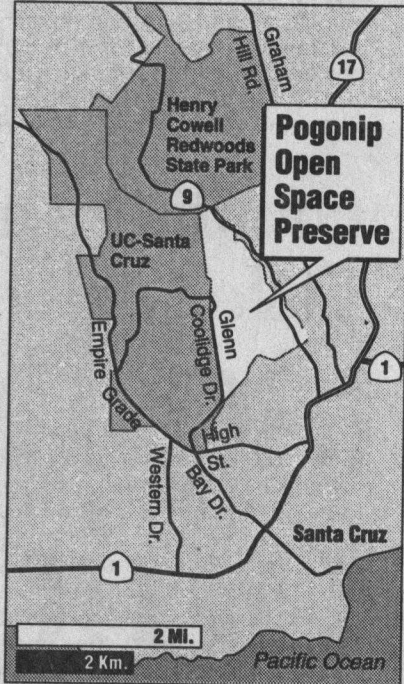


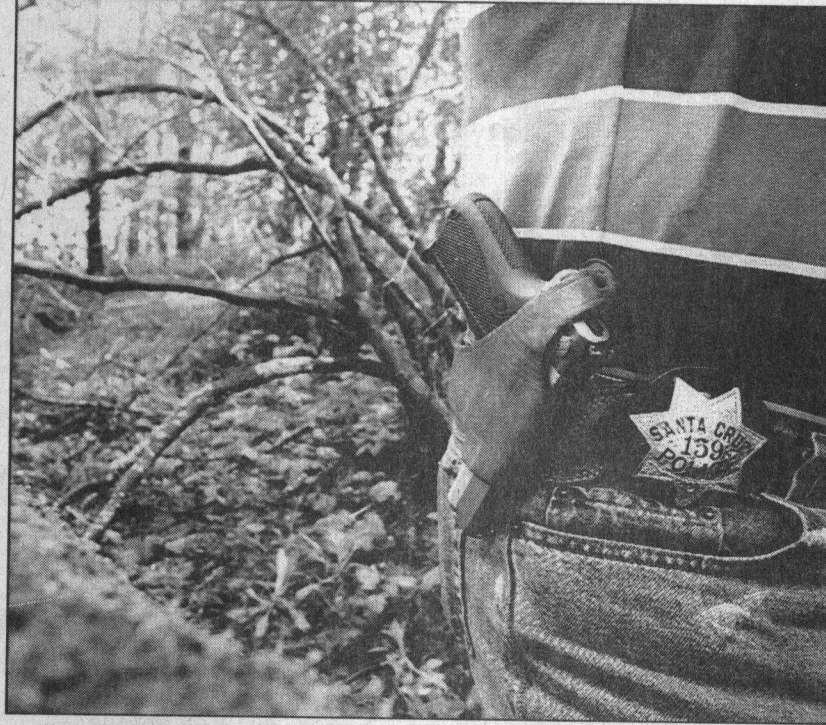
SJM 2/9/95

# Who killed 'Jane Doe #2'?

Crime & Criminals



CARL NEIBURGER — MERCURY NEWS



Detective Butch Baker returns to the area where a woman's body was found more than a year ago at Pogonip Open Space Preserve. Since then he has been frustrated by the case. The apparent murder victim is in her 20s, with expensive nail and dental work. Until last week, Baker's efforts had turned up only false hopes. But new evidence could lead him to the Philippines to crack the case.

JUDITH CALSON, MERCURY NEWS

## From Santa Cruz to Manila, a mystery leaves haunting trail

BY PAUL ROGERS  
Mercury News Staff Writer

She was buried without a funeral. There were no mourners. No family or friends to pay their last respects.

In a brown urn under a 300-pound slab of concrete, the ashes of a young woman the world knows only as "Jane Doe #2" lie in the indigents plot at Soquel Cemetery on Old San Jose Road.

### Still seeking clues, killer

She has been dead for more than a year now, left in a purgatory of anonymity, and nobody seems to have noticed. Nobody except a few frustrated homicide investigators, who still search for her killer across California and began looking for clues in the Philippines this week, and the man who supervised her burial.

"No one comes," said Dewey Raburn, superintendent of the cemetery. "No husband. No son. No father, mother, brothers or sisters. They were somebody in their time, and now there's nobody. It's sad."

### Remains found by hikers

On Jan. 29, 1994, two women hiking through the Pogonip Open Space Preserve, a 614-acre park between downtown Santa Cruz and the University of California campus, wandered off the trail. They found the remains of a woman who, coroners' investigators later concluded, had been beaten to death with a blunt object two to six months earlier.

