Car Fires Have SF Residents Fuming

BY LAUREN PINNELLA
Metro Editor

The recent string of car fires throughout San Francisco has created an uneasy feeling among residents.

SF State student and resident Alex Malmsberg says she doesn’t want to see her car torched. “It’s weird because they’re setting fires all around the city and you don’t know whose this will happen next.”

Sarah Nielson, also a SF State student and resident, is now concerned about where she’ll park. “There’s not even enough space to park in the city and now we have to worry about people setting our cars on fire.”

Thirteen car fires have been set at various locations throughout the city since July 23, said San Francisco Police Department Sergeant Wilfred Williams. “At this point, there have not been any arrests and it is still considered an ‘ongoing investigation’,” added Williams.

The fires, which are still under investigation, have affected only a tiny number of the vehicles in San Francisco. According to the city transportation agency, there are 450,000 registered vehicles in the city and an additional 35,000 auto that enter San Francisco during each weekday. The arsonists have all occurred in the late night or early morning hours.

The most recent fire occurred around 3 a.m. on July 20 at Balboa and La Playa streets.

Williams said “Some of the fires have started the same way using newspaper and others have not been started that way. There is no known pattern of targeted vehicles or motives.”

Although the investigation is continuing, many believe 62-year-old Fala Chan, who was recently arrested in connection with two structural fires, may be to blame.

Chan was taken into custody on July 30 because of her connection with the structural fires that occurred on April 30 and July 24.

There is no evidence linking her to the car fires and she (Chan) is not a suspect,” said Williams. However, it is important to note that there have been no car fires since Chan’s arrest.

The fires may also be the work of multiple criminals. “Copycatting is always a possibility. We’re looking at all avenues in this investigation,” said Williams.

“It is a difficult crime to com-

Change for the Meter

Those who park in Oakland bemoan the increase in meter fare.

BY NICOLE MESHACK
Staff Writer

A recent increase in metered parking in the city of Oakland has caused mixed reviews among city residents and local merchants who are directly affected.

Due to the city’s budget crisis, the city increased metered parking to $2 on July 1 and extended metered parking times. This will add an estimated $4.5 million to the city’s budget.

“Parking will have been horror-

Rehniking Romeo: Professor Melissa Witman takes a new look at the Shakespearean standard.

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Free Thursday, August 6, 2009

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