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# Marina**Times**

WWW.MARINATIMES.COM :: CELEBRATING OUR 29TH YEAR :: VOLUME 29 :: ISSUE 11 :: NOVEMBER 2013

@NITE



ARTWORK BY S.F. ARTIST NIDHI CHANANI AT WWW.EVERYDAYLOVEART.COM

## Fall into romance

by maryann lorusso

**R**IGHT AFTER I MOVED HERE from the East Coast, San Francisco's mixed-up seasons really threw me off. One evening in July, as my family and I strolled down Chestnut Street wearing fleece jackets, we heard the crunching of fallen leaves under our winter boots.

"Look, it's autumn, Mommy!" my son said.

"No, honey, it's summer," I said. "Forget what you read in your book about the four seasons."

Then, by October, around the time the trees should have begun shedding their red and gold treasures, I had to explain to the kids why instead of jumping into piles of leaves, they were finally lathering on sunscreen and jumping into the bay near Crissy Field. Just when I wanted to be baking apple pie and wearing wool sweaters, San Francisco was heating up.

I have since come to accept the Bay Area's eccentric weather patterns, including the perpetual hair-frizzing fog and the fact that we can go sleeveless only a couple evenings a year without freezing. One month I especially look forward to is November, when Mother Nature bestows upon us its most sensuous gifts: mild but cooling temperatures, shorter days with beautiful sunsets, and a slight chill in the air that entic-

@NITE, continued on 22

CLIMATE ONE :: City leaders

## Metro revolution

San Francisco is part of a growing urban movement to do what Washington can't

by greg dalton

**T**HE CIRCUS IN WASHINGTON, D.C., HAS MADE it painfully clear that cities and regions can't count on the federal government to play the supportive role it has in the past.

"The federal government has left the building," says Bruce Katz, co-author of *The Metropolitan Revolution: How Cities and Metros Are Fixing Our Broken Politics and Fragile Economy*. The vice president of the Washington-based Brookings Institution, Katz joined San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee and Lennar Corporation executive Kofi Bonner for a discussion of the future of American cities recently at Climate One, the sustainability project of the Commonwealth Club.

Gone are the days when the federal government did big things and showered funds onto states and cities. Today, cities are realizing they need to come up with creative funding models and take their futures into their own hands. Metropolitan areas are "stepping up and doing the hard work to grow jobs, make their economies more prosperous, and respond to climate and environmental challenges," says Katz.

The caricature of Silicon Valley is that it is Google and Facebook and other companies that write code and don't really build anything. In fact, Katz says that about about 17 percent of the economy in Silicon Valley is manufacturing. Much of that production is

CLIMATE ONE, continued on 4

BUSINESS AS USUAL :: S.F. Impact

## The budget cliff

There are reasons to be hopeful, and they all have to do with money

by john zipperer

**I**F YOU AND YOUR BELOVED WANTED TO CELEBRATE your mid-October anniversary with a drink or dinner at the Cliff House, then you got a rude awakening when you pulled up to the restaurant. Perched on the edge of the scenic hillside, the historic destination was forced to close due to the partial shutdown of the federal government.

You got a similar situation if you wanted to take out-of-town visitors to Alcatraz; the famous former prison was also shut down by Washington's fiat. But the disruption to your plans was nothing compared to the disruption it caused to people who work there; the *Examiner* reports that Alcatraz Cruises, which ferries visitors to the island, lost about \$3 million and had to lay off 15 people and furlough others.

It may be a popular notion to claim that what happens in the nation's capital at the other end of the continent doesn't affect us in the Bay Area, but the government shutdown shows how even just a partial shutdown —

BUDGET CLIFF, continued on 3

DISHING



Akiko's sources seafood through a strong network of purveyors PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

## Akiko's Ray Lee takes artisan sushi to spectacular heights

by susan dyer reynolds

**A** \$6,000 SUPER FREEZER; sous-vide monk liver; removing salmon eggs one by one — it

might sound obsessive or even compulsive, but to Ray Lee, owner of Akiko's Restaurant, it's all about passion.

