co-owner of Original Joe’s restaurant. “But I think she’s still fighting the insurance company.” Duggan is co-owner with husband, John, of the iconic, 70-year-old restaurant up the block on Taylor Street. Some of the restaurant’s 70 employees favored nightcaps at Frank’s bar.

The 21 Club is itself a Tenderloin landmark, as close to an artist’s bar as you’ll find in the neighborhood. And everybody who’s been there knows Frank, but they don’t all know his last name. And he wants to keep it that way. So you’ll see a picture of him on our front page, but you’ll have to knee-cap us to get us to cough up his last name.

But nightcaps and all other routines to and from O.J.’s ended abruptly on that dark Oct. 12 when a $2 million fire started in the kitchen flue. It set off sprinklers upstairs in the Modern Hotel and water showered down through the ceiling. Watters, cooks, busboys, porters and cashiers fled across Taylor Street where they huddled in the rain and watched the billowing smoke and heard the sickening crunch of Fire Department axes. When the fire was out and the firefighters gone, the restaurant and kitchen lay in soggy ruin.

The Tenderloin has reeled ever since from that hit in its solar plexus. Not just
Friends of Boeddeker
Families that earn $42,000 or less
Four boys on the

or go to earnitkeepitsaveit.org.
in tax refunds. Dial 211 to find the nearest site
23,000 Bay Area families get back $23.9 million
region. Last year, the program helped almost

will be approved by park Director Al Wimberly.
Community announcements and other material

received a $5,000 Community Challenge Grant
to marjorie@studycenter.org or

for a...

BOEDECKER PARK Friends of Boeddeker Park is long a major element of the front gate. Now the park will get it. The Friends received a $5,000 Community Challenge Grant from the city and within six months the 4-foot by 4-foot bulletin board will go up outside on the fence near the Jones and Eddy streets gate. And it will be David Llade surveyed the park. Blackstone will create an ornate steel border around it. She will unveil her design at the Friends of Boeddeker Park’s 15th anniversary celebration in May. Blackstone has created sculptures at Helen Wills Playground on Russian Hill and in Kid Power Park. Friends of Boeddeker Park is a group of residents, government agencies, churches and financial institutions, government agencies, churches and financial institutions.

PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

GREEN STREETS In November, good citizens Jobs Chair Betty MacCanDo surveyed the TL came up with a list of eight street trees damaged by accident or vandalism, and sent the list to DWP and other city agencies responsible for greening the city. Some trees were still saplings, planted during the mayor’s 2006 greening initiative. Early March, DWP’s Bureau of Urban Forestry was out replacing not only the streets on the list but three others that were looking peaked. Celebrate spring and the new trees at 424 Jones, 450 Jones, 518 Leavenworth, 222 Hyde, 625 Ellis, 741 Ellis, 795 Geary and two each at 450 Hyde and 308 Eddy. The community thanks DWP for its quick work.

THE TENDERLOIN Four boys on the MacCanDo Tenderloin Youth Track Team have qualified to compete July 11-15 in the 42nd International Children’s Games, which are expected to draw 2,000 athletes ages 12 to 15 from 60 countries. Qualifying in three track and field events each at Kezar Stadium on Feb. 10 were Simon Xie, David Nguyen and Aaron Lam, all 14, and Tony Lau, 12. Kezar, where the MacCanDo team practices weekly, will host the track competition. At the first of the year, when coach and Rec and Park Co-director Rob McDaniel was reassigned, he moved his recruiting base from Boeddeker Park to Tenderloin Children’s Playground a block away. “And these four just jumped up,” McDaniels said. “It’s their first year on the team.” He predicted Aaron Lam, who lives on Eddy Street, will make the national team. “He’s ran the 400 meters like Edwin Moses. Well, I shouldn’t jump to conclusions too soon.” In various instances, boys qualified in 100-, 400-, 800- and 1,500-meter categories, and in the shot put, high jump and long jump.

