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Calendar

February Events: Take a stroll down Union Street for the Valentine's Day Wine Walk, or take in concerts, comedians, and more this month. There are also Black History Month events, film festivals, jazz performances, and much more. 20

MarinaTimes

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Perry Butler has owned and operated Perry's on Union Street since 1969. PHOTO: PERRYSSF.COM

The real story behind closing Café des Amis (And why what's coming next will be great for the neighborhood)

This is the first of a three-part series on the state of Union Street.

by susan dyer reynolds

PERRY'S RESTAURANT HAS operated on Union Street for 45 years, and proprietor Perry Butler hopes it will be there 45 more. "The best thing to happen to me is that my son, Aldy, and my daughter, Margie, wanted to come work

with me after college," he said. "So when I get hit by whatever turnip truck comes around the corner, I know the business is in good hands." Perry's has additional locations on the Embarcadero, at SFO, and in the Galleria Atrium of the San Francisco Design Center, but it is the flagship Union Street location that has attracted everyone from the city's top politicians to several generations of families for its cozy atmosphere, bustling bar,

and signature dishes such as tomato bisque, Cobb salad, and the hamburger. Mondays and Thursdays draw a crowd for half-priced bottles of wine, as do Wednesday nights for "Lobster Madness," where diners get a 1-1/4 pound Maine lobster, corn on the cob, and boiled potatoes for \$24.95.

Lack of change has been a good thing for Perry's — their celebrated bartenders have been crafting classic

UNION STREET, continued on 4

Cruising speed

No crash for San Francisco real estate, but expect a moderating pace in 2015

by john zipperer

THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS (CAR) is predicting that 2015 will be the best of times and the best of times in the state: Price growth plus an influx of buyers and inventory is expected to strengthen residential home sales across the Golden State. But we all know that San Francisco is often a world unto itself, and things can happen differently here. So how can locals find out what to expect for real estate in 2015?

"The state will continue to see a bifurcated market, with the San Francisco Bay Area outperforming other regions, thanks to a more vigorous job market and tighter housing supply," said CAR's vice president and chief economist Leslie Appleton-Young.

To get an on-the-ground view of San Francisco's residential property market, the *Marina Times* checked in with some local experts to get their predictions of prices, hot neighborhoods, and other things to expect from real estate in 2015.

Do you think 2015 will be a year of real estate price growth, stagnation, or decline?

Carole Isaacs, sales associate, McGuire Real Estate: Real estate price will continue to grow, but not at the high rate it has in the past year or two. Five to seven percent, depending on the neighborhood, is the figure often quoted. The Association of Bay Area Governments has

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BELLINGHAM BY THE BAY :: Bruce is back

Look out! Here comes the news again

by bruce bellingham

SOMETIMES I WONDER WHERE WE would be without a crisis to manage. Nothing but trouble comes the easy way," said the great Chicago poet, **Oscar Brown Jr.** Some people look for trouble. Why bother? "You're not going say anything gloomy again, are you, Bruce?" someone sighed to me the other day. "You are such a crepehanger." What a great word that is, "crepehanger," even if it does mean that people cross to the other side of the street when they see me coming.

Years ago (don't let me use that expression again), during my news radio days, I got a call from a pleasant-sounding woman who wondered if I'd contribute to her new enterprise, The Good News Network. She wanted me to report on brave firefighters, medical miracles — that sort of thing, in general, things that turn out well. Her

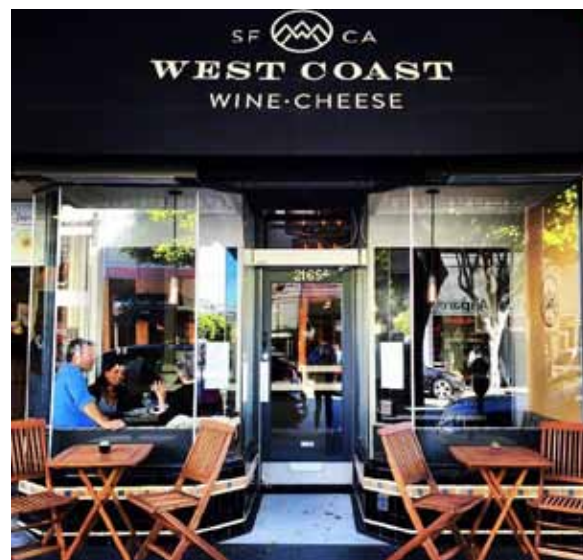
network was out of business in six months. She couldn't find any stations that were interested in airing "good news." It's not that people want to hear bad news all the time. They just tend to be attracted to bad news as long as it happens to other people most of the time. **Charles Osgood**, the veteran CBS broadcaster, wrote a book

about this topic: *Nothing Could Be Finer Than a Crisis That Is Minor in the Morning*. That's right. We survived this disaster; let someone else clean it up, and we'll move on to the next calamity.

Some people look for trouble. Why bother?

Who picks up the pieces after the "breaking news" has broken? A recent trend in news, though much of the news isn't really gathered. It's disseminated by a relatively few sources. For example, last month the *New York Times* described **President Obama's** State of the Union Address as "defiant." Suddenly all the net-

BELLINGHAM, continued on 4



West Coast Wine & Cheese features a varied and constantly evolving menu, currently featuring Roasted Pork Belly with Red Curry and Lime and Seared Foie Gras with PX Sherry, Black Cherry Conserva, Parker House Rolls. PHOTOS: COURTESY WEST COAST WINE & CHEESE



West Coast Wine & Cheese brings a wine bar to Union Street

by julie mitchell

UNION STREET HAS always been a dining mecca, from French to burgers, to Italian to cream puffs. But until West Coast Wine & Cheese

opened late last fall, Cow Hollow really didn't have its own wine bar. This small, sleek space that seats just 28 is operated by husband-and-wife team Lindsey Repose and Chris Wanner, Cow Hollow residents

with a passion for premium wines from California, Washington, and Oregon, complemented by a rotating, market-driven menu of cheese, charcuterie, and small plates.

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TOP 10 STEAKS IN AMERICA

Osso Steakhouse - San Francisco, CA
Bobo's - San Francisco, CA
Peter Luger Steakhouse - Brooklyn, NY
Bern's Steakhouse - Tampa, FL
CUT - Beverly Hills, CA
Emeril's Delmonico - Las Vegas, NV
Mario Batali's Carnevino - Las Vegas, NV
Chicago Cut - Chicago, IL
The Precinct - Cincinnati, OH
Elway's Cherry Creek - Denver, CO



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Street Beat

Union Street is busy

Christine Roher welcomes Gala and other shops to Union Street; the Northsider isn't the only one celebrating Union Street's award-winning holiday lights display; and Ernest Beyl says Angela's mad at him again about the Ferlinghetti Piazza project. **8**

Food & Wine

New and romantic

The Tablehopper bellies up to Chubby Noodle Marina's bottomless dim sum brunch; Dana Eastland highlights some romantic places to take your special someone on Valentine's Day; Bill Knutson tells us to cook with the wine you'd want to drink; and Ernest Beyl uncovers some notorious recipes. **10**

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Up and down the coast

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February must-see events

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Condo conversions made easy-ish

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Susan Dyer Reynolds says goodbye to the Fix-Its.. **30**

ONLINE SPECIALS

Evalyn Baron, expanded event calendar, complete archives, and more.

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NEWS BRIEFS :: Northside roundup

Public garage security on hold

PIERCE GARAGE SECURITY GETS FOUR-MONTH WAIT

Plans by the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) to delay security upgrades for the Pierce Street Garage (3236 Pierce Street) for at least four months were not welcomed by the Marina Safety Upgrade Committee. Local attorney Robert Sheridan tells us Northern Station Captain Greg McEachern reported that auto burglars struck Pierce garage cars seven times in October and 15 times in December. "This is an emergency situation that screams out for emergency protection," said Sheridan.

FARRELL RETAINS BUDGET SEAT

District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell was again assigned to head the city's budget committee by newly elected Board of Supervisors President London Breed. Farrell had told the *Marina Times* that he has enjoyed his work as budget chair and hoped to continue in it (see "Four more years for Farrell: District 2 supervisor plans next steps," *Marina Times*, December 2014). The assignment is a two-year commitment. His colleagues on the committee will be Eric Mar and Katy Tang, with Scott Weiner and Norman Yee joining during the busiest budget season.

NEW PRESIDIO PARKLANDS

The dramatic roadway renovation of the Presidio Parkway has resulted in the opportunity to create a new 13-acre park, and the Presidio Trust is seeking

community involvement in the planning and creation of this park.

The New Presidio Parklands Project, as it's called, includes three interconnected sites. First, there's a 10-acre designed landscape that will be created above the new roadway tunnels. Second, there's a three-acre revitalized Crissy Field Center Youth Campus with a "learning landscape." And there will also be a new plaza for the Presidio Visitor Center.

The Presidio Trust Gallery (1023 Montgomery Street) on the Presidio's Main Post, opened a design lab at the end of January. In the lab, which is free and open to everybody seven days a week (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.), people can draw, debate, and otherwise engage with each other and the project.

You can find more information, as well as dates, times, and locations of public design workshops, at newpresidioparklands.org/participate/public-presentation.

NEW MUNI VEHICLES COMING

Muni's funding issues — which were the focus of two separate propositions on the November ballot — have helped keep the city from replacing and expanding its fleet of light rail vehicles (LRVs). That has resulted in a lack of capacity, increased breakdowns, and slow service, which is all exacerbated by the city's growing population.

Help is on the way following late-2014 approval by the Board of Supervisors of a new contract with Siemens for the purchase of the next generation of LRVs. "Siemens has a

great reputation, and the new vehicles will require less maintenance and will be more reliable, better-designed, and quieter," said District 8 Supervisor Scott Wiener. "Muni is accelerating its purchase of the new light rail vehicles by acquiring 40 of them several years earlier than anticipated. This is great news for the system."

DUCK AND (RE)COVER

The 30-year-old duck from the Joe DiMaggio Playground that went missing during an October renovation has been found and, as Rec and Park told the *Chronicle's* Leah Garchik, "The duck will be home." Local residents who had enjoyed watching their kids play on the metal duck (or who played on it themselves when they, one hopes, were young), had tried to find out if there had been any fowl foul play involved, but in the end, a neighbor had reportedly salvaged the duck when he thought it was abandoned. The duck has been a part of the children's playground since 1985 when Nan Becker, a neighborhood activist who led the Tot Lot initiative, choose it as part of her construction project.

MISSING YOUR WEDDING RING?

The *Marina Times* was contacted by a good-hearted local resident who said they'd found someone's wedding ring last month somewhere in the Marina neighborhood. If you think this is your lost ring, please contact the good samaritan with full description and proof of purchase at si2hubert@yahoo.com

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The In-Box:
Letters to the Times

NOT SO SKETCHY

Lately I have been reading "Sketches from a North Beach Journal" by Ernest Beyl in the *Marina Times*. Last month lo and behold is his best — "The Last of Capp's Corner?" This ensemble is a home run. Right down to the last Beat.

—Tom Whelan
San Francisco

BUILDING A BETTER POLK

Almost two years on from one of the worst city meetings on record, a compromised but mostly forward-looking final plan for Polk Street's redesign will be presented before the SFMTA board very soon.

Folks for Polk's "Checklist of Expectations" is the result of many meetings and advocating for the best outcome for the majority. We're optimistic that many suggestions from our

November 2013 wish list of recommendations will be in the final design.

There will be something for everyone on the new Polk Street, no matter how you get around. Currently, Polk is one of San Francisco's high-injury corridors, so much of it addresses the public's concern with road safety and San Francisco leadership's support for Vision Zero, the goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2024.

Changes will include better lighting, enlivened alleys, signal timing adjustments, more disabled parking and loading zones, relocated and revamped Muni stops, landscaping, state-of-the-art bicycle paths, and a host of measures known to create safer intersections. Preview all of what can be on our checklist (<http://bit.ly/PolkFinal>), and stay tuned for the unveiling.

—Madeleine Savit
Founder, Folks for Polk
San Francisco

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BELLINGHAM

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works were calling Obama's demeanor "defiant." I didn't think it was all that defiant. If he were really defiant, the president would have stripped off his jacket in the hallowed halls of Congress, and challenged the GOP leadership to an arm-wrestling contest. That's what "Abe the Rail Splitter" would have done. But no, the whole issue was reduced to a pedantic frenzy about "executive privilege." Huh? We've come a long way — from splitting

rails to splitting hairs. Meanwhile, we're "still waist deep in the big muddy." Where's Pete Seeger now that we need him?

Enough crepehanging. And opining.

Jody Powell once told me the definition of a columnist is someone who hides in the hills during a battle, and when it's all over, comes down to finish off the wounded. And enough namedropping, too. Well, maybe not just yet.

On newsgathering, someone asked me about how Herb Caen collected his items for "The Column." In the old days, before people clamored to get into the column, Herb walked all over town, yes, with a notebook and pen, the best type of newsgathering. Seems so quaint today. Herb loved names. He was particularly delighted when he discovered a barber in the Sunset named Joe Stalin. "Oh, that Joe Stalin!" Herb would write gleefully from

time to time. He never stopped walking around San Francisco, the best walking town in the world, even when he was sick, and even when he owned a Jaguar, which he called The White Rat. At the end of his life, Herb said ruefully that he wished he had covered more neighborhoods in the city. He did refer to the Marina as a "bigoted little village." Marina people are a proud lot, and the old-timers did not like that at all.

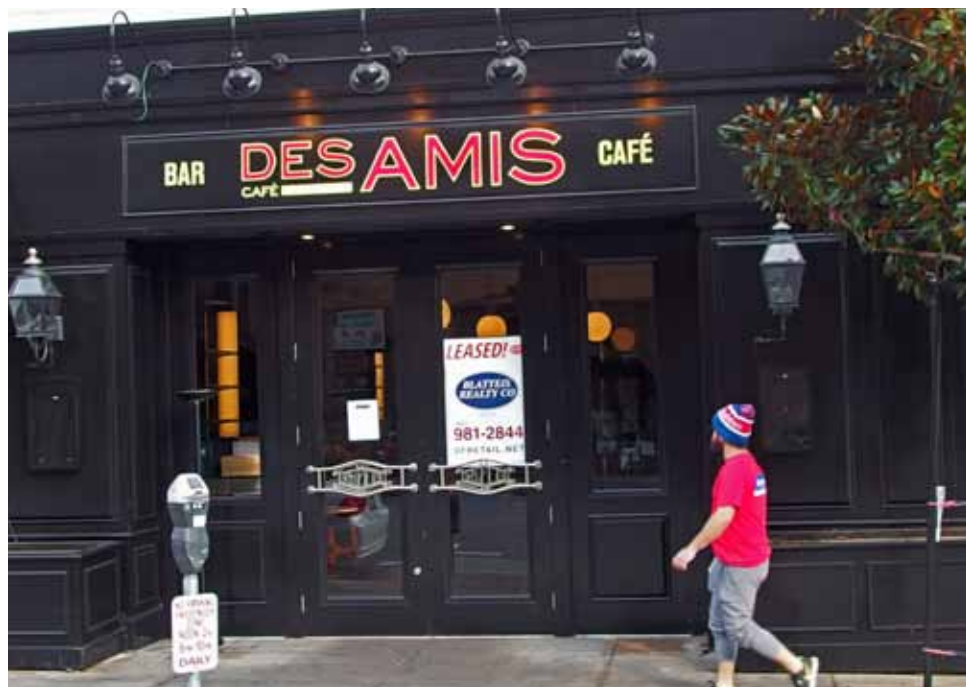
San Francisco is still obsessed with neighborhoods. It's our version of the class system. How many times have you heard "Lower Nob Hill" or the "TenderNob" or "Upper Tenderloin," as if there is such a thing. Or "Nopa,"

Herb wished he had covered more neighborhoods in S.F.

because the Western Addition has the wrong connotation? In days of yore, the Chinese could not leave Chinatown or they'd face arrest. Vernon Alley, the great bassist, took umbrage at Frank Jordan's nostalgia for the "good old days" in the city. "Good old days?" Vernon sniped, "I guess he meant the good old days was when black people could not cross east of Van Ness Avenue."