Four years ago when Lee took over Akiko's from his

parents (located at 431 Bush Street and not related to Akiko's on Mason Street), the 18-year-old business did mostly lunch, takeout, and catering. Lee was a

restaurant photographer at the time, but he decided to follow in his father's footsteps. "My father is from Osaka, Japan, and has been a sushi chef for 40 years," Lee says. "In fact, he's helping out today." Behind the sleek bar, his father smiles at customers eagerly awaiting their lunch — but this isn't just any lunch, this is his son's sustainable artisan sushi, and it's spectacular.

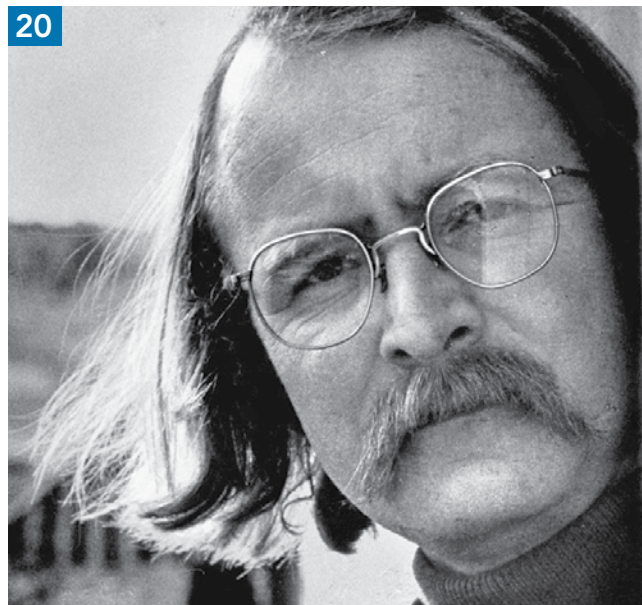
"I've gradually phased out most of the old menu. I'm more into ingredient-driven service," Lee says. He regularly travels to Japan to source his seafood, and recently returned from the world-renowned Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo, the biggest wholesale seafood market in the world. He receives shipments from Japan most days of the week. "I've built relationships with purveyors over the years. Now I'm really tight with the fishermen,

DISHING continued on 15



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## TOP TEN STEAKS IN AMERICA

- Osso Steakhouse** — 1177 California Street, San Francisco, CA
- Bobo's** — 1450 Lombard, San Francisco, CA
- Peter Luger Steakhouse** — 178 Broadway, Brooklyn, NY
- Bern's Steakhouse** — 1208 South Howard Avenue, Tampa, FL
- CUT** — 9500 Wilshire Boulevard, Beverly Hills, CA
- Emeril's Delmonico** — 3355 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV
- Mario Batali's Carnevino** — 3325 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, NV
- Chicago Cut** — 300 North LaSalle, Chicago, IL
- The Precinct** — 311 Delta Avenue, Cincinnati, OH
- Elway's Cherry Creek** — 2500 East First Avenue, Denver, CO