If you have some good news, send it to centralcityextra@studycenter.org or tom@studycenter.org.

Residents rally, but outlook bleak, for full service Tenderloin post office
BY MARJORIE BEGGS

T he Tenderloin’s post office at Golden Gate Avenue and Hyde Street has been going downhill steadily for some time now, and despite community efforts to clean it up and save services, improvements are likely to be a long time coming — if ever.

It has to make money to justify improvement, U.S. Postal Service public affairs rep James Widgeld told The Extra.

Widgeld was one of 13 people who met for an hour Feb. 25 in supervisor Chris Daly’s office to pounce on the fate of the Hyde and Golden Gate post site, which is up for rent next year.

It opened in 1991, after the 39 quake closed the 7th and Mission post office.

Community members and the Tenderloin police say it’s a haven, inside and out for drug-dealing, gang activity and loitering, and has so few postal services that customers are staying away. The stamp machine doesn’t work, drop boxes for outgoing mail were removed two months ago and box holders can’t pick up boxes after 5:30 p.m. Until a year ago, the building was open two nights a week until 8:30 p.m. Forty percent of the facility’s 7,000 boxes are unrented, Widgeld said.

The Feb. 25 meeting was part of community activists’ effort to get the USPS to convert 101 Hyde into a full-service postal facility. It started late last year when a coalition of groups — the New Tenderloin, Tenderloin Housing Clinic, Alliance for a Better District 6, Communal Neighborhood Development Corporation, Chinatown Community Development Center, the YMCA, the Safety Network and the North of Market Community Board District — came up with a petition drive calling for the conversion.

At the meeting, the coalition handed over its petition with 1,000 signatures to Winnie Groux, USPS district manager for San Francisco. The accompanying letter was c/c to Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Postmaster General Jack Potter. In addition to Groux and Widgeld, TL police Capt. Gary Jimenez and Hastings CFO David Seward attended.

Sheward asked the Postal Service reps to look for “sustainable solutions” to the community’s concerns. Daly, who called the Feb. 14 Operations and Neighborhood Services Committee hearing on converting 101 Hyde to full service, asked the Postal Service to be a better neighbor. As things are now, Daly said, the post office is contributing to the “ghettoization” of the neighborhood. The Examiner reported that Capt. Jimenez called 101 Hyde “prettier than an abandoned property” and said his officers are “constantly chasing drug dealers out of the place.”

According to Alliance for a Better District 6 Executive Director Michael Nulty, who attended the meeting, Groux of course also concerns about safety. She said employees at the site have been assaulted, one just last week.

Eight postal facilities are within a mile of 101 Hyde. Widgeld told the group: “There are three in the Tenderloin, including a small full-service site in the basement of the old Federal Building on Golden Gate and Fox Plaza.

The Postal Service has good reason to look hard at all three right now. The 101 Hyde lease comes due next year, and the old Federal Building site — you need to go through heavy, heavy duty to get stamps — is up for consolidation as offices move into the new building on Seventh Street.

And the Fox Plaza site is on the chopping block and could be gone in a year or two. Owners Archstone-Smith filed in December to demolish the two-story building that houses the postal facility and build a 250-unit market-rate apartment building.

“Fox Plaza is one of the busiest post offices in the entire city,” Widgeld told The Extra. He thinks that good news for the Tenderloin because when USPS evaluates its financial options, the Tenderloin post office to go where the business is. “Community input is important to us,” he said. “At the meeting, neighborhood people gave us things to think about as we go forward, like the information about growth in the area. Area growth means growth for us. We’re mandated by law to make money.”

Widgeld said the next step will be to turn over all the information about options to a Postal Service facilities group — “your real estate and building experts” — and reconvene the Tenderloin group again in about a month.