Where would we be without scapegoats or people to deride? That will never be answered on The Good News Network.

Bruce Bellingham is the author of *Bellingham by the Bay*. You may reach him at bruce@marinatimes.com.



Café des Amis is down for the count. PHOTO: EARL ADKINS

UNION STREET

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cocktails like the Ramos Fizz since day one, and now those same cocktails are all the rage among the hippest young "mixologists" in town. One thing that has changed over the years, however, is Union Street. "We've seen Union up and down just like we've seen San Francisco up and down," Butler said. "Right now it's down, but I think there's a lot of optimism with Adriano coming in."

Adriano is Adriano Paganini, one of the Bay Area's most prolific restaurateurs, who took over the lease on the former Café des Amis space (2000 Union Street) at the beginning of February; his new restaurant is slated for a spring to summer opening. Paganini founded (and

sold) the Pasta Pomodoro chain and now runs mega-hits like Delarosa on Chestnut Street (he's opening another this year), the Super Duper burger chain (including one on Chestnut Street), Beretta, Lolinda, Starbelly, and Uno Dos Tacos. Butler was a partner in Café des Amis, along with Bacchus Management Group (Spruce, Pizza Antica, The Village Pub), which closed in January. "I met with Adriano to transfer the liquor license," Butler said. "He's not sure of the concept yet, but he knows the neighborhood well, and I have no doubt he'll blow the doors off. I do know he's planning something casual and reasonably priced, which is the antithesis of Café des Amis."

Rumors are flying around the Marina/Cow Hollow community as to

why Café des Amis shuttered abruptly, but Butler said it had been a long time coming. "We just got off to a rough start and we could never fully recover," he said. Metamorphosing the 7,000-square-foot former home of Prego into a fashionable, elegant French brasserie was fraught with construction delays and the residual effects of the 2008 financial crisis. After the much-anticipated unveiling in 2010, a series of lukewarm reviews led to a chef shuffle that eventually found Bacchus executive chef-partner Mark Sullivan in the kitchen. Under Sullivan the food improved, but Café des Amis struggled to overcome first impressions. It was open just four years — the same number of years it took to build. "We had a handshake deal with our

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UNION STREET

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landlord to reduce the rent so we could tweak the concept, but the landlord suddenly reneged," Butler explained. "They wanted us to pay up on the back rent, and they planned to raise the rent as well. We never made money, and a lot of these landlords think they have the Taj Mahal. They were confident they could get more, so we walked away and they walked away, and we agreed to disagree."

Union Street's landlords are some of the city's most notorious, often preferring to sit on an empty building rather than accept lower rent. "I was one of the people working to keep the Metro Theatre a theater," Butler said. "But the landlord told us that he would rather just keep it boarded up, so now it's the Equinox gym."

Landlords aren't Union Street's only problem — in 1987, some merchants and residents supported a law stipulating that restaurants could only open in former dining establishments. Residents worried about additional noise and rowdy behavior, while existing restaurants saw it as a way to stifle competition. In 2008, with vacant storefronts blighting the once-beautiful street, merchants went to then-District 2 Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier and asked her to help lift the

moratorium. The ban was lifted in January of 2009, allowing five new restaurants and five self-service food sites to open in former retail-only spaces. Unfortunately, much of the food was mediocre and some of those restaurants have since closed or changed hands a number of times. Today, Union Street has more bars that serve food (think The Brick Yard and The Brixton) than it does foodie meccas like Chestnut Street's A16 or Fillmore Street's State Bird Provisions. Chestnut and Fillmore also maintain working theaters to draw the "dinner and a movie" demographic, where the Equinox gym inside the old Metro caters mostly to people who want to work out, grab a kale juice, and head home.

Without destination dining, a movie theater, or a major retail anchor, many Union Street merchants complain of low foot traffic. "Apple wanted



Perry Butler today. PHOTO: PERRYSSF.COM

it backfired on them, and I think they're seeing now that it wasn't good for the street or the neighborhood."

The state of California and the city of San Francisco are culpable as well for making it incredibly difficult to open a restaurant and keep it open due to costly health care and minimum wage requirements. California is one of only seven states not to offer tip credit against minimum wage, which rose from \$10.74 to \$11.05 this year and will go up to \$12.25 in May. Tip credit allows restaurants to pay waiters less than minimum wage because tips make up the difference. In California, owners must pay minimum wage on top of tips, meaning a server in a good restaurant can make between \$20 and \$50 per hour while back-

of-the-house employees continue to struggle. Some San Francisco restaurant owners have seen their labor costs climb to 50 percent or more of their operating expenses in a business already synonymous with slim profit margins.

Combine that with \$6 to \$7 per square foot commercial rents and San Francisco's health care mandate (which is the same whether you're Wells Fargo or Don's Diner), and you have struggling restaurants closing their doors, while still others open theirs in the East Bay. Even many successful San Francisco franchises like A16 and celebrated chefs such as Daniel Patterson have taken their latest ventures to Oakland, which has rapidly become a gastronome's delight.

The good news for the Marina and Cow Hollow is that the former Café des Amis space at

2000 Union garnered an incredible response. "I don't remember a restaurant deal that has been as competitive on Union Street. There were a lot of interested and qualified parties, and the owners went with the best operator," Jeremy Blatteis of Blatteis Realty, who brokered the deal, told the *San Francisco Business Times*.

Of course, this is no surprise to Perry Butler. "I'm an optimistic person by nature," he said. "I don't want to put all the weight on Adriano's shoulders, but I do think he will breathe a lot of life back into the neighborhood and we will see things swing upward again. I believe Union Street is going to be just fine — it's too attractive and desirable not to be."

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com

Union Street's landlords are some of the city's most notorious.

to come to Union Street but they were discouraged," Butler points out. "If we got Apple instead of Chestnut Street, I don't think we'd be having this conversation. The people who wanted to keep out new restaurants and businesses —

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POLICE BLOTTER : The life and crimes of the Northside

'Twas the season for breaking the law

THE MARINA AND COW Hollow really stepped up this past holiday season to help make the San Francisco Police Department's annual toy drive a success.

Northern Station Captain Greg McEachern expressed his gratitude for everyone who participated. "I can't thank the community enough for your generosity, and I hope you all know that your generous gifts will bring smiles to the children who might otherwise not have a lot to smile about during the holiday season."

McEachern also gave special thanks to "the merchants that participated in the toy drive by opening up their doors and hearts to our community. Those merchants include Jack's on Chestnut, The Topsy Pig, The Marina Lounge, the Coffee Roastery, Cat Nip and Bones, Starbucks, Peet's Coffee, and Reed and Greenough. I would also like to thank the Cow Hollow/Marina Neighborhood Association that helped promote the toy drive to the community and ensured that the community was aware of the worthwhile event." He said all of that generosity went "a long way to bring-

ing a joyous holiday season to our community."

The crimes below are a small snapshot of what the officers of Northern Station are doing. For a more comprehensive list, visit sf-police.org; under Compstat, select the link to Crimemaps.

HAVE YOU MET OUR NEW NEIGHBOR?

Dec. 2, 7:10 a.m.
900 Block of Franklin Street

Officers responded to a call regarding a trespasser in an apartment building's basement. They found a male subject asleep in a basement stairwell of the building. The subject said he entered the building to sleep until it was time for him to go to work. A computer check

The subject said he entered the building to sleep before work.

revealed there was an active warrant for his arrest. He was arrested and in a search the officers discovered a meth pipe and marijuana. He was booked at Northern Station.

TIS THE SEASON TO TRESPASS

Dec. 2, 9:45 a.m.
2900 Block of Gough Street

A resident came home to find a male subject leaving the building through the premise's second front gate. The resident knew the subject didn't live in or belong in the building, so she called the police. The officers were able to detain the subject without incident, and a search revealed numerous small items the subject had taken from various apartments in the building. He was booked at Northern Station.

"I DIDN'T DO NOTHING"

Dec. 2, 10:05 a.m.
700 Block of Van Ness Avenue

Officers met with an employee of a drugstore that had just been robbed. The employee said a male subject entered the store and began stealing razors from the shelves. The employee confronted the subject and was punched in the face; the subject then pulled out and brandished a knife before fleeing.

The employee said he didn't need medical attention, and he

joined the officers in their car so they could search the area for the subject. They spotted the subject, and officers got out of the car and ordered him to stop;

The employee confronted the subject and was punched in the face.

he ignored their commands, instead changing direction and continuing walking and putting his hands in the front pocket of his sweatshirt. The officers saw him pull out a stolen razor and throw it to the ground. He then turned to the officers and began to yell at them, "I didn't do nothing." He put his hands back into his pockets.

The officers knew about the knife being used in the robbery and presumably now somewhere on his person. With his agitated mindset and his hands in his pockets, the officers feared for their safety and pulled out their firearms and pointed them at the subject. He removed his hands from his pockets and showed them to the officers, becoming even more agitated, saying, "What are you gonna shoot me for a razor, like Ferguson?"

Additional Northern Station officers arrived, and the subject gave up without further incident. He was handcuffed and searched, and a switchblade was found in his pants pocket. There were several witnesses, and video cameras confirmed the drugstore employee's story. The subject was booked at Northern Station.

BULLDOZED

Dec. 4, 11:22 p.m.
Larkin at McAllister Street

Officers responded to a call regarding a male stealing items from a bulldozer and attempting to steal the bulldozer itself. They arrived to see him removing chains that secured the bulldozer to its trailer. They ordered him to show his hands and step away from the construction vehicle, but he did not comply and continued to manipulate the chains. They had to physically stop and detain him, which was accomplished without injury. He was searched, and the officers found a bottle of prohibited pills in his pocket. The officers contacted the owner of the bulldozer and booked the subject at Northern Station.

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GreenFinanceSF: Embracing San Francisco's Environmental Leadership

by supervisor mark e. farrell

CALIFORNIA AND SAN FRANCISCO have been at the forefront of environmental policy for years. Both the state and our city have helped to kickstart the emerging clean and renewable energy economy and industry that we see today providing thousands of jobs, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and combating climate change. Back in 2008, what started as an experiment in Berkeley quickly spread across the country into a strong financing mechanism and environmental policy known as property assessed clean energy, or PACE.

PACE financing allows property owners to borrow money for clean and renewable energy upgrades to their homes and pay it back over time as a line item on their property tax bill. PACE financing can come through in two different ways: one for commercial buildings, which is referred to as commercial PACE, and one for residential buildings of four stories or less, which is referred to as residential PACE.

PACE's special form of financing has helped to overcome market barriers that exist to energy-efficiency upgrades by spreading cost recovery with savings realized over the life of the improvement. This special form of financing allows

property owners to responsibly finance the upgrades with extremely favorable terms and competitive interest rates – all at no cost whatsoever to the city. Because the capital for the loans is provided by private entities, there is little to no financial risk or exposure to any jurisdiction looking to implement PACE.

Former Mayor Gavin Newsom was an early adopter of PACE. His administration rolled out the residential PACE program in 2010 known as GreenFinanceSF, but it quickly had to scrap the efforts just after a couple of months because of concerns from the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), which believed that the loans posed an unacceptable risk to mortgage lenders should homeowners default. The FHFA still has concerns, but since 2010 PACE has spread to numerous states throughout the country and in most of the major counties in California. For example, in Riverside County, more than 5,500 people have used it to finance home upgrade projects worth a total of more than \$100 million.

The success of residential and commercial PACE in other counties and states could not be more evident, and I want San Francisco to share in that success. In other jurisdictions that have implemented PACE programs, the upgrades prop-

erty owners made save money not only on repair costs to crucial home energy services, but also on monthly utility bills to the tune of thousands of dollars saved annually – all while creating new jobs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

To share in the known success of residential PACE, I partnered with Mayor Lee, our Department of Environment, and workforce training advocates to craft a new and improved residential PACE program. I recently passed legislation at the Board of Supervisors to restart residential PACE here in San Francisco under the same GreenFinanceSF brand that former Mayor Newsom created.

From the beginning of the process, Mayor Lee and I wanted to ensure that this environmental policy and finance tool had a strong workforce component tied to it that put local residents to work on local projects in an emerging industry. We know the potential that the clean energy economy has in store, and we want our local workers to have the skills necessary to take part in that emerging industry while also providing them opportunities for upward mobility. We know that the clean energy economy could trigger a market transformation as profound as the information and technological revolution that we are currently experiencing, and I look forward to our city's workers sharing in that success.

By this point you may be asking when you might be able to take advantage of this program. Due to our collective efforts on the city's end, we expect our residential PACE program to be fully functional and up-and-running by March. The city has dedicated staff within the Department of Environment that will be available to walk property owners through the process from start to finish. I also plan to do outreach about our residential PACE program in tandem with the Department of Environment at property owner and neighborhood association group meetings throughout the city to educate them about this program and answer any questions they may have. In the meantime, you can visit sfenvironment.org/residentialpace to learn more.

GreenFinanceSF is one of the environmental solutions that we have been searching for in San Francisco to build local renewable energy sources and create local jobs. GreenFinanceSF will further cement San Francisco's national role as a leader in reducing the adverse effects of climate change, and it will make it easy for property owners in our neighborhoods to make energy efficiency upgrades to their homes while saving energy and money.

Mark Farrell is District 2 supervisor. E-mail mark.farrell@sfgov.org or phone 415-554-7752.



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Honoring the light brigade

by john zipperer

WE TOLD YOU SO

At the *Marina Times*, we have been touting the great holiday lights display of Union Street for a long time. It is one of the gems of the city, and each year we hope more people will come to see it.

But it's not just us saying this. For the second year in a row, the Union Street Association was awarded First Place Winner of the 2014 Neighborhood Holiday Lighting Promotion sponsored by San Francisco Travel. Union Street businesses were singled out in the category "For beautifying our city streets during the holidays, helping to create a sense of destination for visitors." Along with the proclamation came a \$2,500 check and a year's free dues for the Union Street Association, which is a longtime member of San Francisco Travel. Congratulations to everyone who made it happen!

And did we mention that Union Street is a great place to visit even in-between holidays?

TRANSPORTATION EDUCATION

The San Francisco County Transportation Authority is holding a public meeting Thursday, Feb. 5, 2:30-4:30 p.m., to discuss collaboration opportunities for small and large firms in its upcoming projects. Those projects range from work on the Presidio Parkway revamp, I-280 interchange improvements, construction contracts for the Transbay Transit Center, and more. The Transportation Authority is holding this meeting to reach local and disadvantaged businesses and discuss how to work together.

The meeting will take place at the authority's 22nd-floor hearing room at 1455 Market Street.

OVERHEARD AT RESTAURANT

Little girl to grandmother: And the stepmother was so mean that she wouldn't even let Cinderella go to the mall.

News tip for the Northsider? E-mail john@marinatimes.com

UNION INSIDER :: Coming and going

What's happening at the west end of Union Street

by christine roher

UNION STREET IS constantly evolving — entrepreneurs moving in to realize their dreams; others shutting their doors, deciding it's time to move on. In one block alone — between Fillmore and Steiner Streets — there have been a handful of changes during the past few months.

Gala, a retail clothing boutique, opened its doors in late August, taking over the former Meggie space. The owner, Gayle Recuerdo, a former preschool teacher, had always dreamed of owning a shop like this. But it was her dad who pushed her to do it. "Be your own boss," he advised. So when the opportunity to sublet a space fell into her lap, she took it.

Gala is filled with clothes from designers in Paris, New York, London, and of course California. Gayle describes her collection as a mix of modern and vintage-inspired. And the average price point — \$75 — is easy on the pocketbook. She also offers a large collection of jewelry, scarves and clutches. You'll find Gayle in her store every single day — stop by and say hello (2277 Union Street, 415-988-1777).

Just a few days after Gayle opened shop, a new neighbor moved in — **Wrecking Ball Coffee**.

