

TL's top cop says it takes a village to keep the peace

EACH week Tenderloin police Capt. Gary Jimenez composes an email newsletter to the community. His personal state-of-the-neighborhood assessment precedes a litany of the week's busts. On April 18, Jimenez explained the simple facts of trying to keep order in the Tenderloin, and why he is hopeful. It seemed worth repeating

"Many of the problems that are on our streets do not involve criminal conduct and are allowed to go unabated or ignored by the community in the name of individual rights or sympathy for the human with a condition that they themselves cannot rationally address and (there is) no mechanism in place to address it. Therefore, the problem continues until some act deems it illegal or criminal, and therefore it becomes now a problem the police should solve.

"The reality is that the resources of your police district are limited and the actions we do take are often extremely ineffectual. Our operation mode is based on a traditional response to the problem and our society and the conditions around us have changed so much that the means available to the police are no longer achieving the desired results. Thus the problems and the crime fighting are not only a police concern and duty but also a community responsibility and cause for address.

"The Tenderloin District has many organizations working along with the City to improve the neighborhood and bring more retailers to occupy the vacant storefronts, businesses to fill the abandoned buildings, and housing for families and the homeless. Many groups in the Tenderloin work with the youth in our neighborhood to give them positive direction and assistance to deal with their future. We are so lucky to have so many wonderful people that care, tutor and guide our Tenderloin children.

"There is much to be hopeful about and reason to believe we are headed in the right direction. We need just to stick together and believe in our goal to rightfully be proud of our neighborhood. A big part of that is having a full service neighborhood." ■

Mother's Day

entering through the door
i immediately sense the odor
of the blue incense from a room
where a Buddha altar sits

Mother must be home

— Wakako Murata



PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Presentation Senior Community's Yoko Takahashi, 75, Nianmui Wong, 68, and Run Ci Liang Der, 80, take a bagful of leaves and weeds out of Boeddeker Park's gardens for Earth Day.

Seniors revitalize Boeddeker for Earth Day

THE Earth Day spirit drew more Presentation Senior Community volunteers than usual next door to a Boeddeker Park cleanup, where a hardy band of green-thumbed seniors typically gathers like elves every month to make order out of chaos.

Usually, a dozen or more in their 60s to 80s turn out to pull weeds, remove trash and plant flowers the third Thursday of every month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The six-story Presentation houses Section 8 elderly and overlooks the park's northeast corner, which has most of the flower beds.

But April 19 — the Saturday before Earth Day, April 22 — more than 20 showed up. They were joined by two Daly City Westmoor High School students, the son and daughter of Paul Lam of the Presentation staff who serves as translator.

At 10:30 a.m. the group was furiously raking a plot and stuffing weeds and trash into garbage bags almost like they were trying to outdo each other.

"Earlier they pulled all the weeds in the sandy playground area," said Betty Traynor, the Friends of Boeddeker Park chair who leads the monthly cleanup with someone from Rec and Park.

Also left in the group's wake were three transformed flower beds replenished with new growth, making the park look as good as it ever has.

"My apartment is up there," said Yoko Takahashi, 75, pointing to Presentation's fourth floor. She was wearing gloves and a long-sleeve brown T-shirt with the Rec and Park logo, a gift for

her persistent volunteering.

"So I see the people down here making a mess," she said. "We pick up the needles and cigarette butts and trash. I'm just glad poor people can enjoy it. But it looks like a park now, not a trash bin." ■

— TOM CARTER

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