The day after the meeting, Nulty of MacCanDo Benefit District Manager Elaine Zamora emailed community supporters of a full-service post office: “I believe we are making some progress . . . [At the meeting] we noted that . . . it is the added eyes and ears of the customers who would frequent a full-service post office that would bring security to the site. This was something that had occurred to [USPS officials].”
neighborhood dwellers and fellow city citizens but other than the waiters and cooks and cleaning, too, lost their prime Wild West, Italian haunt. Moreover, from the theaters to nearby mom-and-pops, Original Joe’s was good for everyone’s business.

A sign outside the front door on 144 Taylor St. says: "Closed due to fire, opening soon." But five months later, rumors question whether Joe’s will ever rise from its ashes.

"Yeah, I miss Joe’s," says a woman, older man on Francisco and the street. The blinks-eyed woman next to him leans in, echoes the sentiment, then confides, "It made a lot of money, you know.

Historically, the skies famously met the old-timey middle class and sometimes celebrities at Original Joe’s. And whether you had a heat on or not, it was a pleasant step up to equality.

"A lot of people come out of town, too, and drink here first, then go eat at Joe’s," says Frank, who frequents Joe’s himself. "Now (my business is off. People who came to town before New Year’s were disappointed." Frank says his business is down less than 10%.

It’s a shame, too, he adds, that street people hang out on the sidewalk.

Around the corner at EXIT Theater on Eddy Street, manager Richard Livingston feels the loss as much as anyone. The theater’s back room served as EXIT’s cabaret and stage for its Diva Festival each April and the S.F. Fringe Festival in September. The Fringe Festival can sell 18 performances, which is opening and closing night parties at Original Joe’s.

"It’s a tragedy, a tremendous loss," Livingston says. "The performers and audiences go there before and after shows.

"People come to the Tenderloin for several things, but when evening approaches, Nov. 30th a lot of things in their evening. Now, they are less likely to stick around the neighborhood."

Besides offering the city’s best $6 Manhattan and finding the lady co-worker next to him and adds, "Joe’s is a giant. It’s got that old-school, Tenderloin feel and the tradition of San Francisco dining — on the order of Tadich’s," Larkin says, then adds, "Joe’s is a giant. It’s like an ancient tree in the neighborhood."
STUFFED ANIMALS – A photo project

This is just another day in San Francisco where since the ‘80s, there has been a growing stuffed animal problem. Due to the development of sophisticated video games, computers, and robotic toys that offer a wide variety of stimulation to the old as well as the young, stuffed animals have found themselves becoming increasingly passé.

So many were manufactured during the stuffed animal boom in the 20th century, that thousands of stuffed animal baby boomers now find themselves discarded, homeless, and forced to sit on street corners plying their trade by appearing desperately cute. A few find homes where they comfort those individuals not yet adapted to modern technology and who are still easily amused by artifacts from the past. But many end their lives in recycling centers, garbage compactors, dumps, or, in a worse case scenario, are held captive by individuals with bizarre and exotic sexual fetishes.

As yet, there are no organizations whose purpose is to advocate for the rights of stuffed animals and protect them from the obsolescence that forces them to the streets. Despite that in the past they served as loyal and uncritical companions of children, lonely men and women, senile alcoholics and drug addicts, career criminals, wastrels, eccentric geniuses, sexual psychopaths, movie stars, knuckle-dragging idiots, saints, sinners, garage mechanics, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelists, bartenders, prize fighters, dictators, yogis and veterinarians, they are shoved to the side like a trophy wife who committed the unforgivable: the sin of growing old and ugly.

Bessie Smith once sang a song stating “…you’ve been a good old wagon, honey, but you done broke down…” and it would not surprise me in the least if, having rearranged her brain cells the previous night in a radical manner by imbibing a bit too much gin, she was suffering from a momentary bout of clairvoyance that resulted in her channeling the words of a song that predicted precisely the fate of stuffed animals in the 21st century. Not that Ms. Smith cared. She was having far too many problems with real men to be able to sympathize with Teddy Bears and Bunnies, but such are the accidents of great art.

Now I would like to draw the reader’s attention to the photographs.

Exhibit One: A pile of plush animals is found abandoned on a Tenderloin street.