Husband-and-wife team Trish Rothgeb and Nick Cho launched Wrecking Ball four years ago, after moving to San Francisco from the East Coast. Union Street is Wrecking Ball's first solo permanent location, and Trish and Nick were excited to settle in the Cow Hollow/Marina neighborhood. "There's not a lot of boutique specialty coffee in this part of

ing them to learn the old-world art of sewing, knitting, and needlepoint. "We live in a creative area, full of the smartest people in the technology world, and at the end of the day the innovation doesn't need to stop, it can just be done in a more peaceful way," explained Melissa.

And Melissa's plan worked to an extent — people enjoyed learning how to knit and make quilts. But she quickly faced a couple obstacles: too many people wanted the Pincushion staff to create and finish projects for them, rather than do it themselves;

and the neighborhood was too family driven — parents came in looking for classes for their kids, but then weren't willing to support the business beyond that. In the end, Melissa decided it wasn't enough to justify the high rent costs. "People want better choices on Union Street, but they're not shopping there enough," said Melissa. "You can't have this if you don't support it."

Melissa plans to rethink her business and may relaunch it another way. Until then, you can find some of her products in her Etsy store, PincushionCraft.

We'll keep tabs on who's coming and going in the neighborhood, but always feel free to tell us about someone we may not know about!

E-mail: christine@marinatimes.com

Gala's collection is a mix of modern and vintage-inspired.

the city, compared to what you'll find in the Mission," explained Nick. Wrecking Ball's beans are sustainably sourced, and their roasting method aims to balance sweetness, brightness, and deep flavor development. And the look and feel of Wrecking Ball is different than many coffee shops. It's not rustic with reclaimed wooden tables. Instead, it has a modern vibe — with white counters and benches for seating. Wrecking Ball has already built a following and now also sells its beans online at wreckingballcoffee.com (2271 Union Street).

Across the street, **Pincushion** said goodbye after opening shop one year ago. Owner Melissa Li hoped to give people a new way to unwind at the end of the day, by inspir-

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SKETCHES FROM A NORTH BEACH JOURNAL

Kerouac and Cassady, Capp's Corner, and the Angela conundrum

by ernest beyl

JANUARY WAS AN INTERESTING month for your rambling Sketches columnist. Word came that Grizzly Peak Press in Berkeley will publish my book "Sketches From a North Beach Journal," a series of profiles on larger than life characters — "San Franciscans: Heroes, Heroines, the Wise, and the Wily from the Gold Rush to Yesterday." I'll keep you posted. Meanwhile ...

'NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND'

Back in December, the remnants of San Francisco's Beat movement were all aflutter. An 18-page, 16,000-word letter from proto-Beat icon Neal Cassady to writer Jack Kerouac was discovered and was slated to be auctioned — presumably to rake in big bucks. Known as the "Joan Anderson letter" because much of it was devoted to relating Cassady's erotic adventures with her, it is said to have inspired Kerouac to write in a stream-of-consciousness style in his novel *On the Road*. The auction is on hold because of lawsuits from the Cassady and Kerouac estates. And the big letter is in a vault somewhere. Meanwhile I made an interesting discovery in a box of old magazines in my closet.

Back in the sixties, I had a buddy named John Bryan, an off-the-grid, late Beat and early hippie who wrote poetry and published a counter-culture magazine called *Notes from Underground*. What I found in my closet was a copy of the magazine (Issue 1) published in 1964. When I browsed through it, I made a startling discovery. Bryan had published a 13,000-word excerpt of the Joan Anderson letter. *Notes from Underground* also published a lengthy reply by Kerouac.

NOTES FROM JACK KEROUAC

No, I'm not going to give you 13,000 of Cassady's words, but here are a few excerpts from Kerouac's reply.

Just a word, now, about your wonderful 16,000 word letter about Joan Anderson and Cherry

Mary. I thought it ranked among the best things ever written in America. ... You gather together all the best styles of Joyce, Celine, Dusty and Proust. ... It can't possibly be sparse and halting, like Hemingway, because it hides nothing; the material is painfully necessary ... the material of Scott Fitz was so sweetly unnecessary. ... Hurry to N.Y. so we can plan and all take off in big flying boat '32 Chandler across crazy land. ... I got to work now on script so I can pay Uncle Sam his bloody tax & landlord's bloody old rent ... Jack

CAPP'S CORNER UPDATE

Those of you who follow this sort of thing will remember that Capp's Corner, one of the last of the old-time saloon-restaurants in North Beach, may go belly-up. Lease problems. Well, hang on, as we go to press, proprietor Tom Ginella is still trying to negotiate with the landlord, but it's uphill. We will put out an all-points bulletin when something happens. Meanwhile, now is the time for another drink and another meal at Capp's Corner. It may not be there much longer.

THE RETURN OF O'REILLY'S

O'Reilly's Irish Pub on Green Street across from the mortuary will reopen under new management after it was padlocked by the feds. Taking over is Rick Howard who also operates Harry's on Fillmore, Bruno's in the Mission, the Owl Tree on Nob Hill, and Eddie Rickenbacker's on Second Street.

THE ANGELA CONUNDRUM

Well, this is the last time you will see the name Angela Alioto in this column. It's my Valentine's Day present to readers. Churlish Angela is stonewalling me — won't talk to me anymore. She's angry over two words in a recent column on Lawrence Ferlinghetti's Piazza St. Francis-Poets Plaza project on Vallejo between Grant and Columbus. The first offending word was "acolyte." In the column, I referred to her as a Ferlinghetti acolyte. Angela, a fundraiser for the project, claims she came up with the idea

for the pedestrian plaza before or simultaneously with Ferlinghetti. Rather, she trailed him on the visionary idea by several years. I also referred to her religious group, the Knights of St. Francis, as "unofficial." She used that very word when she told me she needed the Pope's blessing to make the group "official."

It is best to avoid contemplating Angela. Doing so causes dizzy spells.

Meanwhile, when I checked on the status of the project with the city's Department of Public Works recently, Nick Eisner, senior plan checker, told me, "Provided that the Piazza design team addresses all city comments and concerns, the issuance of a permit and start of construction by October of this year appears to be realistic."

THE BICYCLE THIEF

I hadn't seen Jimo Perini, the noted North Beach photographer, since the new year, so I missed my January column deadline for this item. When I saw Jimo in Caffe Puccini the other day, I asked him if Christmas had treated him well. It had, he told me, and then he added, "When I was a kid I got two walnuts and an orange for Christmas one year and the kid next door got a bike. I stole it so I could try riding it around the block." I love the quote. Already it's one of my leading contenders for 2015 quote of the year. Last year Jimo got my award for best quote: I introduced him to my wife and described him as a famous photographer. Jimo replied: "I just point the camera and push the button. God does the rest."

MERLA AND BORDELLO HISTORY

Mid-January came word that journalist-novelist-socialite-philanthropist Merla Zellerbach had died. She was my editor when I wrote occasionally for the *Nob Hill Gazette*. Merla gave me the best assignment I ever had. "Write about the history of San Francisco bordellos," she said. And I did. I asked her for an expense account but she ignored the request.

E-mail: ernest@marinatimes.com.



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THE TABLEHOPPER ∴ The food business

New openings, and the usual January closings, too

by marcia gagliardi with dana eastland

MARINA

Your weekends are about to get “dim-summier” and rowdier with the arrival of the bottomless dim sum weekend brunch at **Chubby Noodle Marina** (2205 Lombard Street, 415-655-3335). For \$37 (plus tax and tip), you will have 90 minutes to enjoy bottomless dishes and four or five beverages, too, ranging from draft Sapporo to their cold tea to probably some mimosas.

The starting menu is divided into five sections: dim sum (pork buns, shrimp

Mercury News reported that the Fillmore Live Entertainment Group had been trying to revive the location, which opened in 2007, but its financial commitments were too burdensome. They are hoping a new partner will step in yet again to breathe some life into the location.

UNION SQUARE

The next time you’re downtown, you have a couple new options to check out. There’s a follow-up to Klyde: **398 Restaurant & Bar** (398 Geary Street, 415-654-5061) and, like Klyde, it’s in the Hotel G but is a separate project. Klyde’s Sam Fechheimer is the chef here as well, with a menu of European-inspired dishes. The charcuterie selection is extensive, with pâtés and terrines made in-house, and entrées include pastas, meats, and salads.

There’s also some news behind the bar: Brian Felley and Mo Hodges of the short-lived Big are running the show. These new digs are actually large, clocking in at 124 seats, and the pair will still be shaking up their creative and flavorful concoctions. The drinks and food are designed to play well together, so think cocktail-friendly food and vice versa.

The interior is a mix of industrial and raw with polished accents. The banquettes are upholstered with blood orange velvet to give a plush vibe, while raw beams and the original and distressed plaster ceiling keep everything from getting too fussy. The back bar has botanical wallpaper, which echoes the many ingredients in the cocktails, and Holophane-style lights, with polished dark wood stools and a pewter-toned bar. Hours are daily 5–11 p.m.

Beer lovers will want to check out **Hogwash** (582 Sutter Street, 415-361-5500), a new beer hall from owners Nick Rothman and Paula Thompson, which offers a major selection of beers on tap (Rich Higgins assembled the list). There are 30 in all, from far and wide, including Hitachino White Ale (Japan), Fuller’s London Porter

Beer lovers will want to check out Hogwash, a new beer hall.

(England), and Monk’s Cafe Flemish Sour Ale (Belgium). There are also many domestic taps, including locals like Almanac, Lagunitas, and Magnolia. The beer selection will change often, but the goal is to make sure that it is well rounded and that there is something for everyone, from the intense beer nerd to the casual sipper.

The space was designed by Lauren Geremia of Geremia Design and has a modern, sleek feel with warm touches. There is a lot of oak and steel, and the warm brick touches and mod white wall paneling keep it from falling into the ubiquitous reclaimed-everything trap we see so much of. The high ceilings have been stripped to reveal exposed timbers, with modern globe light fixtures and wall sconces, keeping the space geometric and clean. The taps behind the long wood bar are backed with marble, too, which is one of the touches that make the space feel more sophisticated than the average beer hall.

TABLEHOPPER, continued on 11

At Chubby Noodle, you will have 90 minutes to enjoy your meal.

and cilantro dumplings, shu mai); noodles (expect Hong Kong-style chow mein, rice cakes in XO sauce, wonton noodle soup); soup (hot and sour, crab and corn chowder); rice (their amazing fried rice, and jook with smoked pork and a poached egg); and sides (bok choy, pea shoots, eggplant).

Knowing chef-partner Pete Mrabe, these initial dishes will change a bit. He plans to start with 12, and then ramp up with new dishes each week, eventually getting to 25 (five dishes in each menu section). You’ll check off on a piece of paper the dishes you want. Depending on the size of your group, you may need to order double — your server will advise you. Bonus: Because tables will be timed for 90 minutes, reservations will be available (via SeatMe or Yelp). You can hop over to their website right now and book your table. Brunch will be served 10 a.m.–3 p.m., and with these new hours, they will be open continuously on Saturday and Sunday through dinner.

Adding to the bakery madness in town is **La Panoti** (2234 Chestnut Street, 415-525-3625) in the Marina. This is the second location of the small bakery chain, which started in Campbell. The menu offers soups, sandwiches, salads, and pastries, as well as coffee and tea.

COW HOLLOW

The beginning of the year is here, and, sadly, that means some closures to report. **Café des Amis** (2000 Union Street) closed its doors on Sunday, Jan. 4, after opening in 2010. A press release from Bacchus Management Group, which owned the cafe, cites problems securing a lease as the ultimate cause of the closure. The hope is to reopen in a new location later, but in the meantime, they are working to make sure all the staff can transition into new positions at the group’s other restaurants.

The Union Street location of **Osha Thai** (2033 Union Street) closed on Sunday, Jan. 11. Their other (many) locations are still in operation, though.

WESTERN ADDITION

The sad news continues, with the report from Eater that **Gussie’s Chicken and Waffles** (1521 Eddy Street) has closed. Yelpers are reporting that they closed due to ongoing flooding issues but will reopen in Oakland.

One more Fillmore closure: **The Addition** (1330 Fillmore Street) or the artist formerly known as Yoshi’s, closed once and for all on Jan. 14. The *San Jose*



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Clockwise: West Coast's sleek interior; One of the many cheeses on offer; The formidable wine wall; Sir Prize Avocado Toast with 6 minute egg, aleppo pepper. PHOTOS: COURTESY WEST COAST WINE & CHEESE

WEST COAST

CONTINUED from page 1

Wanner, who earned his California Wine Appellation Specialist certification in 2013, is ardent about creating both a comfortable, unpretentious spot for neighbors to drop in and a showcase for some of

the West Coast's best small-production wines. Opposite the gleaming white bar is an entire wall of wines; West Coast

offers an ample selection of whites, reds, and sparkling wines by the glass (\$12-\$22 for most) and by the bottle (\$44-\$80 for most). This is the place to try a 2012 Pinot Noir from Evening Land in Oregon's Willamette Valley (\$16/glass; \$60/bottle); a Copain 2012 Chardonnay "Tous Ensemble" from the Russian River Valley (\$12/glass; \$44/bottle); or one of West Coast's specially selected wines including Shafer Vineyards 2012 Merlot from Napa Valley (\$25/glass; \$100/bottle), if you're in the mood to splurge.

Wanner and Repose are clear that an artisanal, locally sourced menu is just as important as the pours. They recruited Napa native and world traveler Ethan Speitzer, formerly with Oenotri in Napa, as executive chef. Cheese and charcuterie plates (\$6-\$7) feature Marin French Cheese

Marcona almonds, fresh bread with olive oil, and assorted TCHO chocolates (\$3-\$6).

In addition to wine, West Coast offers four regional draft beers and a sampling of bottled brews including ales, stouts, and hard cider. A happy hour from 4-6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday offers \$10 off all bottles of wine, and plans for brunch are underway. Last month, the first winemaker tasting featured Napa Valley

Wanner is ardent about creating a comfortable, unpretentious spot.

Company, Bellwether Farms, and Zoe's Meats among others. Speitzer's "plates" (\$7-\$35) change often but recently included burrata (a menu staple) with balsamic vinegar, olive oil, pomegranate, and arugula; a little gem salad with faro, mushrooms, San Andreas cheese, and lemon vinaigrette; roasted Brussels sprouts with pancetta, brown butter, and butternut squash puree; and pork rillettes made from five-spice braised pork shoulder and served with pickles and crostini. Always available are Castelvetro olives,

vintner Ignacio Delgadillo from Delgadillo Cellars and his 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$30/glass; \$130/bottle.) In February, a special Valentine's Day rosé flight menu will be available all day Feb. 14.

West Coast Wine & Cheese is a charming and welcome spot for oenophiles and foodies alike to try something new.

West Coast Wine & Cheese: 2165 Union Street, 415-376-9720, westcoastsf.com; Monday-Friday 4-10 p.m., Saturday-Sunday noon-10 p.m.

E-mail: julie@marinatimes.com

TABLEHOPPER

CONTINUED from page 10

There's food, too, mostly in the form of house-made sausages and snacks. Morgan Hamm of Le Beau Market crafted the menu, which includes a breakfast-style pork sausage served with a fried egg, a lamb sausage, and even a vegetarian option made with squash and barley. There are also salads and a few snacks like fries, pretzel bites, and fried pickles. For now, they are open daily 6 p.m.-1 a.m., but plan to add lunch service soon.

FINANCIAL DISTRICT

There's a new project from Stones Throw's Ryan Cole and Jason Kirmse (also of Fat Angel) going into the Great Hunan space in Jackson Square called **Trestle** (531 Jackson Street). The Hi Neighbor group, the newly established San Francisco-based

restaurant group responsible for Fat Angel and Stones Throw, is behind the project, which includes the aforementioned Cole and Kirmse, plus Cyrick Hia, Tai Ricci, and executive chef Jason Halverson.

The daily-changing dinner menu will focus on elevated interpretations of comfort cuisine, and the format will be a three-course prix fixe for \$35, with an option to add additional courses for \$10 each. As for the name, the press release explains that a trestle is "defined as one of the earliest interpretations of a dining room table." The targeted opening is late March 2015. We'll have more details on the 49-seat space in the coming months.

