A TIMELINE OF SURVIVING A YEAR OF COVID-19

How the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted sex workers

Police Won’t End Anti-Asian Violence. Community Will.

by Sam Lew

Every day, I see the small bouquets of flowers in front of the apartment. Daisies, pink roses, sunflowers wrapped in beautiful blue fabric. Still there, a week and a half after Vicha Ratanapakdee passed away.

During an early morning stroll in a quiet neighborhood in San Francisco, the 84-year-old grandfather from Thailand was violently pushed to the ground. His head hit the concrete. Despite paramedics administering first aid to him on the sidewalk, he died two days later in the hospital.

Three days later in Oakland’s Chinatown, a 91-year-old senior was shoved to the ground. That same day, two other Asian Americans, a 60-year-old man and a 55-year-old woman, were similarly attacked by the same man.

“How have you watched the video?” my mother asks. All of her friends have been sharing them in a frenzy. But it is hard to bear witness to these terrible acts of violence against our elders. I cannot bring myself to watch Ratanapakdee’s death. He reminds me too much of my own grandfather.

My heart hurts for our elders, for the family that has now lost their grandfather and father. Our community is grieving, outraged, scared. We ask: When will this happen again? And who will be next?

I wish this heartbreak could be just heartbreak, but I am scared about how those in power will capitalize on our pain.

Every time Asian Americans are attacked, robbed, or assaulted, I wonder how we will be used once again as pawns to advance a pro-police agenda, despite the fact that police have not kept our communities safe and have killed so many Black, Latinx, and Indigenous community members.

Already, politicians like Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf are bottling up our grief and rage and selling it back to us as a shiny promise to keep us safe with more police, more prisons, less crime. Some of those promises have already come to fruition. The week following the attacks, the City of Oakland created a special police unit to focus on crimes against Asians. There has been an increase in private security guards and a push to bolster networks of digital surveillance. I am hearing many of us call for more police and more prisons to keep us safe. Asian American celebrities like Daniel Dae Kim and Daniel Wu called for justice, offering a $25,000 reward to identify the man behind the Oakland Chinatown attack. Steeped in tough-on-crime rhetoric, we ask, “How can we catch these racists and punish them until we feel right again, until the hurt goes away, until we are no longer angry?”

But we cannot conflate police and incarceration with justice or public safety. They do not keep us or our elders safe, even as much as we wish they could. The justice, healing, and safety our communities deserve will never be realized by adding more police officers or putting more people in prison. It was police officers who brutally shoved 75-year-old Martin Gugino last year, leaving him bleeding on the ground with a fractured skull, nearly identical to the attacks we are seeing against our elders today.

In the past five years, Bay Area police have killed 110 residents, with Black people representing 27% of those murdered and...

adapted from a photo by Heidi Alletzhauser
How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected sex workers?

I know this question is not on the minds of most people here in San Francisco, or anywhere else. We should all already know this, as well as understanding the pandemic’s effects on communities of elders, migrants, folks who are disabled, Black, Asian, trans, poor, living and working on the streets, and anyone marginalized and disadvantaged by the cis-hetero-patriarchal-capitalist system. That is to say, we need to be seeing each other and supporting each other, because we are all we got.

I am a former sex worker and current supporter of the sex worker community, as the outreach director of St. James Infirmary. We are a peer-based health clinic, community organization and advocacy organization run by and for current and former sex workers, founded in 1999.

We have been going out on the streets to support our communities living and working on the streets since January 2018 at our Naughtty Nurse Mobile. Before the pandemic, we offered incentivized HIV/Herp/STI testing and other limited medical services and supplies, safer drug use supplies and seasonal supplies like coats, tarps, hand warmers and more. Since the first COVID-19 shutdown in San Francisco in March 2020, we had to discontinue providing medical services directly from the van, but continued providing all other services including, symptomatic medical services and testing, at our clinic location.