Exhibit Two: Spending time among stuffed animals.

EXHIBIT ONE
My friend Veronica Faraday is sitting on the edge of the winding stairs that covered while she was delivering newspapers. These creatures are distinguished by their size. When the average stuffed animal a child would have had is because they suffer from the condition known as Stuffed Animal Inflation. These creatures are distinguished by their size more people will pay attention to them, to sympathize with them.

EXHIBIT TWO
Desperation and despair go hand in hand, known to get aggressive upon close contact. Faraday found this fact out the hard way. After creatures suffering from Stuffed Animal Inflation by one who appears to be a cross between a person. This scene only goes to show that there is nothing
the street in a pile of stuffed animals we dis-

ers for the newspaper I work for as an art crit-

size that is approximately 10 times larger than

wn as Stuffed Animal Inflation, a psycho-phys-

ss many of them experience when they final-

red. Naively hoping that if they increase their

hey turn themselves into grotesquely cute par-

onger fit for the cradle because intimate con-

hyxiation. After Stuffed Animal Inflation there

y eccentric individuals will toy with them until

to the street like a common prostitute to fend

eman is standing stock still in utter amazement

ever exist in a rational universe. The sight of

ored creatures leaves him speechless. He is no

justice in the human world and experiencing

and some homeless stuffed animals have been

ct with members of the human species. Ms.

er sitting down with a tribe of homeless stuffed

ation, upon rising to her feet she was clung to

cartoon character, a lizard, and a snake. This

more pathetic and desperate than a cute loser.

EXHIBIT THREE

Now this is the money shot here. Ms. Faraday, having weeded out from the bunch two

truly evil stuffed animals, both of whom deserve to be out on the street, is performing an

occult exorcism upon them.

Notice the oval light over the evil stuffed octopus’ head. All the evil is being sucked out

of him in broad daylight as he bows in resignation, shame, and surrender.

Under Ms. Faraday’s left arm, a giant, demonic stuffed lobster waits its turn to be exor-

cised.

I love it when the spirit world channels itself through my camera. At the time of this

event my feet hurt and I wanted a drink more than I desired to breathe so my mind was

suitably empty enough to be able to take this shot and get one hell of a good look into the

workings of the invisible world.

If I play my cards right by publicizing this photo maybe later I can put up a shingle and

vertise myself as a medium.

I might make some money for a change so I don’t end up hitting the streets like an

oversized stuffed animal.

You see, a human being can be as ugly as sin, but if he runs out of money he’s worth

just about as much as a discarded cuddle bear.

So next time you observe a Teddy Bear or a Stuffed Lobster, think of the suffering in

the background of their lives and have some compassion. If this article in any way con-

tributes to that, then I feel I have been a success.

—ED BOwers

poem on the finding of found art

or by Ed Bowers

“She has a vision of the neighborhood rising and she’ll

have volunteers collaborating during the work, carry-

ing paint and things. It’ll be fantastic.”

The mural has been a burning idea of Zamora’s since

she moved into her one-story law office next door in

2001. In those days, as soon as graffiti appeared on the

building’s Jones Street wall, she and her husband dashed

outside to scrub it off, scarcely before it dried. But the

Jack Sen Benevolent Association, she said, had no inter-

est in sharing the burden to keep up appearances.

A rusty, overhanging, porn movie sign got

Zamora’s attention, too. She thought it was dangerous

to walk under — though the Department of Building

Inspection didn’t agree, she admits. The slippery sub-

basement cover on the sidewalk was another danger

she brought to the owners’ attention. It wasn’t until a

woman slipped and fell on it that the owners fixed it.

“And they eventually took the sign down,” she said.

The mural was an idea she brought when she was

chosen manager of the new CBD two years ago. By

coincidence, she had met Walee Gon, an association

owner who was interested in the CBD when it was

forming. He liked her mural idea and delivered the

association’s approval.

Zamora floated the idea in committee. Soon the

CBD board approved it.