Marcia Gagliardi is the creator and Dana Eastland is the associate editor of tablehopper.com, a popular insider weekly e-column about the San Francisco dining scene; subscribe for more news and updates. Follow Marcia on Twitter: @tablehopper.

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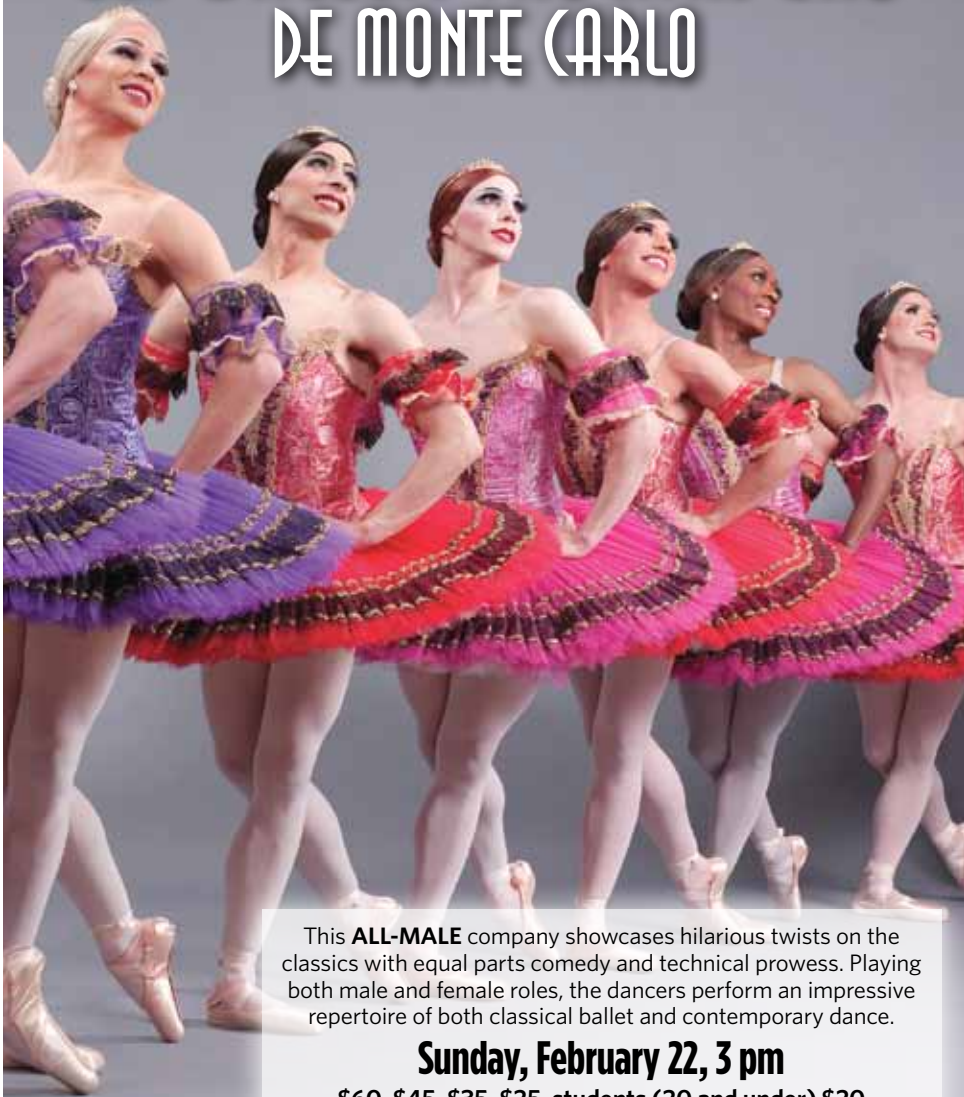
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The world's your oyster at the classic Foreign Cinema. PHOTO: COURTESY FOREIGN CINEMA

Romantic restaurants for Valentine's Day

by dana eastland

FEBRUARY IS A MONTH FOR romance and getting cozy, even if you decide not to eat out on Valentine's Day proper (it's Saturday Feb. 14, if you need to put it on your calendar). There's more to romance than candlelight and French food, though those are great options, too. Here are some more traditionally romantic spots around town, along with some less conventional choices for your less conventional squeeze.

For some old school charm with neighborhood credentials, make your way to the **Brazen Head** for an intimate night in one of their booths. Start with oysters and bubbles, or perhaps one of their strong cocktails, and then move on to one of the classic American dishes. You can also feel good about supporting this neighborhood institution, because they regularly fundraise for the San Francisco Firefighters Toy Program and for breast cancer research. Nothing says romance like giving back to your community (3166 Buchanan Street, 415-721-7600, brazenheadsf.com).

Gamine French Bistrot on Union Street is adorable, intimate, and très charmant — what more could you ask for? The menu offers classic French staples, and a selection of sparkling wines is sure to keep the mood festive. Chocolate mousse for dessert, check (2223 Union Street, 415-771-7771, gaminesf.com).

The excellent wine list at **A16** is enough to make any wine lover swoon, and the impeccable Southern Italian

food won't hurt, either. The space is perfect for a date who appreciates modern, sleek design, and the wood-fired oven takes the hearthside Italian vibe up yet another notch. Oh, and the blistered pizzas are the stuff dreams are made of (2355 Chestnut Street, 415-771-2216, a16sf.com).

For another French option with a more opulent ambiance, **Café Claude Marina** is an excellent choice. Every inch of the

vintage-inspired interior is covered in luxurious fabrics, textiles, and wallpaper, and the red leather banquettes are perfect for a night of flirtation.

There's more to romance than candlelight and French food.

The menu is classic French, with great daily specials, including bouillabaisse on Fridays and boeuf Bourguignon on Saturdays, and the wine list is no slouch either (2120 Greenwich Street, 415-375-9550, cafeclaude.com).

The rustic Italian vibe at **Terzo** is low-key and hard to beat for a cozy night out. The exposed brick, older building, and warm lighting are just some of the charms at this comfortable Cow Hollow spot. The menu is always intensely seasonal, with changing dishes each day, and the staff is welcoming. (3011 Steiner Street, 415-441-3200, terzosf.com).

North Beach is one of the more romantic neighborhoods in all of San Francisco, and **Da Flora** is one of the best places to enjoy it. The sweet potato gnocchi is rightly famous, as is the focaccia and other Venetian specialties. Flora herself has a reputation for being a bit prickly, but follow a few simple rules and you'll be fine. Make a reservation, use your very best manners, and pay cash if you

ROMANCE, continued on 13



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OssO's elegant Art Deco interior offers views of Grace Cathedral. PHOTO: OSSO STEAKHOUSE

ROMANCE

CONTINUED from page 12

can. Your date is sure to be impressed with your North Beach cred (701 Columbus Avenue, 415-981-4664, daflo.net).

Aziza's intimate booths, moody lighting, and sumptuous interior all conspire to make it one of the best date spots in town. It's location in the sleepy Outer Richmond helps, too, if you and your love are into a fog-shrouded walk after dinner, serenaded by foghorns. The modern Moroccan food is excellent, and the unusual cocktails won't disappoint (5800 Geary Boulevard, 415-752-2222, aziza-sf.com).

Located down a quiet alley right off charming Mint Plaza is **54 Mint**, a great hidden gem in the middle of the downtown bustle. Reserve a table upstairs and you might actually think you're in Rome, with the painted brick walls, beautiful bar, and charming staff. Don't miss the pastas (the cacio e pepe is particularly noteworthy), and be sure to ask the knowledgeable staff for help with the extensive Italian wine list (16 Mint Plaza, 415-543-5100, 54mint.com).

For an adventurous date, check out brand new **Californios** in the Mission, from chef Val Cantu and his wife, Carolyn Cantu. Carolyn designed the beautiful space, with its dark walls, caramel leather banquettes, and thoughtful art objects. The food is all served as a seven-course tasting menu, so you won't be faced with any choices — so be sure this is something you and your date will enjoy (a vegetarian option is available). Like the food, the soundtrack is urban and edgy, too, making it the perfect spot to impress the artsy, edgy cool kid in your life (3115 22nd Street, 415-757-0994, californiossf.com).

If Californios is a little too alternative but you still want a cool urban oasis, **Foreign Cinema** is your spot. The long hallway off Mission Street opens into a stylish, comfortable space with a gorgeous fireplace, back courtyard, and attractive bar. The classically California food is always good, and it's an excellent place for a vegetarian and meat eater to find menu harmony. The vegetable dishes are just as thoughtful as the meat-focused ones, so no one will feel left out. The desserts always deliver, too. Oh, and did we mention they screen films on the back patio wall? Sure to be a hit with your artsy date (2534 Mission Street, 415-648-7600, foreigncinema.com).

For serious old school charm, head to the top of Nob Hill for a night at **Osso Steakhouse**. This San Francisco classic drips with Art Deco opulence, and they specialize in dry-aged, bone-in steaks. They also serve an extensive selection of seafood, including local Dungeness crab, and have an extensive wine list (1177 California Street, 415-771-6776, ossosteakhouse.com).

Speaking of classic San Francisco, nothing says romance quite like the ocean view at **The Cliff House**. The historical landmark is perched at the very edge of San Francisco, with huge windows, a full bar, and great design. The restaurant has actually been in operation since 1863, but was rebuilt and remodeled several times, and now is an excellent example of Art Deco architecture. Start or finish your meal at the bar, where the views are especially spectacular and a fireplace keeps everything warm (1090 Point Lobos, 415-386-3330, cliffhouse.com).

Dana Eastland is the associate editor the *Tablehopper*, a weekly food and restaurant e-column. E-mail: dana@tablehopper.com



The decorations and ambiance of the restaurant you choose will go a long way to making your Valentine's Day a special affair of the stomach and the heart.

PHOTOS: TOP TO BOTTOM: COURTESY AZIZA; FLORA; AZIZA; TERZO; AZIZA; THE CLIFF HOUSE; TERZO; FLORA

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THE KITCHENLESS COOK :: Recipe



Petite Cornish game hens make an elegant presentation for two.

Choose red or white wine game hens for two on Valentine's Day

by bill knutson

I HAVE LONG HELD THE BELIEF THAT the best wine for any meal is the one that tastes best to you. And as a cook who enjoys experimenting with flavor combinations, many times with items that do not seem well suited for each other, I often enjoy pairing wines that provide a pleasant contrast to the dish. Perhaps try a Pinot with your petrale sole, or a Sauterne with your steak. I am not saying that every combination will work for everybody. It helps to have an open mind and a deep wine cellar.

Most recipes with wine call for "dry white wine" or "red wine," which isn't very helpful. Just by the nature of the fermentation process, the majority of wines are considered dry. Even traditionally sweet wines like Gewürztraminer and Johannesburg Riesling are now being made dry. So how do you find the right wine for your recipe?

Here is my first rule of cooking with wine: Always cook with a wine you are willing to drink. I find this helpful because you will rarely use the whole bottle for cooking, so you should be prepared not to waste it.

And as an addendum to that rule, cook with the wine you plan to serve with the dish. Not only do you solve the waste issue, but also you will greatly improve the likelihood that your wine will pair well with your dish.

For my two recipes this month, I used the same main ingredients, game hen and wine, but one was cooked with white wine and the other with red wine. I wanted to show the impact of the different wines by using different cooking methods, and in both cases, the wine acts as a tenderizer.

For the red wine game hens, I wanted the flavor of the wine to make a statement, so I braised the hen. This infused not just the flavor, but also the color of the wine into the bird. When cooking with reds, I usually lean toward a blend. The winemakers will blend the flavors of several varietals to make a smooth, easy-to-drink wine that is ready for your table right now, hence the term, "table wine." For this recipe, I used Ménage à Trois from Folie à Deux in Napa, a blend of three of my favorite varietals, Zinfandel, Merlot, and Cabernet.

For the white wine game hens, I used the wine as a marinade to help infuse the flavors of the seasonings and then grilled the birds. I used a Sauvignon Blanc from Wildhurst Vineyards, Lake County, for this recipe. Sauvignon Blanc is my pre-

ferred choice of white wine when I am cooking, especially for seafood or poultry. It lends a nice citrus flavor to the dish, but does not overpower the flavor of the meat.

RED WINE GAME HENS
Serves 2

- 1 game hen, split in half
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 sweet onion, sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced
- 2 cups red table wine
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

Rinse game hen and dry. In a large saucepan, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add the hens, skin side down and brown

about 5 minutes each side. Add onions and peppers to the pan. Cook for 5 minutes. Add wine, basil, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil and reduce

My first rule of cooking:
Always cook with a wine you are willing to drink.

heat. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Gently turn over hens and simmer another 20 minutes. Carefully remove from pan, serve and enjoy.

WHITE WINE GAME HENS
Serves 2

- 1 game hen, split in half
- 1 tablespoon rosemary leaves
- 2 teaspoons thyme
- 1 teaspoon ground sage
- 1 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup Sauvignon Blanc
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Rinse game hen, dry, and place in resealable bag. Combine herbs and spices, sprinkle over the bird, and massage into skin. Add wine and oil and seal the bag. Refrigerate for at least one hour and up to overnight.

Grill directly over medium heat, skin side up for 25 minutes. Turn over and grill until skin is a rich, golden brown, approximately 20-25 minutes.

Serve and enjoy.

Editor's note: A version of this recipe previously appeared in Northside San Francisco.

E-mail: bill@marinatimes.com

APPETITES AND AFTERTHOUGHTS

Infamous recipes by famous people — and vice versa

by ernest beyl

I'M A COLLECTOR OF UNUSUAL RECIPES, the kind not found in *The Joy of Cooking*. Here are a few that might appeal to you.

GEORGE LANG'S GRAVLAX

You may recall the New York restaurant Café des Artistes on a historic block of West Sixty-Seventh Street. It dated back to the 1900s and was a place where artists, movie stars, dancers, and writers like Noel Coward, Rudolf Valentino, Isadora Duncan, and Alexander Woollcott hung out. After the café went through a bad patch, master restaurateur George Lang took it over and revived it right down to the Howard Chandler Christy murals of frolicking nudes. The place is closed now. The Christy nudes (they were called Wood Nymphs) are gone.

A popular menu item was gravlax — cured (not smoked) salmon. Here is the recipe.

In a glass dish, sandwich two fresh salmon fillets with salt, sugar, crushed pepper, and fresh dill. Put more of everything on top, and add a half-cup aquavit. I have done this with gin and that works fine. Put a weight on top of this salmon sandwich, place in refrigerator, and check it once a day for four days. Tilt dish and pour the aquavit over it repeatedly. Taste each day, adding sugar or salt until you get it half way between sweet and salty. After four days, drain the gravlax and scrape away the dill. Serve it cold, sliced very thin, accompanied by a good, dark Russian rye bread and with a mustard-dill sauce.

I wonder what ever happened to those Wood Nymphs.

JAMES SALTER'S AVOCADO

James Salter is my favorite living writer. His novel *A Sport and a Pastime* is a masterpiece. Salter eats well and he wrote a book with his wife, Kay, called *Life Is Meals*. In it, they point out that avocados were believed by the Aztecs to be an aphrodisiac and were named *ahuacatl*, which meant testicle.

In Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad in the Caribbean, a popular way to serve avocados is to split them, remove the rough skin, and immerse them in hot beef broth laced with Worcestershire Sauce. It's acceptable to sprinkle on hot pepper flakes for an extra kick — if needed.

ALEXANDRE'S POTATO SALAD

Prolific French writer Alexandre Dumas, who wrote the popular historical novel *The Three Musketeers*, had two principal loves — women and food. His assignations were legendary. So was his cookbook *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine*. It was published posthumously. Before he died in 1870, he stated "I intend that my last work shall be a cookbook composed of memories and desires ..." In the idiosyncratic dictionary Dumas dismissed asparagus by stating simply, "Well, everyone knows what they are" and leaving it at that.