We quickly began trying to figure out how we could best serve the needs of our communities during this time of chaos and confusion. It became immediately apparent that many sex workers were working without a job, without any backup support like state unemployment or having to face the very difficult decision to continue working to support themselves and their families and risk exposure to a possibly fatal disease. For those who were working online before FOSTA/SESTA — federal legislation passed in 2018 that affected the already privileged, and now the most marginalized, I’m sure the readers here already know that. So out of necessity, many local groups started mutual aid campaigns with cash grants for sex workers like Bad Misson Neighbors, Bay Area Worker Support, and the Tenderloin Cultural District, with many of these organizations offering other resources and support as well. The tragic police murders of Black people in the United States brought together masses in the streets united in mourning and in rage. The recent mass murder in Atlanta brought anti-Asian racism, in conjunction with the stigmatization and criminalization of sex workers and sex negativity, to a head, bringing more awareness to an already devastating problem. Many organizations have made statements in solidarity with Asian sex workers. Much more work needs to be done to support these communities with real reparations to bring healing. Racism continues to be a deadly epidemic. And then there were immediate traumatic, emotional parallels between COVID-19 and the AIDS epidemic. There was much confusion about what contact is safe or allowed, how people can hook up, and much judgement, sex negativity, loneliness and isolation. Much healing will continue to be needed as we move through this pandemic, forge a new future and learn better ways to be in community with each other with patience and compassion.

We at St. James Infirmary are not perfect, but we strive to support our communities as best we can each day without judgement and with harm reduction in our hearts. We know that there is much pain and suffering, as we are our community and we gave each other’s backs. We fight the injustices because we love you and we love ourselves. And in the process, we find creative solutions and even joy.
continued from front page.

Asian Americans 10%. Police do not prevent crime; they are the manufacturers of violent crime, of which Black residents are most often victims. As Vietnamese author and artist Thi Bui says, “Asian Americans cannot look for safety from the same agencies that terrorize Black Americans. We have to resist the us vs. them mentality.” It is easy to demand convictions and harsh sentences. It is harder to address the root causes of racial violence and to commit to the real day-to-day work of collective healing.

The attacks that have taken place over the last several weeks have been labeled as the product of anti-Asian racism, I was quick to think this, too. But I later learned that the young man behind the Chinatown attacks was unhoused and placed on a psychiatric hold. His history of assault demonstrated no correlation with race, but did include a judge noting he had “serious mental health issues” six years ago. I wonder what could have happened if he had received the support and housing he needed when he needed it, if this could have all been prevented.

I deeply appreciate reporters Momo Chang, Sarah Belle Lin, and Darwin BondGraham, who explore necessary and important questions on crime, safety, and race in their two-part piece for The Oaklandside.

Is there evidence that what Chinatown has experienced in recent weeks is racially motivated? Are we really seeing a unique uptick in crime there, unlike years past, and divorced from what’s happening elsewhere and to other communities in Oakland? Why have recent crimes in Chinatown attracted searing attention locally and even internationally, while gun violence has spiked dramatically in parts of East Oakland for months with less sustained concern and civic response? What do Chinatown residents want to see happen in terms of solutions, and whose voices aren’t being heard?

More so than race, Chinatown organizers and workers like Sakhone Lasaphangthong view the attacks as “crimes of opportunity” that target a neighborhood already demonized as one that is vulnerable to robberies.

While this does not justify behavior or minimize the violence or harm, it does beg the question: What do we view as anti-Asian racism and who do we think of as those who commit them? How does this further pit Asian and Black communities?

I hope, too, that we can see beyond the young men who assaulted our elders. Yes, they are individuals who caused great harm. But if we are going to talk about violence, let’s also talk about the violence of systemic racism we face every day as Asian Americans. Let’s speak up about the violence of family separation when loved ones are deported by ICE back to Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Viet Nam. Let’s talk about how our communities suffer when 118,100 Asian Americans are locked up in federal prisons. We must broaden our understanding of all races and demographic that is vulnerable to robberies.

By this time next year, providing a COVID testing site and table space for several community organizations. Glide has long served unhoused and marginally housed people in the neighborhood with several programs, providing free daily meals, clothing and hygiene items, as well as harm reduction services to as many as 3,500 people per week, according to its most recent newsletter. Glide’s announcement came three days after the California Department of Public Health said that it will expand vaccine eligibility to people aged 50 and older on April 1, and people aged 16 and older on April 15. That same day, residents of San Francisco’s single-resident-occupancy apartments — regardless of age — automatically became eligible when clinical experts from the City’s public health department determined that SKOs meet the state’s criteria of high-risk congregate settings.

A week earlier, the City announced that unhoused people would be among the next groups of people to receive the vaccine under the state’s prioritization plan. They join people in other congregate settings, such as correctional facilities and residential medical facilities.