Contracting with Caron likely won’t cost the CBD a

cent, Zamora said, because she applied for the

Community Challenge grant, and it was awarded in

early February.

The mural may be a removable face fixed to the

building. That’s being explored and would need owner

approval. It definitely will have a protective coating.

“Then graffiti washes right off within 10 hours,”

Zamora says.

—Tom Carter

urial to building on Jones and Golden Gate

“...
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The police have an old sketch of a person of interest who’d like to locate in the Mei Leung case. He’s not a suspect, Perez says, but he was seen in the building about the time of the slaying.

Right after the murder, a woman and her young son went into the basement perhaps to check on laundry and the boy noticed blood on the floor. The mother decided to go upstairs and report it. In the elevator, she said in a police interview, was a young man fiddling with the control buttons as if he didn’t know how to use them. The sketch is of him.

“We have DNA from a lot of people, including hotel residents, but we couldn’t find anyone still living in the hotel from 1984,” Pera said. “And he hadn’t admitted it (the crime). But we found he had quite a rap sheet, lots of prior arrests for robbing and beating people up. We were 99% sure it was him but he had died. So we closed the case.

“We don’t realize what an impact a murder has on a family. It probably lasts two or three generations. Bringing it to a close is great, but sometimes people are grateful that we are just giving it a look. It’s a pleasure to deal with the people.”

Pera has about 50 cold cases on their desk in various stages — unsolved, in lab work, awaiting court scheduling — with 20 now being actively pursued. They also brought 100 “warm” homicide cases with them.

Here are the active ones involving District 6:

June Palmer was an attractive blonde, 31, a business type who had gotten into drugs after arriving here from New York in the 1980s. She was arrested for petty theft here and in Millbrae. In June 1995, she was raped and strangled. Her body was DNA’d at 806 Howard St., an area where she was hanging out. The family called and the cold case unit began looking at it in February.

• Brandy Toms, a 45-year-old African American woman. She was found dead in 1984, St. Brigid’s Church, 24th and All Souls at Sixth St. brutally beaten and repeatedly stabbed in her Venetia Hotel room 228. “She was drugged to death,” Perez says, “and her life revolved around having or not having $5 or so. People can even get killed for owing that much. But nobody deserves to die that way.” Toms had no family but left a lot of DNA and broken bottles for the lab. Toms was once subpoenaed for a wedding, staying at the Rodeway Inn at Geary and Larkin streets. She checked in on Thursday, July 12, 1973, and was hoping to stay four days, if the inn had space on Sunday. But she disappeared on Friday. She showed up in the George Washington High School parking lot on 10th Avenue, sexually assaulted and strangled. The unit is investigating similar cases involving three other young women in the May to July period.

The audience at the police meeting didn’t fail to recognize the sensational aspect of his work and he was asked if he had ever worked on what was known as the “Most Wanted” television show. Twice, he replied, and he was once subpoenaed in the Scott Peterson murder case.

Toomey had worked on a case involving a missing young pregnant mother and her 5-year-old boy. He found a pelvis floating in a bay, then went to the missing mother’s family and got DNA samples from a hairbrush and her clothing. The woman of death didn’t fail to recognize the sensational aspect of his work and he was asked if he had ever worked on what was known as the “Most Wanted” television show. Twice, he replied, and he was once subpoenaed in the Scott Peterson murder case.

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FRANK TRANTHAM
‘A memorable guy’

In the Faithful Fools’ meditation room on Hyde Street, five Tenderloin health providers gathered Feb. 19 to remember a man who taught them to look beyond the obvious in their clients. Frank Trantham had been homeless for many years when he started coming to SF General’s Dayroom for the Homeless, run by the Life Span Institute and DPH’s Homeless Outreach Team. Mr. Trantham was a general’s aide and had to be counseled away from GIs. He got his health problems severe—he was an insulin-dependent diabetic, had been hospitalized and had three strokes before he died.