PHOTOS: MISHA BRUK

# Osso Steakhouse

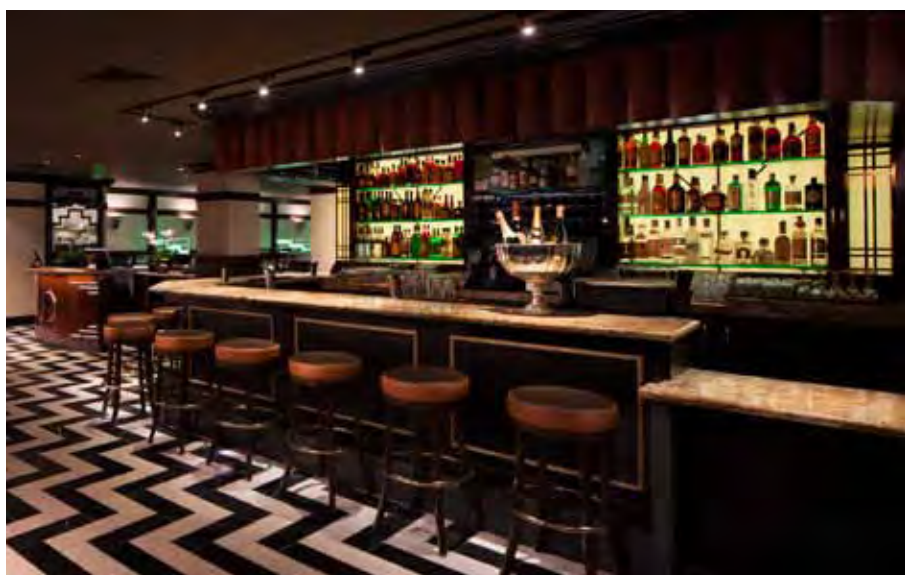
**O**SSO STEAKHOUSE is the latest creation from the people who brought you The Stinking Rose, Calzone's and Bobo's, which was listed as one of the top ten steakhouses in America by USA Today in 2012, alongside such notable restaurants as Peter Luger, Bern's, Emeril Lagasse's Delmonico, Mario Batali's Carnevino and

Wolfgang Puck's CUT. The steakhouse is located in the landmark Gramercy Towers, next door to the Masonic Auditorium on prestigious Nob Hill, near the Fairmont, Mark Hopkins and Huntington Hotel. The stylish Art-Deco-inspired design provides an elegant yet relaxed ambience. The New York Steak is dry-aged 4-6 weeks for a fla-

vor that is nothing short of a revelation. For the truly hardy, try the three-inch thick Bone-in New York New York Empire Steak Building Cut. It's the juiciest, most perfectly marbled beef that has ever been set before you. "It's osso good!!"

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#### Changing face of the Marina

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### Up Front

#### Tosca is dead, long live Tosca

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### Arts & Entertainment

#### Life and art

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on [www.marinatimes.com](http://www.marinatimes.com)

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**BUDGET CLIFF**

CONTINUED from page 1

combined with the threat by hardcore congressional conservatives to risk a default of federal debt — can have a serious impact here.

It was not exactly a textbook example of political science in action. It all started with a struggle to tie a policy disagreement with the basic functioning of our country — at Alcatraz and across the nation.

If you look at the states and regions that are net contributors to the federal budget and net takers, you see a curious but pretty consistent pattern: The areas that are net contributors — that pay more into the federal budget than they receive in services and payments — are overwhelmingly “blue,” to use the popular political vernacular; net taker areas are overwhelmingly “red.” That is held up by many liberal polemicists as proof of conservative ignorance or even hypocrisy, but another explanation is that residents there are even more aware of government’s presence and spending because it affects them more, and therefore the conservatives among them see ever more examples of government largesse at times of huge deficits.

Whatever explanation you accept, the fact remains that conservative hostility to President Barack Obama’s presidency and particularly to his healthcare initiative, the Affordable Care Act or ObamaCare, have remained pretty much the only rallying point unifying a party made up of religious conservatives, libertarians, suburban moderates, and Wall Street business types. The struggle that led to the shutdown and threatened default were based on an attempt to delay and ultimately end ObamaCare; a quixotic quest in any case, considering the results of last November’s elections and the emphatic message from voters in surveys who said they did not want Congress to shut down the government for this reason, but one that appeared more fanatical than principled when Tea Party-allied House Republicans (egged on by Texas Senator Ted Cruz) demanded a one-year delay in return for keeping the government open; the separate but fast-approaching date at which the government would begin to default if the debt ceiling were not raised added extra tension to the standoff. Tea party members and their party’s leadership both expected President Obama and the Democrats to give

them what they wanted in return for not cratering the national and global economies; but Obama has reportedly rued giving in to similar tactics in previous standoffs and was determined not to do so here.