The body was nude. A few hundred feet away, police discovered an abandoned tent. Outside were pots and pans filled with rainwater and a campfire ring containing burned clothes, a charred umbrella and flashlight parts, as if someone were trying to destroy evidence. It appeared as if the campers had left in a hurry.

A year ago, the case seemed straightforward. Investigators speculated Jane Doe might have been a homeless woman.

See **POGONIP**, Page 6B





# Haunting Santa Cruz mystery may lead police to Philippines

## ■ POGONIP

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But the puzzle gradually evolved into what Santa Cruz police are calling one of the most unusual mysteries they have encountered in years.

No homeless shelter reported the woman missing. An autopsy showed the slender woman, in her early 20s with dark hair and a double-pierced ear, had fingernails painted red. The nails were acrylic, which can cost \$30 to \$50 at a professional manicuring salon. Her teeth contained porcelain inlays, rare dental work that can cost \$500 a tooth.

On her left hand was a key clue: a tattoo of a heart. With dental records, a tattoo and fingerprints, Santa Cruz officers expected to learn the woman's identity. They were wrong.

"It's so unusual," said Santa Cruz Police Detective Loran "Butch" Baker, the lead investigator on the case. "When I first got all of that stuff, the guys in the coroner's office told me, 'You'll solve it. No problem.'"

As leads have stalled, Baker has become fixated on what amounts to two mysteries: finding the identity of the victim, then tracking her killer.

### Long-shot searches

Two days after the body was found, Baker began a computer search. He transmitted the woman's estimated age, weight, height and other characteristics over a law enforcement computer network police call "MUPS," short for the Missing Unidentified Persons System, run by the state Department of Justice. He sent bulletins out over a nationwide search network, the National Crime Information Center.

The computer matched reports of missing young women who fit the Santa Cruz description. It printed out California residents first. There were 1,700 names.

"I was blown away," he said.

Baker made more than 200 phone calls. He'd call police in other cities, then the relatives of the missing women. Sometimes the women had been found dead yet were still on the list, or turned up alive but wanted to elude ex-husbands or unhappy pasts.

Hounded by the mystery, Baker drove rural roads in the Santa Cruz Mountains looking for newly abandoned cars. His long-shot theory: Maybe the woman was a visitor from San Jose or San Francisco who broke down and was abducted. Again, no luck.

Police have all but ruled out kidnapping. If someone were taken by force, friends or family would have reported it.

### Help from experts

Others have joined the search along the way.

Forensic anthropologist Allison Galloway used a wooden box and metal screen to sift through what appeared to be a shallow gravesite nearby, a few days after the body was found. The sifting turned up nothing.

Also in the first week, Baker returned to the crime scene with Officer Kathy "Cat" Albrecht and her search dog, Rachel, a Weimaraner trained in finding missing bodies. The dog, who works with Albrecht at the University of California, Santa Cruz police department, located several teeth and part of the woman's jawbone in the damp undergrowth, clues that helped in assembling more complete dental records.

Police also found dozens of objects at the scene, including old clothes, the business card of a local homeless shelter, supermarket receipts, beer bottles and a condom. But because so many homeless people and hikers frequent the woods, investigators don't know which of the objects, if any, are connected to the case.

One clue that holds promise:

Baker found an empty booklet in the bushes that once contained

\$50 in food stamps. It was dated Dec. 6, 1993 — seven weeks before the body was found. Investigators have researched the origin of the food stamps, but they are not disclosing information about where the stamps might have come from or to whom they were registered.

Computer matches have created false hope. A match last week from Fairfield included a woman with a tattoo on her hand. When Baker called Fairfield, he found it was on the wrong hand.

After months of cold leads, last week Baker got a "hit" from police in Woodbridge, N.J., who reported a missing woman from the Philippines who matched the description of Baker's Jane Doe. A housekeeper last seen in 1993, she set off one day and hasn't been heard from since. Friends believe she was headed west.

Baker said Wednesday he is attempting to contact the woman's mother, who lives in a slum near Manila.

Baker's obsession with the case is evident as he wanders the murder scene a year later.

"Somebody's gotta have a missing person. Maybe she was somebody who normally took off for a while . . ."

He walks on, turning over possibilities like the leaves underfoot.

"Maybe it's been long enough now. Somebody's thinking, 'We haven't heard from her in over a year . . .'"

He pushes past downed tree limbs and sloshes through puddles.

"Something's got to come through for me. She didn't just appear here. She came from somewhere."

And in his voice rises a tone of disgust when the conversation turns to her attacker.

"They basically got away with it," he says. "At least for now."

Anyone with information about the case is asked to call Santa Cruz police at (408) 429-3725.