Kahn found Mr. Trantham dead in his Columbia Room Jan. 24, only six months after he moved in. He was 79 years old. Permanent housing hadn’t been far off. Not long ago, Kahn took him to the Empress Hotel for an interview. “It only took twice, he always stood up for her, yelling at people,” Mr. Trantham once said. “When any would come into a room—they could be 70 years old—he’d just light up. He didn’t like to talk about his medical examiner’s office. The cause of death wouldn’t be determined for a month.”

“His anxiety as he tried to figure out how he’d wound up in the hospital, how he had to admonish him. But he was willing to approach change.”

Mr. Price was found dead in his second floor room on Feb. 10 during a room check. He was 65, and had been a medical examiner’s patient. “We don’t attend but sent her picture inscribed with ‘Goodbye Daddy,’ which Moriarty had on the table,” she said.

“Mr. Williams came from a large Alabama family, and other subjects close to his heart. Some revered him as a Hollywood movie.”

“Baker talked to Mr. Whitchock several times a week and learned that in the last year he had turned to speed. ‘It’s amazing what we remember of him is all positive,’ Baker said.

JAMES WILLIAMS
Cambridge Hotel desk clerk

James Williams, a former Maritime Museum employee, was a well-read Tendleron intellectual who charmed people with his knowledge and inspired them to read and learn. He was a desk clerk at the Cambridge Hotel for the past 17 years, until he got too sick to work. In his friendly way, he went person-to-person and going through the lobby, about history and music and other subjects close to his heart. Some reverently called him Mr. Williams, others, “The Southern gentleman.”

For a long after battle with cancer, Mr. Williams died Jan. 12 at Kaiser Hospital. He was 65.

Mr. Price lived in rough-and-tumble Baltimore for 30 years ago for the Bay Area music scene. He had nephews and nieces in Oakland.

But music didn’t pan out for Mr. Price. He was homeless for eight years and living under the free-span roof. He couldn’t get into S.F. General where doctors helped him get medical treatment, SSI and other benefits.

Mr. Price started kidney dialysis treatments three times a week and received a wheelchair. Moriarty got him into the Lyric Hotel in June where he immediately became popular.

“We try to make our goodbyes as nice as possible,” Harvey Whitlock said. "But I couldn't read that much."
District 6 plays leading role in city's drug cases

Up to 70% of prosecutions originate in area, D.A.'s office tells Safety Forum

BY TOM CARTER

F of the 500-plus drug cases the district attorney’s office prosecutes each year, up to 70% are for arrests in District 6, Sharon Woo, of the D.A.'s narcotics unit, told a Safety Forum audience.

Woo was one of nine panelists representing the police districts containing the Tenderloin, a neighborhood with the highest drug activity in the city, according to a recent police study. District 6, which encompasses most of the Tenderloin, has the highest drug activity in the city, according to police statistics.

The statistics appeared grim against the backdrop of an overcrowded drug court system. On Feb. 1, the backlog of 3,830 felony cases was up 12% from February 2007, he said. In the same month, misdemeanors totaled 3,024, up 12%.

Parole Officer Darren Dill said his department's 80 officers each carries a caseload of about 200. Dill, then, has 160 parole officers, gone into the streets and alleys of the TL and SRO to find homeless probationers who aren’t reporting in. He hooks them up with services to get them on their feet.

More cuts coming

SROs, to get my caseload down to 50 or 75, that would be great,” Dill said afterward. “I could do so much more and spend more time with each person. I saw 15 today. “But now we’re being asked for a cut in the department.

The budget appeared grim against the backdrop of the city's $234 million shortfall for the year starting July 1. With the 8% across-the-board department cut, he said, Newson has requested things will get worse before they get better. And the slice could go deeper. Newson has asked departments to identity 5% more in contingency cuts.

Safety for Women in the Tenderloin, every 3rd Wednesday, Central City SRO Collaborative, 259 Hyde St., 4-6 p.m. Information, volunteer coordinator, 775-7110 x102.

