

# Felton residents ask, 'When will violence end?'

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FELTON — Year by year, the townspeople here feel the tension grow. And, they are asking, when does it end?

What can be done to stop the sudden violence that has come to plague this small town during the past decade?

Monday, on the eve of the anniversary of last year's destructive and killing flood, Felton was the scene of a shooting that left a deputy sheriff in extremely guarded condition in the hospital and a Highway Patrol officer with wounds in his wrist and leg.

The gunman escaped into Henry Cowell Park, a wilderness area only partly domesticated into campsites and walking trails.

The trails are quick for joggers and its underbrush is nearly impenetrable over large areas.

It has hosted the killings of two mass murderers and given

refuge to a third.

It again has hidden a man of violence.

It may be hiding him yet.

"It's amazing the number of people who came in and said they're locking doors they never locked and they're loading their guns and keeping them handy," Bill Martin of Martin Mobil at the north end of town said this morning.

At the other end of town Tuesday afternoon, shopkeeper Mike Rugg was saying, "People are tense; it's only a year from the flood. You know, it's a wonder the number of people who have guns."

Rugg is a long time resident of Felton and he's been touched by much of its violence.

He went to high school with Herbert Mullin, the second of the area's mass murderers and he lived close to John Linley Frazier, the first of the infamous killers.

"Frazier was at a party in my house the night before the killings and the feeling, the vibes he was giving off, were

unbelievable," Rugg remembers. He says he and his brother, Howard Rugg, were on Frazier's "snuff list."

Mike Rugg's house in Gold Gulch was flooded last January and he says that Leslie Grover Wyman, the man suspected of shooting the two officers, has been living part time in one of the homes. The residence was four houses from his and was abandoned by its owner when he couldn't get flood repair money.

Gold Gulch lies alongside Henry Cowell Park and neighbors say they saw a man who resembled Wyman 10 minutes after the shooting. They believe he may have been trying to get back to his borrowed home.

He was also known to have other natural homes in the interior of the park.

Rugg says the series of loop trails in the parks makes it possible to get down to Toll House, a well-known valley landmark, within three to five minutes from Gold Gulch. From there one can go across Highway 9, and in 10 to 15 minutes get to Empire Grade Road.

It's also that quick to go out the east side of the park to Graham Hill Road, he said.

Felton Fire Chief Mac MacDonnell says, "It seems the first week in the New Year is a good time to leave the area — it's just unreal the stuff that's been going on."

People at the bowling alley were telling reporters they leave in groups now when it is after dark, and one Felton businesswoman says she is now waiting until it's light before going to work in her shop.

Nick Pagnini, owner of Roy's market, says people he's talking to want more supervision at the park and one said they should clear-cut the trees.

The question all over town is whether the suspected gunman is still in the park — if he's gone to ground in a Viet Cong type tunnel, or if he's "in Tijuana, by now," as Bill Castor, owner of the Toll House, says.