In short, he didn’t give in, Democrats remained united in their opposition to the economic hostage-taking, and the Republicans kept pushing to get some kind of concessions up to the last minute, when they folded like a house of cards. San Francisco’s own Nancy Pelosi was not out front in the political bickering, but she earned credit for keeping House Democrats united in their opposition to the Tea Partiers’ plans.

In the agreement that ended the shutdown — opening up Alcatraz and the Cliff House, among many other shuttered places — and raised the

**There are reasons to hope we won’t end up right back in the same place in a few months.**

debt ceiling, there are no measures that prevent us from ending up right back in the same place in several months, when the agreement ends. There are, however, other factors that give us good reason to hope for a different experience.

First, the agreement reflects the divides between the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, and between different factions of the congressional Republicans themselves. The latter divide was the reason the disagreements got so nasty; the GOP is still undergoing a protracted and painful reaction to its failure in the 2012 election and adjustment to the growth of the power of the Tea Party faction, which is not allied with traditional Republican allies in the business community. The former divide was the reason we got out of it; Senate Republicans, with a few exceptions such as the aforementioned Cruz, tend to be more moderate because they represent entire states of diverse districts, rather than one all-red gerrymandered district, and they were able to reach a compromise agreement with the White House and Democratic leaders, who got almost everything they had demanded.

Second, when it became clear that the hardcore conservatives in the Congress were willing to risk default, and some even said there was no danger in doing so, the Republican Party’s traditional paymasters got

religion and began to let it be known that this was a bad tactic. But this is more than them exerting pressure on party leaders; that’s what they do all the time. This is actually about them realizing they have helped bring about a party that is antithetical to their well-being and existence. Standard and Poor’s analyst John Chambers said that defaulting on federal debt would create a situation worse than the 2008 economic collapse. The Wall Street crowd doesn’t care much about gay marriage, abortion or drugs, but it does care about money. And when it realized that the Tea Party candidates were willing to push the country into a default that would have devastated the global financial system, it had to act.