In a statement released earlier in March, the City’s COVID Command Center said that people in encampments, residential treatment centers and outdoor, amenity-provided camps known as “safe sleeping villages” should be prioritized for a vaccine because they “could transition to in-building vaccination settings.”
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>A Timeline of Surviving Homelessness and COVID-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>San Francisco announces it won’t issue citations for unmoved vehicles, a move celebrated</td>
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<td>March 16</td>
<td>San Franciscans ordered to shelter in place. Unhoused people were stuck: They had nowhere</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>Governor Newsom announces $500 million that can be used to fund homeless services. This</td>
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<td>March 23</td>
<td>San Francisco shelters extend reservations but shut down shelters to new reservations.</td>
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<td>May 26</td>
<td>Homeless Bayview residents get access to RV site. Earlier in May, faced with inaction from</td>
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<td>May 25</td>
<td>George Floyd is murdered by police in Minneapolis. The death sparked nation-wide</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td>UC Hastings files lawsuit against the city and county of San Francisco calling for the</td>
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<td>June 2</td>
<td>Sean Monterosa, a Black Lives Matter activist who grew up in SF is murdered by police in</td>
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<td>June 23</td>
<td>Black homeless lives matter protest draws hundreds to the Tenderloin. The action highlighted</td>
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<td>August 5</td>
<td>City announces plan to stop leasing hotel rooms. The original vision of getting to 7,000</td>
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<td>August 7</td>
<td>San Francisco mourns the death of local homeless artist and activist Ronnie Goodman who</td>
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<td>September 9th</td>
<td>Victory for unhoused San Franciscans! Prop. C tax to fund housing for homeless people</td>
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<td>December 1</td>
<td>City again announces plan to wind down SIP hotels by February, citing expenses. This was</td>
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<td>December 15</td>
<td>Board passes emergency legislation related to SIP hotels. This required the City to have</td>
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<td>December 21</td>
<td>Bidens announces FEMA will cover 100 percent of SIP hotel costs. Previously under Trump,</td>
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### 2020

**February 25**

Mayor Breed declares a state of emergency. This centralized power in the hands of the Mayor and Public Health Officer Tomás Aragón in order to respond quickly to the crisis, but significantly weakened the power of the progressive Board of Directors.

**May 25**

George Floyd is murdered by police in Minneapolis. The death sparked nationwide demonstrations and propelled the movement to abolish police into mainstream consciousness.

**June 2**

Sean Monterosa, a Black Lives Matter activist who grew up in SF is murdered by police in Vallejo, reinvigorating the fight for racial justice and police abolition.

**August 5**

City announces plan to stop leasing hotel rooms. The original vision of getting to 7,000 was abandoned.

**August 7**

San Francisco mourns the death of local homeless artist and activist Ronnie Goodman who died in his tent.

### 2021

**January 21**

Biden announces FEMA will cover 100 percent of SIP hotel costs. Previously under Trump, FEMA was covering 75 percent of the costs. The Biden announcement was retroactive to the beginning of the pandemic and forward to October of 2021. The city could extend the program for two more months on top of that with state funds.

**January 25**

Governor Newsom announces a change to the vaccine roll out plan, removing homeless and incarcerated people from tier 1B. Homeless people can still qualify for vaccines if they are 65 or older, or if they work in healthcare, education and child care, emergency services, or food and agriculture.

**December 15**

#30RightNow campaign wins a rent cap for supportive housing tenants! Tenants can no longer be asked to pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent.
The three vaccines approved as safe and effective by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. The administration determined all three offer protection against COVID death and hospitalizations.

**VACCINATION INFORMATION**

The following pharmacies are providing vaccinations for those aged 16 and older:

- **Walgreens** pharmacy locations in the Tenderloin and South of Market, including those at 684 The Embarcadero, 501 Ellis Street, 1239 Market St., and 825 Market St.

- **Muni** allows anybody to ride its buses and trains for free to and from a vaccination appointment. Riders are advised to have their appointment form ready.

A mobile vaccination unit will visit Treasure Island the next two Saturdays, April 3 and April 10, to vaccinate eligible residents.

The vaccination site will be part of the Tenderloin Resource Community Hub on the 300 block of Ellis Street, between Jones and Taylor streets. For more information, call (415) 674-6199 or email 300resourcehub@glide.org.
A RETURN TO THE MISERY OF POVERTY TOWS?

Stella Kunkat

After months of moratorium on poverty tows, San Francisco may soon fall back on the inequitable practice.

As the map pictured here makes brutally clear, the towing practices of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) are highly inequitable and disproportionately target San Francisco’s low-income communities of color living in the Bayview and Tenderloin. Welcome to the reality of poverty tows!