But he did a fine recipe for potato salad: Boil some potatoes in their skins, peel while hot and slice into a bowl. Season with salt and pepper and add a half-cup of olive oil and that much white wine. Gently stir and let potatoes cool. Add a small amount of wine vinegar, some chopped parsley and chives. The trick is to peel those potatoes when they are hot.

HEMINGWAY'S SAUSAGE

In his memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, Ernest Hemingway wrote about being hungry in Paris in the 1920s and suddenly receiving a small check from a German newspaper that published one of his short stories. He cashed it and went quickly to Brasserie Lipp on the Left Bank and ordered a liter of beer, potato salad (*pommes a l'huile*), and a sausage (*cervelas*).

"When you are through, you lean back and think about your writing. Perhaps because you are no longer hungry, you feel sure that the stories are good and that you should continue on," he wrote.

Plunge the *cervelas* or other pork-garlic sausage in boiling water and simmer for five minutes. Remove, rinse in cold water and place in frying pan with a small amount of butter over moderate heat until lightly browned. Serve with a mustard sauce made with a few tablespoons of Dijon mustard, to which a tablespoon or two of boiling water has been added. Slowly incorporate one-third cup olive oil, drop by drop, into the sauce while beating with a wire whip. Add salt and pepper, and a squeeze of lemon juice. Eat and write a short story.

AN ARMY COOK'S SOS

Anyone who has been in the U.S. military remembers this. It was known affectionately as SOS. If you don't know what that stands for, send me an e-mail and I will enlighten you.

Officially, it is creamed chipped beef on toast and is usually served for breakfast. Sauté the chipped beef (it comes in a jar) in some butter. Add flour and milk and stir over a low heat until it thickens. Pour over toast and serve.

I prefer SOS with hamburger rather than chipped beef. That's how the Marine Corps makes it. And, of course, Marine jarheads are a bunch of gourmets — at least they are when compared to the Army. And of course, the Navy eats quiche.

ALICE'S HASH BROWNIES

For dessert, let's consider this special fudge.

Alice B. Toklas was not only the close buddy of Gertrude Stein but also an adventurous baker. When the *Alice B. Toklas Cookbook* came out in 1854, it created a sensation. Alice included a recipe for "Haschich Fudge" — a forerunner of marijuana hippie brownies.

Here's the recipe in Alice's words: "Take one teaspoon black peppercorns, one whole nutmeg, four average sticks of cinnamon, one teaspoon coriander. These should all be pulverized in a mortar. About a handful each of stone dates, dried figs, shelled almonds and peanuts: Chop these and mix them together. A bunch of *canibus sativa* [her spelling] can be pulverized. This along with the spices should be dusted over the mixed fruit and nuts, kneaded together. About a cup of sugar dissolved in a big pat of butter. Rolled into a cake and cut into pieces or made into balls about the size of a walnut. It should be eaten with care. Two pieces are quite sufficient."

If you want to try any of these recipes and need specific instructions, contact ernest@marinatimes.com. He's also willing to share the recipe for his famous Spam sandwich.

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THE COASTAL COMMUTER ∴ Searching far and wide for the perfect Asian meal

At the Pan-Pacific buffet

by michael snyder

So a kid from the East Coast megalopolis moves out to California after college, and shortly thereafter, he learns that Asian cuisine is considerably different from the gooey, over-salted, over-sweetened slop he ate at Chinese-American restaurants in the suburban malls of his youth.

First, it was the spicy shock of Szechuan food in San Francisco's Chinatown and then the diverse flavors of dishes embraced by the nomadic Hakka people (courtesy of the now-defunct Ton Kiang on Broadway). When he took the plunge one night at the Japan Center and tried pieces of raw fish trundling past him in little boats on a moat around an exotic thing known as a sushi bar, he moved further toward a kind of gustatory enlightenment.

By the time he was ensconced as a staffer on the local daily, he was joining his colleagues for lunch at the Vietnamese restaurant around the corner on Sixth Street between Mission and Market Streets — a greasy spoonish dive that had received a metaphorical seal of excellence with praise on the journalistic record from none other than America's favorite gourmet chef, Julia Child.

All it took was some imperial rolls and a bowl of Tu Lan's noodle soup. In short order, he had gone from novice to friend of pho.

On a trip to Los Angeles, he went further afield with his initial taste of Thai. At a small restaurant in Hollywood a few blocks from the Capitol Records tower, he tried chicken and spinach in peanut sauce and shrimp and green beans in red curry paste for the first time. It was savory. It was tongue burning. It was revelatory.

OK. The kid was me. He still is. And in the decades I've lived on the West Coast, my concept of comfort food has definitely taken a Pan-Pacific turn. Whether I'm in the Mission and willing to line up for a precious seat at the jammed counter of Yamo for some Burmese delights (especially the tea leaf salad followed by an incendiary cold noodle bowl) or seeking out one of Korean chef-mogul Roy Choi's fleet of Kogi BBQ food trucks in the Los Angeles area to procure his idiosyncratic fusion burrito with chicken, rice, scrambled eggs, marinated veggies, and proprietary spices in a flour tortilla, I crave the Asian flavor.

Sometimes, I think we take our position on the Pacific Rim for granted, especially when it comes to the mad variety and proliferation of ethnic cooking. Sure, we've had at least one troubling geo-environmental issue to navigate. A nuclear disaster will definitely give one pause, and that little Fukushima problem makes me more than reluctant to eat seafood from the ocean next door. With the sea currents in mind, I

I moved West and let my palate expand its scope to the East.

usually confirm that it's Alaskan salmon or comparable Atlantic fare before I bite.

King Neptune's sometimes-tainted bounty aside, I keep discovering new and scrumptious examples of Asian cuisine in San Francisco and Los Angeles, even if the establishments have been around for more than just a few months. Of course, if you've never been somewhere before, it's new to you — and, if you're lucky, it could very well provide a multitude of scrumptiousness.

On the Bay Area front, a friend and colleague introduced me to the aforementioned Yamo last year. It's been a prime destination for me since. But my ever-growing familiarity with Los Angeles and the increase in my time there has resulted in my initiation into even more fresh and fantastic dining spots. If you're willing to eat red meat (and with all due respect to my vegan friends, I am not a veggie-Nazi about beef and pork), there's a proliferation of Korean barbecue restaurants in Los Angeles's Koreatown that specialize in family-style self-preparation at each table. That was fine until I learned of a place nearby that totally overwhelmed my taste buds in the best possible way: KyoChon, an eat-in and takeaway Korean joint that specializes in chicken wings and drumsticks — especially the garlic and the hot and sweet versions. (The latter wings burn so good that they would probably be illegal in some states.)

When it comes to Thai, I go for Jitlada on Sunset, a place with a menu that's like an encyclopedia of northern and southern Thai food, and dishes so peppery that a grown man will weep with delight (and a little pain). For Vietnamese, I hit It's Pho on

Cahuenga in Hollywood (open late and catering to a seemingly endless stream of attractive young actors, actresses, and writers), or a no-sign-in-sight diner in a strip mall on Sunset in Silverlake (and I'd tell you its name if it had one). Finally, if I really want another of Roy Choi's freaky-awesome fusion dishes, don't want to stand next to a truck and gobble it up with all the mess that entails, and would love a nice cold craft beer to wash it down, I've lately come to rely on the Alibi Room on the West side. A bar serves Choi's food-truck fare indoors. What a concept!

There you have it. I moved West and, in the process, I let my palate expand its scope to the East. To be fair, I still don't get boba milk tea. I don't want to slurp up and then choke on one of those tasteless tapioca balls. Death by kimchi would be far more preferable.

Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture on KPFK/Pacifica Radio's David Feldman Show and Thom Hartmann Show and on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, available online at GABroadcaster.com and YouTube. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster

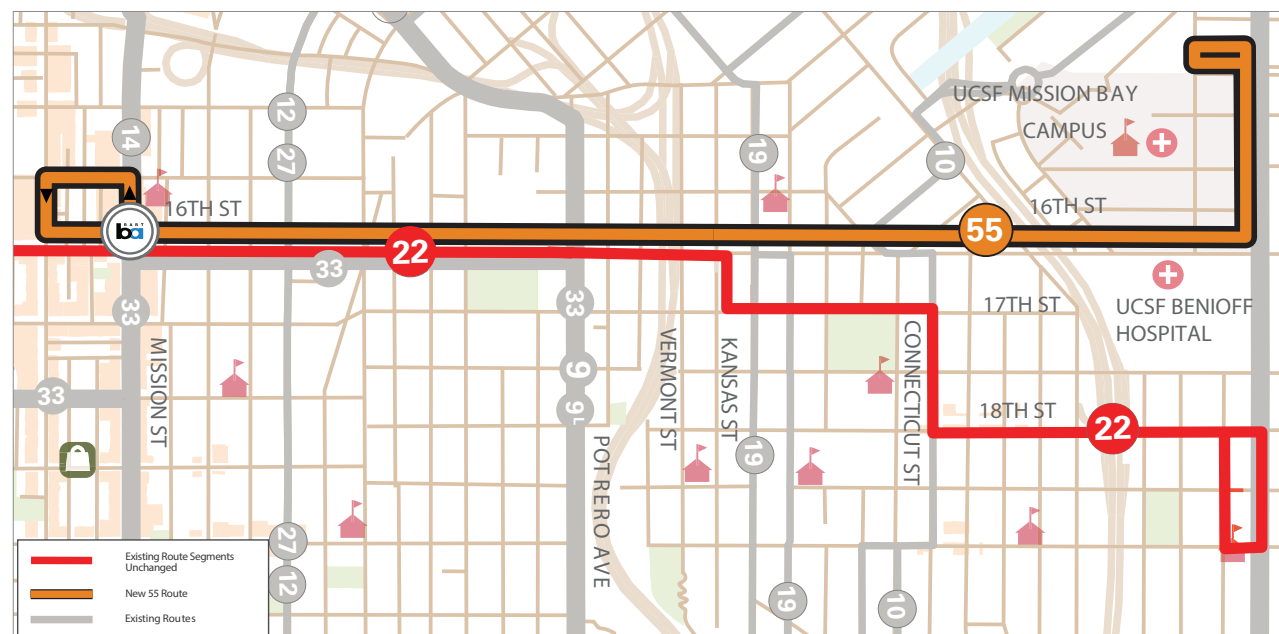
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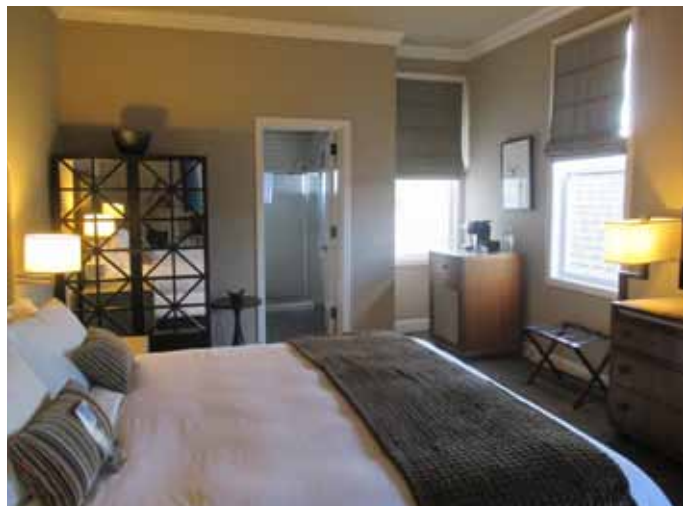
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Clockwise: Tree-lined Main Street; The still on the hill; The tasting room at Cairdean Estate; The view from Hall Wines; Stay at the Wydown. PHOTOS: PATTY BURNES

Charming St. Helena is wine country at its best

by patty burnes

FEBRUARY IS THE PERFECT TIME TO visit wine country — no crowds, no hot weather, and no traffic. Usually bustling with tourists and cars inching along Main Street, St. Helena's popular restaurants, prime parking spots, and space at the wine bar in your favorite tasting room are all available this time of year.

Nestled in the northern end of Napa Valley, St. Helena is home to several National Historic Landmarks (Beringer Vineyards and Charles Krug winery) as well as three downtown blocks declared a National Historic District. The 1860s saw the beginning of wine making and, in 1868, the railroad came to town.

Today, St. Helena is a sophisticated, wine-country-chic destination. Recently, I grabbed some good girlfriend time on a fun getaway.

STAY

At the **Wydown Hotel**, find modern accommodations in a comfortable setting. Named for a tree-lined boulevard in St. Louis, the Wydown has an enviable location in the heart of tree-lined downtown St. Helena. The lobby, a.k.a. the Living Room, is a natural gathering place — read, play games (a puzzle is left to be worked by guests), watch TV, or just relax on a couch.

The contemporary design of this boutique hotel is evident throughout the 12 rooms in the Victorian-era building. Enjoy spacious bathrooms with marble countertops, top-notch amenities, king-size beds, and great views of Main Street and the mountains (707-963-5100, wydownhotel.com).

PLAY & SHOP

It's tempting to leave your car parked during your stay and visit what's within walking distance. But if you're feeling a bit more adventurous, there's a lot to see and do just a short drive from downtown.

Cairdean Estate sits north of town at the base of Spring Mountain. Taste delicious wine and indulge in tempting foods (see **DINE**) in their epicurean village. In the open, modern tasting room, try interesting wines like these 2011s: Napa Valley Rosé, Carneros Pinot Noir, and the Cabernet Franc from their Acquaintance Vineyard in Coombsville (707-968-5434, cairdeanestate.com).

Drive to the peak of Spring Mountain and discover **Charbay**, the Still on the Hill, as it's affectionately named. Run by the 12th and 13th generations, the family has hand-distilled spirits since 1751. The grounds and the interior of the cozy tasting room are

decorated with classic copper pot stills, one still in use. From a diverse selection of wines, brandies, spirits, and ports, savor the green tea aperitif, pomegranate dessert wine and the Still House Port. Due to California law, spirits can't be poured, but there's plenty to purchase. Appointments encouraged (707-963-9327, charbay.com).

Travel south of downtown and you can't miss the 35-foot-tall polished stainless steel sculpture of Bunny Foo Foo (a character in a children's poem) that welcomes you to **Hall Wines**. The Halls have combined their passion for wine, art, architecture, and the environment in their everyday operations. Taste wonderful wines — like the 2011 "Craig's Cuvée" red and "Ellie's" Cabernet Sauvignon, and the limited 2012 Walt "The Corners" Anderson Valley Pinot Noir — and stroll the lush grounds and gardens (707-967-2626, hallwines.com).

It's hard to miss the modern architecture of the **Flora Springs** tasting room that resembles the estate's hillside caves. Named for the family matriarch and the natural springs on the property, their estate vineyards are organi-

cally farmed. Choose a place at the long bar inside or head out back to the casual courtyard or rooftop lounge with views of the vineyards. Enjoy the 2011 Sangiovese and these 2012s: the Ghost Winery Cabernet Franc and the "Poggio del Papa" red blend (707-967-8032, florasprings.com).

Before heading back downtown, consider a hike in **Bothe-Napa Valley State Park**. It's a 1,900-acre park with over 10 miles of trails (707-942-4575, napavalleystateparks.org).

Along Main Street, you're guaranteed a good time at **Orin Swift Cellars**.

High energy abounds here as does great wine. All of the wild labels (except the Palermo) are made in house. Favorites included the 2013 "Abstract," a Grenache blend, the 2012 "Papillon," a red blend with 60 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, and the 2012 "Mannequin," a white blend with 48 percent Chardonnay (707-967-9179, orinswift.com).

After a busy day, nothing is more relaxing than a visit to a spa — and with a stay at the Wydown comes a complimentary pass to **Health Spa Napa Valley**. There's a fitness center, outdoor pool, hot tub, and soothing treatments from which to choose (707-967-8800, napavalleyspa.com).

Main Street is a treasure trove of art galleries and boutiques and a wonderful place to window shop. Try some of these fun shops: **Toss** (tossdesigns.com), **Steve's Hardware & Housewares** (707-963-3423), and **Woodhouse Chocolate** (woodhousechocolate.com).