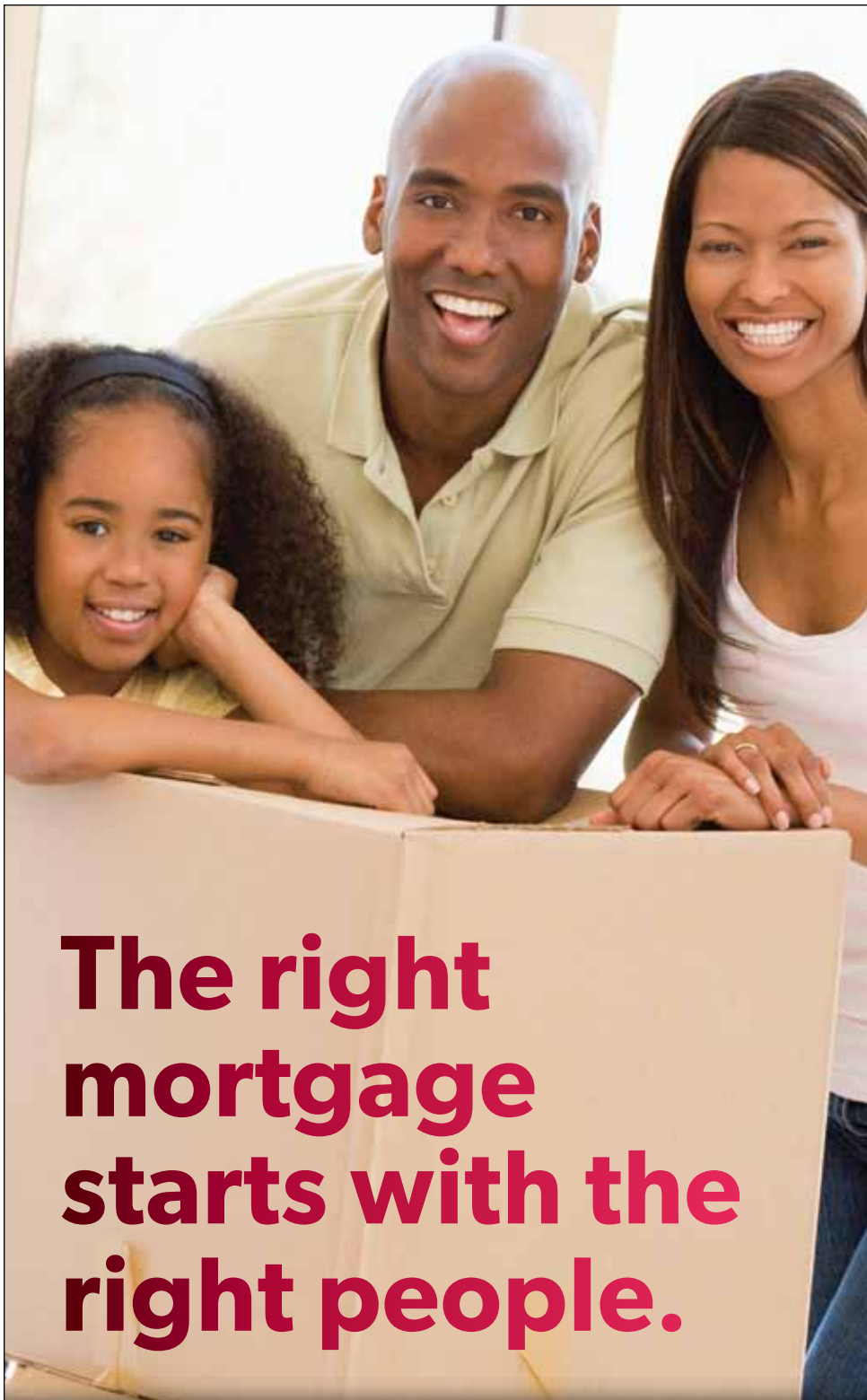
Politico.com cites such GOP bigwigs as mega-bundler Paul Singer, who is looking to counter the impact of Tea Party candidates who flamed out so spectacularly in 2012, such as Todd Akin in a winnable Missouri Senate race. Other

reports have revealed Wall Street donors telling Republicans, media and even Democrats that they’re going to hold back from supporting GOP candidates, or support more mainstream GOP candidates; some might even toss some money at a business-friendly Democratic candidate, and there are plenty of those.

That, in the final calculation, is why we might well see Congress act differently in the new year when the debt ceiling needs to be bumped upward and the government needs to be funded again. Part of the agreement that ended this standoff involved wrangling over which Republicans would serve on a budget conference committee to try to come up with a solution by mid-December to avert any recurrence of this fight. As Bay Area News Group political reporter Josh Richman pointed out at a recent Week to Week political roundtable in San Francisco, some Republicans held up the conference committee appointments in this agreement as their fig leaf to show they got something out of this whole debacle; but Democrats had been trying to get the GOP to appoint those conference members for months, so even that was a Democratic score.

Wall Street is all about winning, and the Republican Party in Congress isn’t.

*E-mail: john@marinatimes.com*



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NEWS BRIEFS : Pub Crawls, Crissy Field, Presidio Parkway Update, Soft Story Seismic Retrofit

**PUB CRAWLS ROIL UNION STREET**

The growing frequency of pub crawls has left Union Street merchants and other locals complaining about the effects of these formerly rare occurrences. What might once have been a group of friends working their way down the street to celebrate a birthday or a major holiday has become a professional effort with an expanding number of companies organizing and promoting pub crawls. That has led to complaints along Union about overcrowding, drunken behavior, vandalism, increased trash, repelling people who might want to be on Union to shop, and a need for more police officers, says Catherine Stefani, legislative aide to Supervisor Mark Farrell.