There are three types of poverty tows: tows for five or more unpaid parking tickets, tows for vehicle registrations that are more than six months out of date, and tows for vehicle registrations that are more than 72 hours. Based on information from an SFMTA public records request, Chris Arvin, a volunteer with the Stop Poverty Tows Coalition, compiled the data on poverty tows occurring in each district. Arvin found that 25% of all poverty tows happen in District 6, which includes the Tenderloin and where 1% of all poverty tows occur, are the second most affected population in San Francisco.

The data speaks for itself. Poverty tows punish the most marginalized and vulnerable communities of San Francisco, and are particularly harmful for folks living in their cars or RVs. These tows result in tremendous and often undueable harm, as the chances of getting back a vehicle or home can be very low due to high towing and storage fees. And if the harm caused was not enough, the City’s tow program makes a deficit of $4.7 million annually, with low-income tows representing 1:5 of this loss.

In Haight-Ashbury, the Homeless Youth Alliance (HYA) was allowed to open a large tent in front of the San Francisco Main Library and the Asian Art Museum, where a large tent encampment would provide access to bathrooms and showers. Mother Brown’s in the Bayview temporarily took over MLK Park to provide adequate space for tents to be spread 12 feet apart, lawsuits were even threatened and filed, including one from UC Hastings College of the Law demanding that the tents be removed from sidewalks. Advocates organized protests, and the Board of Supervisors passed legislation requiring the city to open 8,250 hotel rooms for those deemed most vulnerable to the virus. The Centers for Disease Control issued guidance that tents could provide a significant barrier between neighbors to prevent the virus’s spread. Hundreds of tents were donated and distributed by community organizations.

Some housed neighbors started to complain about encampments in front of their homes and businesses. Service providers such as Homeless Youth Alliance in Haight-Ashbury wrote a proposed for an organized encampment that would provide access to bathrooms and showers. Mother Brown’s in the Bayview temporarily took over MLK Park to provide adequate space for tents to be spread 12 feet apart. Lawsuits were even threatened and filed, including one from UC Hastings College of the Law demanding that the tents be removed from sidewalks. Advocates organized protests, and the Board of Supervisors passed

2020 IN HINDSIGHT: SF ALLOWED FOR SANCTIONED TENT ENCAMPMENTS

Christin Evans

When San Francisco’s COVID-19 health order was released in March 2020, requiring residents to shelter-in-place, it included one paragraph specifically exempting those experiencing homelessness. Immediately, that paragraph raised a question: How could someone without access to shelter protect themselves from the deadly virus? The Centers for Disease Control issued guidance that tents could provide a significant barrier between neighbors to prevent the virus’s spread. Hundreds of tents were donated and distributed by community organizations.

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It has been a breath of fresh air for me to be here. A respite. I have started school and finally have an opportunity to get on my feet because I’m not sleep deprived and I feel safe.” — Jasmine, 33, resident

“I have the ability to use the bathrooms and the showers and having a safe setting so I can get the care of things outside of here like food stamps, legal issues, and other things that I need to get taken care of. The staff helps us and takes care of appointments and organizing all of the things I need to do. If I didn’t have help I wouldn’t be able to accomplish a lot of the things I need to get done. It makes the biggest difference. If I was still out on the street I wouldn’t have gotten any of that done.” — Lou, 55, resident

“I love having the ability to use the bathrooms and the showers and having a safe setting so I can get the care of things outside of here like food stamps, legal issues, and other things that I need to get taken care of. The staff helps us and takes care of appointments and organizing all of the things I need to do. If I didn’t have help I wouldn’t be able to accomplish a lot of the things I need to get done. It makes the biggest difference. If I was still out on the street I wouldn’t have gotten any of that done.” — Lou, 55, resident

The pandemic brought an unexpected form of relief for folks living in their vehicles, when SFMTA halted these towing practices in early summer 2020 in response to the City’s stay-at-home order. This moratorium has meant great relief for many San Franciscans, especially for low-income residents who rely on their vehicles to get to work and other essential places, and most of all for those who rely on their vehicle for shelter.

After temporarily stopping the issuing of parking tickets when vehicles were not moved on street cleaning days over the summer, SFMTA resumed citations in September 2020. Since then, tickets and late fees have been accruing for vehicle owners who are still suffering from the financial hardship caused by the pandemic, and who simply can’t afford to pay the staggering tickets.