DINE

Located on Main Street, **Gillwoods Cafe** is the place for a hearty breakfast and friendly service. With a commitment to classic home-style cooking since 1991, it's where you can find all of your favorites including freshly made breads and pastries. Choose

from farm fresh eggs, applewood bacon, steel-cut oats, and more (707-9631788, gillwoodscafe.com).

One of the culinary destinations at Cairdean Estate is **Butterscots**, a casual cafe. Open throughout the day, enjoy specialties inspired by Scottish and English heritage like house-made Scotch eggs and freshly baked crumpets. Nearly a dozen unique salads come in three sizes — and save room for the blackberry-filled doughnuts. You'll also find cookbooks and specialty foods (707-302-5104, cairdeanestate.com/Butterscots).

Just steps from the Wydown, **Archetype** is a local favorite. Inside seating by the open kitchen or in the cafe garden offer light-filled options to savor the food, centered around the oak-fired oven and grill. We loved Mr. Little's potato and cardoon soup and the Thunder Ridge beef sliders. Be sure to try the curried cauliflower gratin, Dungeness crab crepes, and the oven-roasted Brussels sprouts. Pairing with artisan cocktails and regional wines makes for a relaxing wine country experience (707-968-9200, archetypenapa.com).

Press is a mecca for Napa wines, prime beef, and ingredients sourced from local gardens. Fish, lamb, and poultry are on the menu for non-red meat eaters. Find high ceilings, towers of varietals, and roaring fireplaces both inside and out. Try great Napa wines like the 2013 Hendry Albariño, the 2011 Calder Wine Company Meyer Vineyard Charbono, and the 2010 Silverado Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon (707-967-0550, pressnapavalley.com).

OTHER ESSENTIALS

Special events: *Napa Valley Restaurant Month* (throughout February; sthelena.com/restaurant-month)

St. Helena Chamber of Commerce: sthelena.com

Napa Valley Tourism: visitnapavalley.com

Patty Burnes can be found @pattygb or reached by e-mail at patty@marinatimes.com.

San Francisco Tribal & Textile Arts Show

by lynette majer

THE 29TH ANNUAL SAN Francisco Tribal & Textile Arts Show returns to Fort Mason this month on Feb. 6–8. More than 80 vetted dealers will display art, jewelry, antiques, and accessories representing indigenous peoples and cultures from Africa, Australia, the Pacific, the Americas, and Europe. As the largest collection of ethnographic art available for purchase in North America, national and international museums and collectors, as well as celebrities, have consistently supported this highly regarded show.

Many of the objects and fiber works displayed represent forms

of communication between indigenous people and with their gods and spirits. Most of the dealers have firsthand knowledge of their pieces on display and how they represent these and other traditions. Beyond just dealers or

from San Rafael, which will display an 8th century 24-karat gold repoussé of Buddha (pictured). Crafted by the earliest inhabitants of Myanmar, the devout Pyu Buddhists would gain “merit” by commissioning an item like this, which would subsequently be donated to a monk or pagoda.

The show will also display contemporary artists specializing in traditional crafts and art forms. Heart of the Brush

II features work by self-taught artist and tribal textile dealer Vichai Chinalai, who through his graceful brush paintings, incorporates poetry, sacred writing, Asian philosophy, and Zen Buddhism. Contemporary basket weaver Eva Ginguimia from



Wounaan Rainforest Baskets in Beaverton, Ore., will have on display a basket (pictured) based on ancient Colombian pottery designs. Made from palm fibers and other natural materials found in the Darien rainforest, it took three years to complete.

For those who would like an inside look into the show, former emerita curator of textiles at the de Young Museum Cathryn Cootner will lead a tour, “The Delight of Looking Closer,” which will highlight some of the highly collectible works on view. Tours will start at 9 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

The show opens on Feb. 5 with a high-profile gala to benefit the de Young Museum’s critically acclaimed collection of textile and arts from Africa, Oceania, and America, long treasured by San Francisco. The gala, with past national media coverage, brings together collectors, designers, and art aficionados with live music and exquisite catering.

San Francisco Tribal & Textile Arts Show: Friday–Sunday, Feb. 6–8, Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center, \$15; gala: Thursday, Feb. 5, 6–9 p.m., \$150; sanfranciscotribalandtextileartshow.com

Celebrities have consistently supported this highly regarded show.

collectors, many are recognized specialists in their field, sought out by museums and cultural institutions for their expertise.

In addition to representing international tribal art experts, the show will also feature prominent U.S. galleries, including IndoArts

Butt into the fun with the Year of the Ram

by evalyn baron

WHERE ELSE BUT IN THIS MAGICAL city of ours might you come casually nose-to-nose with a 268-foot-long Golden Dragon called Gum Lung? This enchanting encounter could take place soon, at the world-renowned San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade (details below).

Here are some fun events planned in honor of the Year of the Ram, lunar year 4713:

Saturday, Feb. 14: Southwest Airlines Mini-Parade and Ribbon Cutting, Ceremony, 10:30 a.m.: (Grant Avenue from California Street to Pacific Avenue). Get a glimpse of the larger parade and see lion dancing and giant puppets at the ribbon cutting at these free events. Also on Feb. 14 is the **Chinese New Year Flower Market Fair, 10 a.m.–8 p.m.** on Grant Avenue (Clay to Broadway). Oranges, tangerines (symbols of abundant happiness), flowers, plants, and a variety of auspicious foods are just a few of the items that will be for sale at this fascinating flower market. It also runs on Sunday, Feb. 15 from 9 a.m.–6 p.m.



What would keep you from attending as many of these exciting events as you can?

Saturday, Feb. 28: Miss Chinatown USA Pageant, 7 p.m. (Palace of Fine Arts Theater, 3301 Lyon Street). Young women from across the United States vie for the opportunity to become goodwill ambassadors for the Chinese community. Tickets are \$35–\$65 and can be purchased

at Washington Bakery and Restaurant (733 Washington Street, 415-397-3232) or East West Bank (900 Kearny Street, 415-397-8988).

Saturday, March 7: Chinese New Year Parade, 5:15 p.m. (Market Street at Second). Yes, it’s fabulous — incredibly

so — San Francisco at its best, and it’s free to the public. If you’re in the mood to enjoy it sitting down, bleacher tickets are available for \$30 (415-680-6297 or 415-982-3000).

Friday, March 8: Miss Chinatown Coronation Ball, 6 p.m.–midnight (Hilton San Francisco Union Square, 333 O’Farrell Street). Dine and dance the night away at one of the highlights of the new year celebrations. Call 415-982-3000 for tickets (\$150).

You can also visit chineseparade.com for more information about the entire new year calendar of events, exact times, and locations of more fun and celebratory proceedings.

If you are fortunate enough to live in this wonderful town, what would keep you from attending as many of these exciting events as you can? So get to that parade, look Gum Lung right in his golden dragon eyes and wish him a Gung Hay Fat Choy! Sen Nin Fai Lok! Happy New Year!

E-mail: evalyn@marinatimes.com

David Mitchell: Boundaries

by sharon anderson

THROUGH MARCH 12, 2015, The Dryansky Gallery is featuring the work of David Mitchell in the exhibition *Boundaries*. The gallery opened last fall and is offering San Francisco a fresh approach to emerging and mid-career artists from around the world working in various mediums.

Boundaries, Mitchell’s first solo exhibition on the West Coast, features a series of hard-edged abstract photographs inspired by Piet Mondrian, Ilya Bolotvosky, Burgoyne Diller, Mark Rothko, and post modern architecture. The photographs, inspired by minimalism, represent a par-

ing down of form to its essentials. Unlike traditional photography that typically records reality, narrative and meaning in Mitchell’s photographs are abandoned. In the geometry of empty space, shadows and light are employed as a part of the work, acting as a kind of substitute for representation in the form of recognizable imagery. The identity of the art object becomes mysterious in its simplicity. Urban environments and interiors inspire his approach to color and form that, when paired down, create their own meaning.

Dryansky Gallery’s co-director, Jilian Adi Monribot (whose first solo exhibition ended last month) discov-

ered Mitchell’s work in 2011 at RMA Institute in Bangkok. She knew immediately that she wanted to exhibit his work: “I was struck by the conundrum it presented — I had no idea how the work was created or that it was even photography at all,” she says. “... [I was] drawn to its enigmatic depiction of something both modern and contemporary at the same time, I felt ... invited into someone’s smart, deep and analytical mind; and I found the invitation into that head-space compelling.”

Born in Brighton, England in 1964, Mitchell enjoyed a career in fashion photography in the eighties. He moved to Hong Kong in 1991 to pursue editorial work for *Elle*

and *Vogue*. After experiencing partial seizures in 2004, he was diagnosed with Left Temporal Lobe Epilepsy (LTLE). The condition affected his ability to work commercially, but this limitation paradoxically opened doors to new creative possibilities in Mitchell’s art process. In the studio, Mitchell creates images beginning with sketches that are translated into collage and assemblages, which are then interpreted by the camera. Imagery melts away, leaving impressions that have more to do with the “somethingness” of objects that, in the process of observation, gives the viewer room to dream.

David Mitchell’s Boundaries: The Dryansky Gallery, 2120



David Mitchell, AB 200, 2014, archival pigment print, 49.45 x 40 inches, edition of 3, 67 x 55 inches, edition of 2

Union Street, 415-932-9302, thedryansky.com; Wednesday–Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sharon Anderson is an artist and writer in Southern California. She can be reached at mindtheimage.com.

What's up, doc?

by michael snyder

ONE IS ABOUT THE FOUNDING OF the modern women's movement for liberation and equality; one concerns the historically successful Red Army hockey team; and one investigates the painstaking process of creating a dance for the New York City Ballet. They are among the notable documentary movies being released in local theaters this month — and I'm happy to tout them.

A well-made documentary is like an engaging, informative lecture crossed with an exciting narrative. You learn something new, even

as a tale is told, and sometimes, you're given a new perspective on an issue, a piece of history, a life or lives, renowned or otherwise. Each of the following documentaries achieves those ends to varying degrees.

'SHE'S BEAUTIFUL WHEN SHE'S ANGRY'

Covering a period that lasts from around 1966 to 1971 but resonating far beyond that time, this view of significant parties who sparked and shepherded the women's movement in its formative years is a sleek and vibrant affair. Director

Mary Dore mostly uses the actual voices and images of over two dozen women who played a significant part in the movement. Dore mixes archival and contemporary material to paint a vivid, entertaining, and occasionally witty picture of feminism's roots and cultivation in the latter half of the 20th century. There are a few minor reenactments here and there, but they're negligible.

Throughout its 92-minute length, *She's Beautiful When She's Angry* addresses the diversity of womanhood and the movement's various schools of thought, as well as its controversies and infighting. It's the story of a battle that continues

'Ballet 422' offers rare backstage access.

today on many fronts: one for gender equality in society as a whole, and more specifically, in the home, the workplace, the halls of education, culture, and the arts. As for the title, any anger depicted is of the righteous brand, and the dedication of the participants is quite beautiful in its determination and passion.

She's Beautiful When She's Angry opens Feb. 6 at the Opera Plaza Cinema.

'RED ARMY'

A genuinely thrilling documentary at the nexus of sports and poli-



Travel back to Soviet times to get the inside story on their hockey greatness. POSTER: © SONY CLASSICS

tics, filmmaker Gabe Polsky's look at the legendary championship Soviet Union hockey team, *Red Army*, goes beyond the usual sporty clichés, largely because of the significance of its subject as a cultural weapon in the Cold War during the 1970s and 1980s.

By focusing on the life and times of the team's highly decorated captain and hero of Soviet hockey, Slava Fetisov, Polsky gets a first-hand look at the harsh and relentless workings of the Soviet Union's intertwined sports and propaganda machines. Fetisov's

initial reticence about revealing much about the past eventually dissipates, and then ... the anecdotes come as quickly as a fast break and as devastatingly as an on-target slap shot. We get everything from background on the team's origins to the brutality of Fetisov's upbringing and the perils of *Red Army's* training camp to the Russian perspective on the USA's "Miracle on Ice" victory over the USSR team in the 1980 Winter Olympics. And there's also an elegy for the magnificence of the *Red Army* hockey dynasty — undone by the dissolution of the USSR and its players' exodus to the NHL in North America. To summarize, *Red Army* — the movie — scores big.

Red Army opens Feb. 6 at the Embarcadero Center Cinema.

'BALLET 422'

Director-cinematographer Jody Lee Lipes provides an up-close peek at the painstaking assembly and execution of a single dance created and choreographed for the world-renowned New York City Ballet in *Ballet 422*. In the process, we watch the progress of Justin Peck, the young choreographer commissioned to fashion a new ballet for the company's 2013 winter season. Peck must gather the

talent he needs and foster a successful collaboration with his chosen troupe of dancers, musicians, designers, and techies to make *Paz de la Jolla*, the

422nd new ballet at NYCB, a reality, let alone a triumph. The documentary falters in its failure to give the viewer much, if anything, on Peck's training, his personal life, and the motivations behind his dance, and we get nothing concrete about the critical and audience response to the piece. Still, *Ballet 422* does offer rare backstage access to the insular, step-by-step process of producing an original work at the NYCB.

Ballet 422 opens Feb. 13 at the Opera Plaza Cinema.

Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture on KPFK/Pacifica Radio's David Feldman Show and Thom Hartmann Show and on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, available online at GABnet.net and YouTube. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster



Cast members from *She's Beautiful When She's Angry*. PHOTO: VIRGINIA BLAISDELL

THE BEST OF BOOKS

What you're reading

compiled by brian pettus

BOOKS INC. BEST-SELLER LIST

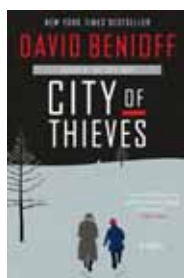
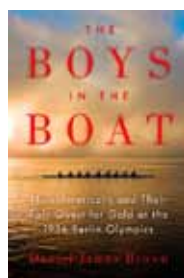
1. *Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics*, by Daniel Brown (paperback)
2. *All the Light We Cannot See: A Novel*, by Anthony Doerr (hardcover)
3. *City of Thieves: A Novel*, by David Benioff (paperback)
4. *Dept. of Speculation*, by Jenny Offill (paperback)
5. *Season of the Witch*, by David Talbot (paperback)
6. *The Tender Bar*, by J.R. Moehringer (paperback)
7. *Wild*, by Cheryl Strayed (paperback)

8. *American Sniper*, by Chris Kyle (paperback)
9. *Unbroken*, by Laura Hillenbrand (paperback)
10. *Cool Gray City of Love*, by Gary Kamiya (paperback)

NEW RELEASES

Lentil Underground: Renegade Farmers and the Future of Food in America, by Liz Carlisle

A story of American agricultural business and the independent organic farmers who held out and now thrive. Sharply written, Carlisle has a Michael Lewis-like knack for finding memorable characters who will talk about what they believe in. A fun read!



Deep Down Dark: The Untold Stories of 33 Men Buried in a Chilean Mine, by Hector Tobar

After being buried alive for more than two months, the 33 men trapped below the earth made a pact: they would tell their story together. Pulitzer-prize winning novelist and journalist Tobar is the man they chose to help them tell it, and he does a masterful job expressing the tremendous effort to save them, as well as the men's deep faith and togetherness.

The Girl on the Train, by Paula Hawkins

Called the "new *Gone Girl*" by *The Wall Street Journal*, *Girl on the Train* is like *Rear Window* from a train. A commuting woman sees the same couple having breakfast every morning from her train, but then one morning it's all different. Soon she is enmeshed in a thrilling story by this fresh debut author. We expect great things from this one!

The Bear Ate Your Sandwich, by Julia Sarcone-Roach

A delightful new picture book features a story being told about the fate of a sandwich on a park bench one day, with charming images and lyrical writing. Not until the end do we suspect there's more going on than meets the eye. A great read-aloud or gift for your young ones.

Brian Pettus is the manager of Books Inc. in the Marina.