North of Market NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Thursday of the month, 6 p.m., 301 Eddy. Contact Betty Traynor, 931-1126. City of San Francisco, 3rd Monday of the month, 5:30 p.m. Board works to protect SoMa resources for children, youth, families and adults. Gene Friend Recreation Center, 370 6th St. Information: 538-8100 x292

North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District. Call Elaine Zamora for times and dates. 2nd Tuesday of the month, 989 Market St., 3rd Fl., 3 p.m. 440-7570. Contact: Leanne Edwards, volunteer campaign coordinator, 440-7570.

South of Market Project Area Committee, 3rd Monday of the month, 6 p.m., 1035 Folsom, between 6th & 7th, Health, Safety and Human Services Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday after the first Monday, 1035 Folsom, noon. Information: 487-2166 or www.sompac.com.

Senior Citizen Breakfast, 3rd Thursday of the month, 10 a.m., Tenderloin Police community room, 301 Eddy. Call at 358-3956 for information. Network of residents, nonprofits and businesses sharing information and taking on neighborhood development issues.

Superior Court, 3rd Monday of the month, 12:30 p.m., 65 Ninth St., noon-1:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home and community-based services, expanded eligibility for home care and improved discharge planning. Light lunch served. Call James Chon, 707-833-3900.

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of the month, Guaker Center, 65 North St., noon-1:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home and community-based services, expanded eligibility for home care and improved discharge planning. Light lunch served. Call James Chon, 707-833-3900.

Health & Wellness Action Advocates, 1st Tuesday of the month, 9-11 a.m., Mental Minestone, 538-8100 x202 or marta@inside.org. Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting, last Tuesday of the month, police community room, 301 Eddy. Call Susan Black, 345-7300. Neighborhood safety.

SROs safer for women. Information: Leanne Edwards, volunteer campaign coordinator, 775-7110 x102.

D.A.’s narcotics unit, told a Safety Forum audience. He needs more courtrooms, Bellati said, and he explained why: The police have always classified the Tenderloin as a “high crime area” over that, he said.

He sent an experienced felony court judge to investigate, evaluate and recommend a solution to reduce the backup. He assigned 51 judges to their departments, gave an extension of time here, there are catch up delays, as the entire Tenderloin. And next time, the suspect can be routinely charged with more offenses.

The second conviction means “about a year in jail,” and the third sends a dealer to state prison for a year or more.

The D.A.’s office keeps stay-away booklets with pictures of the offenders, but the orders have a limited life. Once a dealer is out of prison and on parole, the stay-away orders aren’t valid.

At the end of the night, most of the aired problems remained Gordian knots. Understaffing, not saving money, not following up with them through La Voz de La Ciudad Central, an outreach program of Tenderloin Housing Clinic.

PLEA FROM LATINA MOMS

Continue talking to the police force and the district attorney’s office, among other things. “I can’t just push a button and make them go away,” he said. He has used the system to its maximum potential.

The results were very good, too,” Bellati said. “But do you know anything about cooking? It was like sending Emiric to man the salad bar.

The experienced judge dealt with cases faster, but of course left an ‘experience’ hole in the felony courts where 697 trials are pending, compared with 421 a year ago.

FAR MORE CRIMINAL TRIALS THAN EVER

Judge Bellati said many departments that work with the courts are also plagued with problems, making headache, hopeless. Asked if he could do anything for the mired Superior Court, Bellati, who assigns 51 judges to their departments, gave an extension of time here, there are catch up delays, as the entire Tenderloin. And next time, the suspect can be routinely charged with more offenses.

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Moms walking their kids to school are sexually harassed by homeless people hanging around the school, she said, and no police are around then. She has experienced traumatic loss of young family members in gang-related killings. The police haven’t followed up with them after those cases. Some moms feel abandoned by the authorities, she said.

Caucus, Casciato. “I’ll come to the school,” said Casciato. “Let’s set a day and time. And I’ll speak in Spanish.”