The Stop Poverty Tows coalition — endorsed by more than 70 organizations — is meeting regularly with SFMTA staff to advocate for permanently ending poverty tows and installing less onerous ways of collecting debt, among other harm-reduction practices around towing and citation.

Despite this exchange, SFMTA has told the coalition that it is considering ending the moratorium on poverty tows in the coming months. As for the 72-hour rule, cars that remain parked in a legal spot for three days may start to be towed again as soon as May. When asked why, SFMTA staff have referenced the “immense pressure” from other constituents and complaints about abandoned vehicles. Since the agency has not shared data or estimates on how many of these abandoned vehicles exist, it’s hard to say how legitimate this concern is.

Regardless, it’s a sign that the complaints about the unpleasant sight of an abandoned vehicle voiced by some trump the risk of losing shelter for others.

It seems that SFMTA does not recognize that not towing someone’s RV or car means someone who is already burdened under financial hardship — is a form of harm reduction. The agency has a responsibility and opportunity to prevent people from descending into yet another level of poverty and homelessness. It’s a role that the agency seemingly does not want to reckon with.

“Towing records from SFMTA public records request. The data covers 3,519 tickets from July 2019 to July 2020. Parking tickets included 166,173 parking spaces from the “On Street Parking Census” on DataSF.

Where “poverty tows” happen in San Francisco

Poverty tows include tows for 5 or more unpaid parking tickets, vehicle registration expiring over six months, and vehicles parked more than 72 hours.

### Yearly number of “poverty tows” per 1,000 street parking spaces

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<tr>
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<td>10 - 24</td>
<td>546</td>
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<td>25 - 44</td>
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<td>45 - 64</td>
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THE BEAT OF THE STREET:
What Has Changed for Unhoused San Franciscans in the Last Year, and What Haven’t

This last year of the COVID-19 pandemic has been hard. There has been a lot to adjust to, because there are not very many positive resources in San Francisco due to our City leaders and how our mayor is running things.

One thing that has changed in a negative way is that the City has been very hands-off when it comes to addressing homelessness. I mean the City is not giving people anything besides harassment, so people are learning to use their environment to survive. That is creating even more distance between unhoused folks and City leaders, so it will be harder for anyone to even try to ask for any kind of help when the city does get back to normal.

City leaders are digging a hole for themselves by not taking care of folks that are unhoused during this pandemic. It just showed even more that the City has no heart, and it’s sad. It’s heartbreaking for me, because people depend on their City and they want their City to take care of them but they really aren’t getting the support they need.

Rather than offering services, what they have done is they have intensified encampment sweeps. So what that means is that at night time or just whenever it rains? Boom. They come sweeping people and taking everything they have. They are being more aggressive, and then of course folks don’t really have any place to go again. Some people got lucky and got into Shelter-In-Place (SIP) hotels, which is good. I know several people who were in encampments who got placed in the hotels, so now they are inside and waiting to get permanent housing. But the majority of people are just getting shuffled around and it’s really been business as usual.

The city should have just stopped the sweeps. For a few months they did, and people outside got to rest. We got to actually be normal for a second without having to worry every five seconds about being harassed by the police or DWP. And after a few months, because there are no bathrooms and no water sources for people out on the streets in San Francisco, the City finally put out some outhouses and some port-a-potties. But the problem is that they later take them away. One big thing that they should have done is provided more healthy clean water, more places for people to use the restroom so that they don’t have to go in Mr. Businessman’s parking lot. But the bigger thing that has happened is that because they keep giving a few little things to the unhoused — the bathrooms, the water — that are essential to survive, and then they yank them away. So people out here really have nothing stable to rely on. If you want to help make things better, leave these resources there so people can brush their teeth, wash their bodies, give their pets some water, and get themselves some water, cuz we need that to survive.

The City should also be a little bit more helpful; it should make the services that it offers more real. I mean, the services are real, but no one can really access them. The City really needed to do more community outreach. City leaders should have been out canvassing the streets, talking to people, getting to know what they need — but that just wasn’t done. Our leaders really should put in the work to learn about what’s going on in their community. So those are things that stand out to me; I think the City did a really poor job of taking care of its residents.

But of course there’s always a little bit of hope, even in the worst-case scenarios, and always try to see the positive. It’s hard when I’m presented with so much negativity, but I always can find the positive, because otherwise you can’t go on existing, and I wouldn’t be smiling like I do.