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URBAN HOME AND GARDEN :: Protection



Caring for your hardwood floors

by julia strzesieski

HARDWOOD FLOORS ADD CHARACTER and charm to a home and are a selling point for both home sales and rentals. To protect the beauty of hardwood flooring, proper maintenance is essential to preserve the floor's finish and the wood beneath. By observing some simple guidelines, you will be able to continue to enjoy the warmth and beauty that hardwood floors will add to your home for years to come.

BASIC FLOOR CARE

Keep grit off the floor: Fine particles of grit and dirt act like sandpaper and abrade the floor finish. Vacuum at least once a week. Dust mop or sweep in between weekly cleanings.

Don't overclean: Too much cleaning will abrade the finish, causing it to wear faster. Overuse of soaps and detergents in water can damage your floor and possibly the finish, making refinishing problematic. It's also important to match the appropriate cleaner to the type of finish on your floors (see below).

Wipe up spills and tracked-on dirt immediately: Use a lightly dampened cloth, and wipe dry with a soft cloth.

Use protective mats and area rugs: Mats at all exterior doors help prevent dirt and grit from entering your home. Use area rugs or runners in high traffic areas. Mats and rugs trap a lot of dirt, so shake them out often and clean them regularly.

Use felt protectors on furniture: Movement of chairs and tables can cause excessive wear on your floor finish. Install felt or fabric-covered floor glides on all furniture at floor contact points, and clean/replace them periodically. When moving furniture that does not yet have furniture glides, either pick it up off the floor, or slip a cloth or heavy sock under each leg to avoid floor damage.

Beware of high heels: Avoid walking on floors with high heels or with shoes that may have sharp protruding objects like small rocks caught in the shoe's treads.

Control humidity: To avoid cracking or buckling of hardwood floors, keep the relative humidity in your home between 45 and 55 percent. Excessive humidity can cause wood fibers to swell, creating cracks in the finish. Excessively dry conditions can cause cracks between the floorboards. Depending on which problem you encounter, install a humidifier or dehumidifier.

WHAT NOT TO USE ON YOUR WOOD FLOORS

- Do not use any product on your hardwood floors until you have read the label. If it is not formulated for hardwood floors, don't use it.

- Do not use self-polishing waxes, vinyl, or tile floor-care products on your hardwood floors. After application, the water evaporates and leaves a glossy finish coat, which will discolor over time, requires repeat applications, and is not

compatible when future recoating of your floor is required.

- Never pour water or allow water to puddle on your hardwood floor. Water and wood are not a good combination. Water is particularly incompatible with wax finishes (see below).

SPECIFIC FLOOR CARE

Know what type of coating is on your floor so you can give it proper care:

Sealed (polyurethane) hardwood floors are coated with a protective finish, such as polyurethane, or are impregnated with acrylic.

Use clear vinegar and hot water to clean sealed floors: Completely wring out your applicator. Use of Murphy's Oil Soap is not recommended — it can interfere with adhesion of future recoats of polyurethane.

Do not wax sealed wood floors: Wax can interfere with future recoating of the floors, and often results in a slippery surface.

Waxed hardwood floors are coated with paste wax such as Butcher's or liquid wax.

Decide between buffable and nonbuffable wax: Stay with the same type and brand of wax (incompatibility between waxes may cause a dull or streaky finish). Buffable wax works well on medium to high traffic floors — rebuffer floors regularly between waxings to restore luster (when using a buffing machine, use fiber bristle attachment only). Nonbuffable wax (contains acrylics) works well on low traffic floors or floors protected by rugs. Be careful to not overwax or apply over dirt.

Never clean a waxed floor with soap and water: No cleaning product that includes or requires the addition of water should be used. Carefully read the label of any cleaning product — make sure it is compatible with the type of wax you use on your floors.

Do not use urethane: Urethane should never be applied over an existing wax finish.

Oiled hardwood floors are treated with linseed, tung, Danish, or other vegetable oil, giving them a more matte appearance than floors that are sealed or waxed.

Do not use soap and water: Use specially formulated products for cleaning oiled wood floors, such as WOCA or Bona.

RECOATING

Sealed hardwood floors: If you have treated your floors following the guidelines above, and have not used any wax-related products or Murphy's Oil Soap, you can recoat with polyurethane. It is time to recoat when the sheen becomes dull in high-traffic areas. For most floors, this will be every three to five years.

Waxed hardwood floors: Waxed wood floors usually require waxing twice yearly. Apply more wax only in worn areas.

Julia Strzesieski is the marketing coordinator of Cole Hardware and can be reached at julia@marinatimes.com.

REAL ESTATE TODAY ∴ A way into the market

Two-unit building bypass

by carole isaacs

THE LOSS OF RENTAL UNITS HAS BEEN a long-standing issue in San Francisco. After 15 years of debate, a new condominium conversion lottery bypass law was passed, and the Expedited Conversion Program began accepting applications on July 29, 2013. The previous conversion program has been suspended for 10 years, and there has been permanent disqualification of many buildings that qualified under that law.

The good news for buyers is that two-unit buildings with a clean eviction history can still convert to condos if each unit is occupied for one year by separate parties who each own at least a 25 percent interest during the entire occupancy period. This exemption also applies to mixed-use buildings (commercial and residential) with no more than two residential units that are both owner-occupied. This may sound like old news, but in real estate changes do not happen quickly.

The easy road to conversion has always been a two-unit building. Now that there is a 10-year moratorium built into the law, the conversion of two-unit buildings to condos has found a new following. Single family home buyers priced out of the market can make a smaller step down, find a partner, buy a two-unit building and one year later begin the condo conversion process. There is even hope of upside potential here.

Here are a few things that may be interesting. Considering how inventory has dropped dramatically, it is interesting to me that checking the MLS I found the number of

two-unit buildings sold over the past three years is not dramatically different year to year. 371 in 2012, 352 in 2013, and 345 in 2014. Currently, citywide there are 25 two-unit buildings for sale.

For a detailed look into what has happened with condo conversions the past three years, I spoke to Bruce R. Storrs, city and county surveyor for the San Francisco Department of Public Works Bureau of Street Use and Mapping. He provided me with the statistics in the charts above.

Numbers are always interesting, because we now know that TICs have been converted to condos. Now the issue is to move from fantasies about home ownership to the reality of the condo conversion process.

Often I am asked how long it take to complete a condo conversion. Now that I had the ear of Storrs, I asked a few more questions: How long does it take from the day the application is submitted until it is approved? Can you tell me the minimum amount of time and the maximum? It was no surprise to hear the time to complete a condo conversion may vary considerably.

"This is almost entirely dependent on the applicant," Storrs told me. "If the applicants have their code compliance issues resolved — they have had a physical inspection and resolved all of the Department of Building Inspection issues — and there are no additional issues, a project can record in as little as three months. If there are lingering code compliance issues or there is an issue that needs resolution with the Department of City Planning, the recordation may take much much longer."

Year	Method of CC	Projects	Total
2012	bypass	129	
2012	lottery	16	145
2013	bypass	93	
2013	lottery	6	99
2014	ECP*	4	
2014	bypass	52	
2014	lottery	6	62
Total conversions			306

Year	Number of Units	Applications Received
2014	2	78
2014	3	83
2014	4	51
2014	5	4
2014	6	18
Total		234

*ECP - Expedited Conversion Program

Today the most important question is what can be done to make the condo conversion process go more smoothly? Here are Storrs's tips:

- Perform their own due diligence, including eviction history of the building.
- Make sure that you meet the minimum qualifications and have the ability to maintain these qualifications.
- Understand the subdivision process from start to finish.
- Understand what a common interest development is.
- Retain a knowledgeable and capable attorney that understands the conversion process in San Francisco.
- Retain a knowledgeable and capable land surveyor that understands the conversion process in San Francisco.
- Order your physical inspection from the Department of Building Inspection as soon as you are certain you will be converting.
- Be prepared financially: just the application fee (not the ECP fee), the attorney and the surveyor will be about \$20,000. This does not include any building alterations.

I have found that the key to success is having patience with the process. There are no short cuts here. Success is possible if you methodically follow through on every step.

There is no magic pill to home ownership in San Francisco, but for those who are willing to take on the additional work involved in the condo conversion process, this is one way where sweat equity can be turned into real equity for the long term.

On Dec. 29, 2014, there was only one two-unit building for sale in the northern neighborhoods that include Cow Hollow, the Marina, North Beach, Pacific Heights, and Russian Hill. December and January are always the slowest sale periods in real estate, and there will be more property on the market in the new year. Even so, the lack of inventory is stunning.

Of course in 2015 there will be more two-unit buildings coming onto the market. One can expect that some of these buildings will be qualified for fast-track condo conversion. They will be sprinkled all over the city and provide an opportunity for buyers willing to expand their options and think creatively.

Carole Isaacs is a Realtor with McGuire Real Estate, where she is a Top Producer. Follow her on Twitter @CaroleIsaacs or visit her online at caroleisaacs.com or call (415) 608-1267.

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the COMPETITION

19

Average Days on Market
(Time is money.)

34

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The Barbagelata Team has the Skill, Knowledge and Expertise That your Property Deserves.

*Statistics are based on SFAR Multiple Listing Service data for real estate company performance (1/1/14 - 9/30/14) of home sales in San Francisco. The competition refers to the average production numbers of all other firms combined.

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Rebecca
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John Zipperer: *I expected that on the question of ‘whom do you trust more, the governor or the legislature,’ you might have had Republicans more likely to trust the governor because Brown has been holding back the Democratic tide in the legislature.*

Bill Whalen: *Every Republican who runs statewide spends his or her time beating the snot out of the legislature, complaining about the horrors of the legislature. But given the choice of the governor or legislature, they went with the legislature. So maybe Republicans just deep down dislike Jerry Brown that much.*

Live political roundtable with the Bay Area’s experts

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City and County of San Francisco

February 2015

Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF)

The SF Department of Children, Youth, and their Families, the SF Rec & Parks Department, and the San Francisco Unified School District would like to invite the families of San Francisco to the annual San Francisco Summer Resource Fair on Saturday, February 7 from 10am to 2pm at Balboa High School!

The Fair will feature 150 exhibitors with information about summer camps, programs, and other opportunities for children and youth in San Francisco. The Fair is free and open to the public. In addition to the excellent resources provided by the exhibitors, the Rec & Park Department’s Mobile Rec Team will conduct lots fun activities in Balboa High’s courtyard, the Bookmobile will be on hand, and three Off the Grid trucks will be selling delicious food.

We hope to see you and your family at the Fair!

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Eating well during pregnancy is important. The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program can help. WIC serves pregnant women, new mothers, infants and young children under five years old who meet 185% or below of the federal poverty income level. WIC benefits include nutrition and breastfeeding education and support, checks to buy-healthy foods (such as fresh fruits and vegetables) and referrals to low cost or free health care and other community services.

Enrolling in WIC early in your pregnancy will give your baby a healthy start. Also, WIC staff can show you how you and your family can eat healthier meals and snacks. Migrants are welcome to apply as well.

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For download questions, please contact Ms. Brenda Moore at (415) 715-3170, email moorebr@sfa.org. For technical questions, please contact Project Manager, Andrew Passell at (415) 715-3213, email passella@sfa.org

Board of Supervisors Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings

February and March

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- March 10
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CRUISING SPEED
CONTINUED from page 24

Isaacs: There are a number of forces in play in San Francisco: fear of being priced out of the market, fear of rising interest rates, increase in job growth in the Bay Area, foreign investors are continuing to invest in San Francisco real estate.

Baby boomers are a force in themselves for several reasons: Boomers’ adult children who have stayed at home want to move away and buy their own homes; baby boomers are living longer and not leaving San Francisco for retirement communities, resulting in fewer homes on the market; aging baby boomers who feel the isolation of the suburbs are looking to move to the city; the transfer in wealth between boomers and their heirs is the biggest in history, and they are helping their children buy homes.

Barbagelata: Lowest unemployment in the state, rental amounts are similar to mortgage payments now — so why not own something instead of renting? There is a Roaring 20s feel to the city right now, and young wealthy buyers want to show off their new digs and throw great parties.

Which do you think will be more popular with San Francisco buyers in 2015 and why: single-family homes or condominiums?

Kropp: I believe condominiums will out-sell single-family homes simply due to supply. Many people are priced out of a single-family home and decide to purchase a condominium, TIC, or co-op for that reason. Other people are simply not interested in the maintenance required in a single-family home. Younger tech buyers, who make up a large part of our purchases today, tend to want a condominium with full amenities.

Isaacs: Single-family homes are the gold standard for most buyers. Since there are only so many single-family homes available, many buyers must opt for condominium living. The end result is that both single-family homes and condos will be in demand. The exception is retired buyers who are looking to downsize and enjoy a life with less home care and more freedom. Condo living with an elevator and a doorman is often their first choice. Younger buyers tend to fit into one of two categories: Nesting couples who can’t quite afford a single-family home and fall back on

a condo hoping to move up in a few years; and single people who work long hours and want “to get into the market.” This buyer also is hoping to move up in a few years and perhaps keep their first home or condo as an investment property.

Ahlberg: In my experience, buyers would rather have a single-family home if they can afford it. With San Francisco’s high prices, many have to turn to condominiums to start. There are also a number of new condo buildings, and more coming online this year. These tend to sell quickly as “brand new” has a strong appeal with the younger and Asian demographics. So there will likely be more condo sales this year than single family.

Baby boomers are not leaving San Francisco for retirement communities, resulting in fewer homes on the market

Barbagelata: Condos for sure. The condo market connects with the single tech buyer more that currently represents the number-one buying demographic in San Francisco.

Which San Francisco neighborhoods do you think will attract the most buyer interest in 2015?

Ahlberg: This is a great question. As I work on the Northside of town, I get most of my requests for those areas. The traditional neighborhoods like Pacific Heights, Russian Hill, Marina, etc., always seem to stay strong. However, the southern neighborhoods have become very strong, and I expect them to stay strong.

Also, that is where the majority of the new construction is taking place. I think Hayes Valley, Mission Dolores, and Glen Park are some of the neighborhoods to keep an eye on.

Barbagelata: All of Noe/Mission/Dolores Heights, etc., continues to be on fire. The Sunset is creating a buzz with younger buyers and was rated one of the hottest neighborhoods in the country recently.

Kropp: Noe Valley and Bernal Heights continue to be incredibly strong for buyers in San Francisco, but in 2014, 9 out of 10 of the most expensive homes sold were in Pacific Heights and Presidio Heights. The important thing about San Francisco to understand is that it isn’t one market. We have about 10 to 20 micro markets. Many buyers limit their search by a specific street,

Lake Street, California, or Market Street, for instance, or by hills. People will look in Pacific Heights, Ashbury Heights, the Lake District, and Noe Valley all at the same time to get what they want.

Isaacs: Many new first-time buyers ask about the Bayview/Hunters Point neighborhood. Trulia reported: “Sales prices have appreciated 44.1 percent over the last five years in Bayview.” The Bayview will attract urban pioneers, but it seems unlikely that it can continue this rate of rise in price. Sunnyside is popular with single-family home buyers looking to ride the corporate shuttles at the Glen Park BART station or to take the freeways south or to the East Bay. Mission Terrace is also a candidate for first-time

home buyers as buyers are priced out of Noe Valley and Glen Park. SOMA, Yerba Buena, Mission Bay, and the Inner Mission will continue to attract buyers to both new high-rise construction and smaller existing homes and condos. In general, anywhere within walking distance to a corporate shuttle will attract buyers.

Will a shuttle rider please tell me where they think there will be a new shuttle stop? I would love to sell you a home nearby before prices go up!

Name a San Francisco neighborhood or two that you think is going to be a relative bargain this year. Why?

Kropp: The Portola District and Silver Terrace is where I see many entry-level buyers going. The Bayview has seen incredible growth in 2014, and some people are tired of the competition. I believe the market will drive many buyers to discover the great weather and sunny slopes of the Portola District.

Barbagelata: Forest Knolls — it’s still relatively unknown but offers detached well-built homes with some amazing views close to Cole Valley, Inner Sunset, and UCSF.

Ahlberg: Gosh, I wish I knew the answer to that. Even the previously little-known neighborhoods like Ingleside Terrace, Midtown Terrace, Bayview, and so forth are taking off as the more traditional neighborhoods rise in prices. My suggestion to a buyer would definitely be to be open to some of these smaller, less-known neighborhoods to try to get a better value.

John Zipperer is the former senior editor of Apartment Finance Today and Affordable Housing Finance. E-mail: john@marinatimes.com.

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THE HEALTHFUL LIFE ∴ People power



Diet and lifestyle for increasing productivity

by thalia farshchian

IT SEEMS THAT EVERY year flies by faster than the blink of an eye and our time becomes increasingly more precious. With the rapid growth of technology, many are finding it is more difficult to focus and keep up with the connectivity level. To maintain and be productive, many attempt to game their bodies by monitoring and modifying sleep, physical activity, and eating habits. This process of understanding and modification has been popularly termed "biohacking."

POWER DOWN TO PROPERLY POWER UP

Let's start with sleep because sleep deficit is the number one thing that throws people off any healthful routine. With sleep deprivation, people are chronically fatigued, leading them to feel generally behind and to make poor lifestyle choices. When we lack adequate sleep, we are hungrier and less focused. This often triggers people to reach for more caffeine, sugar, and other stimulants to maintain.

To prepare for a good night's sleep, it is important to power down across the board. A good guideline is to avoid electronic devices for an hour before turning in for the night. The blue light emitted from our phones, computers, overhead lights, and televisions actually suppresses the natural rise of melatonin in the evening. This either makes it difficult for people to fall asleep or affects the quality of sleep.

This can be difficult for many to truly commit to, so there are biohacking tactics to help. For computer screens, there is an application called f.lux that adjusts the color of your screen depending on the time of the day. As you approach the eve-

ning, blue light is increasingly blocked.

So your computer is taken care of, but that still leaves your television, phone, tablets, and overhead lights. For that we have perhaps the silliest yet effective tool, which are blue blocker sunglasses. If you have a favorite show or a movie to watch in the evening, don't forget your eye protection. You will thank yourself in the morning when you are rested.

Many people complain that it is difficult to shut off their minds in the evenings and find that they become increasingly energetic. This is most often due to an imbalance in the stress hormone, cortisol, where it actually elevates in the evening when it should naturally be low. An amino acid, phosphatidylserine, supports lowering cortisol to allow people with busy thoughts to fall asleep. Like shutting off all the lights in the house before bed, it unplugs the cortisol from the receptors in the brain.

CREATING A HEALTHFUL MORNING ROUTINE

It is important to get the day started off right because it sets the tone for the rest of the day. No, it is not healthy to check your e-mail as soon as your alarm goes off. Healthful morning routines include exercise, meditation, and a balanced breakfast to wake up your system.

Light exposure: Though we want blue light to be low in the evening, we want exposure to it in the morning to help us wake up. With shorter days in winter months, this poses more of a challenge for people. Some people opt to invest in a blue light alarm clock. Studies show that 20–30 minutes per day of exposure can help energy levels and mood.

Exercise: Cortisol levels are supposed to be higher in the morning than any other point in the day to

help us be alert. Exercise naturally increases endorphins and cortisol levels with studies showing that even a short five-minute burst of cardiovascular activity can do the trick.

Meditation: With constant connectivity, it becomes increasingly more difficult to find space for silence and introspection. The morning hours are a good opportunity for this and allow you to gear up for the day ahead. For those new to a meditative practice, there are numerous phone and tablet applications that will guide you through the process. To complement meditation and breathing exercises, heart rate variability monitors like Heart Math's emWave2 help you track your ability to reduce stress and anxiety.

Nutritious breakfast: The most common breakfast options are typically high in simple carbohydrates. It is important to keep blood sugar balanced from the first meal of the day. Starting the day with a healthful source of fat, protein, and vegetables is ideal for stable energy.

ALLOW YOUR BODY TO TRUST YOU

At the end of the day, our bodies appreciate predictability. When you are on a consistent routine, your body has faith in you to give it exactly what it needs. There are many different options for maintaining a healthful diet and lifestyle, but finding something you are able to commit to is of utmost importance.

Thalia Farshchian is a naturopathic doctor at Discover Health. Her background includes both conventional and alternative modalities, and her practice is primarily focused on weight management, hormone imbalances, and gastrointestinal conditions. E-mail: drthalia@discoverhealthmd.com

CARING FOR OUR KIDS ∴ Time off

Drop-off childcare for Valentine's night out

by liz farrell

VALENTINE'S DAY IS RIGHT around the corner, so there is no time like the present to start planning that much-needed date night. Any parent will tell you the key to a successful night out is planning what you are going to do and how the kids will be cared for. So before you book that coveted dinner reservation, make sure you have the childcare covered. The good news is that Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year, so many places are offering drop-off childcare for either Friday or Saturday night. Here are a few places to check out to ensure you have a nice evening out and your children are well taken care of:

Peekadoodle: Get a jump-start on Valentine's with a dinner on Friday night. Peekadoodle, located in Ghirardelli Square, is offering a parents' night out on Friday, Feb. 13 from 5-9 p.m. Children ages 2 and older will have their own Valentine's Day fun filled with art projects, pizza, and a movie. They will even get the chance to decorate a sweet treat for dessert. If you are a member of Peekadoodle or the Golden Gate Mother's Group (GGMG), the cost is \$45 per child and \$20 for additional siblings. The non-member cost is \$55 per child. You can sign up by calling 415-440-7335.



Destination Art: If going out on the actual holiday is more your style, try Destination Art. This neighborhood gem located in Russian Hill is a great find. They will be hosting a special extended movie night on Feb. 14 that will start at 6:30 and end at 11 p.m. Children will get to make their own pizzas for din-

AcroSports: If your older children are looking for something more active, try the AcroFun night at AcroSports near Golden Gate Park. They are offering a Valentine's night drop-off for children ages 6-12. The night runs from 6:30-10 p.m. and includes a pizza dinner. The kids will enjoy organized games, and AcroSports' popular zip line and bungee rides. There is defi-

The good news is that Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year.

nitely something for everyone, and the kids are sure to come home exhausted. The cost is \$35 per child with a maximum of 25 kids, so it is best to register in advance at acrosports.org or 415-665-2276.

Presidio YMCA: If you want to avoid the prix-fixe menus and reservation stress of Valentine's weekend, try the parent date night at the Presidio YMCA. Every first and third Friday of the month, they offer drop-off childcare for ages 2-8 from 4:30-8:30 p.m. The kids will enjoy some outdoor time, crafts, and games and then wind down the night with a movie. Due to allergy concerns the kids do have to bring their own dinner. The cost for facility members is \$25 per child and \$50 per child for program members. The good news is if you have three children you only pay the price for two — a virtual steal in the babysitting world.

Whether you decide to go out and enjoy a nice dinner or movie or stay in and just relax, it is important as parents to remember to make time for each other. Not just on Valentine's Day but everyday. I also think it is healthy for our children to see us modeling that relationships are work and need time and attention. They may not understand that now when they are screaming as you walk out the door, but someday they will. In our house, it works best to have a "fun" option for the kids if we are going out, and I hope the places listed above provide just that for your crew.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Liz Farrell is the mother of three young children. She was formerly a television producer in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco. E-mail: liz@marinatimes.com

It is important as parents to remember to make time for each other.

ner and enjoy an evening of crafts, games, and a movie. The movie is age appropriate for the youngest child attending with a separate "big kid" movie showing in a separate room. There are no age restrictions — all children are welcome, so it can be a one-stop drop-off for your whole crew. You also can't beat the price: \$15 for the first child and \$25 for a family. You can register by calling 415-350-4396.

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Those who qualify may be compensated up to \$120 in VISA or other gift cards.

The LILA Study will examine whether a yoga program or a low-impact fitness program will improve urinary incontinence.

You may qualify if you:

- Are a woman, 50 years old or older
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- Are willing to attend a yoga or low-impact fitness program 2 times a week, for 12 weeks



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THE ADVENTURES OF SKYLAR GREY :: Chapter 21

The neighbors who stole Thanksgiving (and Christmas and New Year's Eve)

by susan dyer reynolds

Part 3 of a 3-part series

OVER THE SIX YEARS I LIVED below Mr. and Mrs. Fix-It, a lot happened in my personal life besides their relentless efforts to force me into unnecessary remodeling projects. My father passed away; two people stalked me; I was burglarized; and my beloved blue-eyed pit bull, Jazzy, got cancer and, after a two-year battle with the horrible disease, passed away at age 5. In fact, my experiences and memories across from Buena Vista Park were more bad than good.

I should have listened to the seller's real estate agent when he told me that the current owners no longer spoke to the Fix-Its. I was preoccupied with moving my father up from San Jose at the time, but

looking back, I realize the very first thing they contacted me about was an \$11,000 driveway project. The sellers' real estate agent didn't disclose it to me, which makes me think the Fix-Its probably tried to wrangle them into splitting the cement work without success.

By the time I brought my new pit bull puppy Skylar Grey home in September of 2012, the situation with the Fix-Its had escalated to the point that I dreaded the holidays. On Thanksgiving, when the smell of turkey started wafting through the house, little 10-week-old Skylar (who was living in a car with a kid in Golden Gate Park before I adopted her) sat in front of the oven with her heart-shaped grey nose sniffing madly in the air. She obviously had never smelled anything that sublime, so she curled up in front of my Viking range and slept there until the turkey came out. It was one of the cutest things I'd ever seen, and it helped ease the pain of my first Thanksgiving without Jazzy, but just as we were sitting down to dinner a note popped through the mail slot about more patching on the roof.

Come Christmas, Skylar was pretty used to the good life so she waited for the prime rib to exit the oven while snoozing on an old dog bed of Jazzy's in the living room (facing the kitchen, of course, with one big green bug eye trained on the Viking at all times). I had been dealing with texts from the Fix-Its since 7 a.m. the day before Christmas Eve. I finally texted

Mr. Fix-It from the meat department at Whole Foods and told him that I didn't want him contacting me until after the holidays.

He obliged through the first week of January, but one morning while I was walking Skylar at Stow Lake, I got the "final straw" text: Mr. and Mrs. Fix-It wanted me to pay for half the awning — on their private roof deck. "It's tattered from

the storms and needs replacing," Mr. Fix-It wrote. "How is that common?" I asked. "You added that deck years ago, it's only accessible through your flat, and it's used by you guys exclusively," Mr. Fix-It replied, "It's a common expense. Read your CC&Rs."

After the walk, I called my longtime real estate agent, Kevin Kropp, and told him that I wanted out. The timing couldn't have been better — the real estate market was booming and invento-



Skylar was thrilled to play Rudolph on her first Christmas.

Mr. and Mrs. Fix-It wanted me to pay for the awning on their private roof deck.

ry was slim. We didn't stage the house or even put it on the market, opting instead for a "pocket listing," where a real estate agent puts the word out to select brokers that a property is for sale. We set a firm price, and I took Skylar to visit Kickie in San Jose so Kevin could conduct showings. Just three days later, I got the call from Kevin: "We have a deal!"

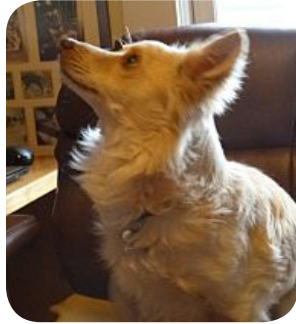
In a bizarre twist, the same real estate agent who represented the sellers when I bought the condo was now representing the new buyers. Like the previous sellers, I disclosed how difficult the Fix-Its were, and like me, the buyers wanted a condo across from the park and bought it anyway. Within weeks, Kevin got a call from the buyers' real estate agent stating they were angry because I "hadn't disclosed the cement work done near the front steps of the house," and, according to the Fix-Its, I moved without paying my half of the bill. Thankfully, Kevin is a shrewd, rock star real estate agent who anticipates problems and puts solutions in place before closing. He produced a text I had written to Mr. Fix-It declining to participate in their latest cement project, as well as a letter that Kevin had the Fix-Its sign stating that I didn't owe them any money. After just a year and a half, my buyers sold the condo. I wish the latest owner lots of luck — he's going to need it.

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com

Announcement: We need foster homes now!

Good dogs land in shelters for many reasons. Grateful Dogs Rescue pulls dogs from the San Francisco and other local municipal shelters and we work hard to match the right dog with the right humans. **Help us save dogs by becoming a GDR foster parent, either short-term or long-term. Apply today!** GDR provides guidance throughout the fostering process and pays for all vet care, grooming, training, etc. for our foster dogs. GDR is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in San Francisco. New volunteers are always welcome! **For more information please call 415-587-1121 or email us at info@gratefuldogsrescue.org.**

Come and meet your perfect love match at the Grateful Dogs Rescue adoption event! We will be at Citipets, located at 183 West Portal Ave. in San Francisco, on February 14th from noon to 2 p.m.

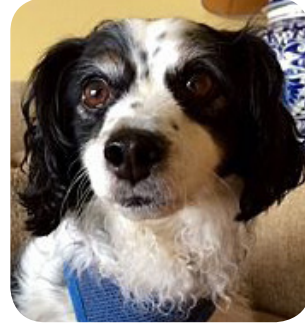


BODIE

Bodie looks like a spaniel-corgi mix, long of body and short of legs, approximately 15 pounds and about 2 years old. Due to no fault of his own, Bodie was surrendered by his owner. During his time

at the shelter, he became "shut down" and shy. Once Bodie arrived in his foster home, his happy, exuberant personality came through. He loves other dogs, seems receptive to children in the street, but has not been cat-tested. He sleeps in his crate at night, and is active during the day. He likes exercise, walks well on a leash and loves to play with his toys.

Celebrate the New Year with fun-loving Bodie.



DAVEY

Davey will charm your heart. This little spaniel mix weighs around 12 pounds and is 7 or 8 years old. He was originally rescued by GDR six years ago and quickly

found a wonderful home. Tragically, last month Davey's mom passed away and Davey is again waiting for a new forever home. He gets along with other dogs, but Davey loves his special person and would be happiest in a home where he is the center of attention. Davey would be a loving addition to your family.



COOPER

Cooper could be your perfect love match. This long-legged Chihuahua mix is an active and friendly youngster just waiting for his forever family. Cooper loves

meeting and playing with other dogs, so a home with a doggie playmate would be great. Currently Cooper is recovering from surgery to repair a broken leg, so for now, he can't be as active as he would like to be. Cooper is approximately 18 months old and weighs 10 pounds. His love is perfect for any family.



PARSNIP

Little Parsnip showed up as a stray with a lump on the top of his head that turned out to be a pellet when it was removed. Not a great start, but he has settled into a stable life. He loves people after

a little shyness. Currently he lives with three cats, a dog, and some chickens. He is very affectionate and loves to run and play, and he walks well on a leash. He is house trained and weighs about 20 pounds (a perfect size for apartments with dog weight restrictions). Parsnip learns fast and with a little attention he will charm his way into your heart.



COSMO

Cosmo has great love for both people and dogs. This puppy's goofy playfulness and affection will bring joy to your life. Como is a smart guy. He is already house trained, crate trained, knows obedience commands, walks well on a leash, goes

hiking, loves car rides, goes to dog parks, and sits with you at outdoor cafés. What more could you ask for? He's meant to be in your life. If you have some dog experience he will be a gem. Cosmo survived a tough beginning, but he's ready for the forever home he so deserves.



SNICKERS

Snickers is as sweet as his name. At about 3 years old and 14 pounds, Snickers could be the perfect little love of your life. Snickers is a gentle and playful dog. He is very dog friendly with both big and small dogs.

He's a little shy with people, but when he's comfortable he's very loving and sweet. He is crate trained and potty trained, and he likes to go for walks. He generally doesn't bark and is very relaxed. Snickers is looking for a best friend to share in his new life.

Check the Grateful Dogs Rescue website for our 2015 upcoming Adoption Events Calendar.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE AND OTHER DOGS:

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