One thing that I have noticed is that people in the neighborhoods who live in houses are actually coming out and getting to know some of their unhoused neighbors, starting to become allies. That’s huge, because now when the City does sweeps, that neighbor will come out and be like, “Hey! What are you doing to John?” and start filming. And that’s a positive shift I’ve seen — we now have neighbors helping neighbors — because before there was just a lot more separation. The City seems like it wants unhoused people not to have allies or anyone to help them, so it’s inspiring to see so much neighborly love. Unhoused folks are your neighbors, and you are their neighbor, so I’ve really noticed that shift, because those folks would never normally give a f**k. It’s nice to see that when they see something happening, when they see someone’s stuff getting thrown away, they are going to see and they are going to video it and it’s amazing to me that people are doing that.

I’ve had a lot of folks want to know how to get involved? People have come and asked me or I got a phone call from so and so to talk to someone who wants to learn about how to better help their community. On more than several occasions I’ve taken people on these little encampment walks to get a understanding of what is happening in our communities, and that is pretty badass to me, too, because it’s showing that people are listening, people are caring. If the City won’t come outside and help people, then we have to come together as a community. People are doing that on their own, they’re seeking me out, or the Coalition on Homelessness, to find out what they can do to make this better.

Another huge positive is that a few of the folks that have been out here on the streets for years are now in permanent housing, and more than a few — at least fifteen that I know of — are now in SIP hotels. Some of these folks are inside for the first time in 10 or 15 years, and it is amazing to me that they are inside now and not having to deal with everything out here, and that they are happy. I visit the hotels and check up on people and it’s amazing to see them living there, living normally and being inside, because I know how they lived before, and they seem so much happier having a place that is stable and secure. And that makes me smile, it really makes me happy, because all I ever wanted is for people to be treated fairly and to be safe. And for a lot of people this is the first time they have felt safe in almost half their life, and so to give that to people is something amazing. That’s the worst-case scenario, but that we need permanent housing, so that we can get folks off the street so that they can feel that same way.

This last year has been a test for all of us. It has tested us at our weakest moments, at our most heartbreaking moments. I think people learned a lot about themselves, about what they can go through, what makes their heart beat, or what makes them angry. It seems like now people are more vocal when they see something unfair. So this last year has really made a lot of us think about things we never thought about before. And one thing that I want to say is this: Remember the things you learned and the things that you saw. Never forget how fast this last year affected you. If you spent this last year inside your house, and you’ve been impacted during this time, just imagine if you weren’t housed. Imagine what this last year would have been like for you if you were on the street. Just put yourself in someone else’s shoes for like 5 seconds. What would that be like? And then take those feelings and all that emotion and go do something about it for the people who are on the street. Just be part of your community, because we’re all humans, we’re all San Francisco residents, and we need each other, because if our City government is not helping us then we need to help each other. I want that neighborhood love to continue, be positive, smile at people when you walk by. Just basically don’t forget we still exist, and we exist amongst each other, so we need to take care of each other. This last year, with the masks, the COVID pandemic, this whole thing is such a weird thing to go through, so let’s not just forget that it happened and let us not forget where we want to go in the future. And don’t let us pick up shit happen to your neighbors. If this last year taught anything to anyone, just don’t forget it.

This was a really long year for me. My work hasn’t changed at all. I’m still doing all this stuff because my city doesn’t take the time to take care of its people, so I’ve been riding from one side of the city to the other. Sometimes I wish I had a little bit of help going out there. I mean, there were nights I didn’t sleep because I was riding across the City going to fix people because they didn’t want to go to the hospital. Unhoused folks didn’t want to go to the hospital because they were worried they would get the virus, which they probably would have. So instead, most unhoused folks are just going to stay put and they’re going to suffer and they’re not going to get medical attention. So I was so busy, so busy, so busy, but even when I was the most tired I still kept riding my bike, I still kept pushing because the City lets people down all the time and I wanted folks to know that if I say I’m going to be there, I will be there. Sometimes I’m, I ache and I just want to lay down, but I can’t, and I wish that the City could feel that, so that it would know not to give up — give up on people that live in San Francisco, pandemic or not — and just take care of people.
STREET SHEET is now accepting submissions for our first ever Disability Issue!

We are seeking articles, narratives, poems, artwork, comics etc focusing on personal experiences with disabilities and well as disability justice issues. Submissions can be emailed to qwatts@cohsf.org or mailed to 280 Turk Street, SF 94102.

*payment may be available for submissions from people experiencing homelessness, please contact the editor for more information*