"It's not just St. Patrick's Day anymore," Stefani told the *Marina Times*. "It's the NCAA finals, Halloween and other holidays." Her office has been working with the city attorney's office to research various solutions, such as Baltimore and Rhode Island's consideration of a ban on pub crawls, or other places that have set up a permitting system much like parades, where the organizers need to hire private security and reimburse the city for extra costs.

The supervisor has been reaching out to merchants, residents, bar owners, and the pub crawl companies to get their concerns and try to find solutions that will work for the most people. You can contact Stefani with your thoughts

and concerns about the pub crawls at [catherine.stefani@sfgov.org](mailto:catherine.stefani@sfgov.org).

**CRISSY FIELD SHOW AND TELL**

More construction in and around the Presidio is planned when Crissy Field, the popular beach with the breathtaking view near the Golden Gate Bridge, is remodeled. Leaders of the projects created by George Lucas, the National Park Conservancy and Project X (exchange) answered your questions about the new project at a meeting Oct. 24 at the Herbst Building (385 Moraga at Montgomery, in the Presidio). Stay tuned for details coming in the December issue of the *Marina Times*.

The much talked-about Lucas plan will include a museum consisting of his fine art and animation collection, and will bring strong affiliations with additional worldwide arts and education institutions.

The Presidio Exchange, or PX, offers a multiuse facility interconnecting indoor and outdoor spaces including exhibits, workshops, concerts, and more. The PX will serve as a program hub and gathering place for the public.

The Bridge/Sustainability Institute will bring together poets, scientists, and CEOs to explore critical social, economic and environmental issues. A Sustainability Marketplace and cafe will offer sustainably sourced food, and rotating exhibits will display today's environmental challenges.

All three plans involve the creation of a new building replacing current retailer Sports Basement, which was originally a military commissary. The views of the bay and Golden Gate Bridge are central to themes of all plans.

The winning plan will be decided by the Presidio Trust's Board of Directors.

**PRESIDIO PARKWAY UPDATE**

If your daily or occasional travel path takes you through the Presidio, you have probably been keeping track of the major construction and disruption there due to the Presidio Parkway development. The parkway organization reports that crews working on the Main Post tunnels have been excavating soil, preparing the foundation of the tunnel, and installing steel rebar.

In the meantime, you probably will notice some nighttime work taking place there, including the presence of trucks delivering and removing materials. The organization reports that it is dedicated to reusing soil on site for "efficiency and sustainability goals," and it uses water to suppress dust and soil stabilizers to keep soil erosion at a minimum.

**SOFT STORY FINANCE OPTIONS**

Multifamily building owners gathered at Fort Mason on Oct. 23 to learn more about their financing options to allow them to comply with new city rules for certain buildings with "soft stories." The event was co-host-

ed by the San Francisco Apartment Association and the Earthquake Safety Implementation Program as a workshop to learn about public and private financing options.

As reported this summer in the *Marina Times* (see "It's here: Mandatory seismic retrofit for 'soft story' buildings," June 2013), San Francisco has enacted a law called the Mandatory Seismic Retrofit Program for Soft Story Wood Frame Buildings. As the name suggests, it deals with strengthening these multifamily buildings so they better withstand earthquakes. It covers buildings built before 1978 that have living space for five or more units and at least two floors above a weak or "soft" story, usually used for parking or commercial space. An estimated 55,000 San Francisco residents are in such buildings, as are about 7,000 businesses.

Building owners learned about a variety of private financing options. And the city will have its own public financing option through its Green Finance Program. Details will be available in coming months.

Owners of such properties who are looking for guidance on what they need to do, how they can finance it, and how they go about getting the work done, can contact the Department of Building Inspection at 415-558-6699 or [softstory@sfgov.org](mailto:softstory@sfgov.org) or visit the San Francisco Apartment Association at [www.sfaa.org](http://www.sfaa.org).



Bruce Katz, left, and Mayor Ed Lee discuss how San Francisco can take the lead in economic policymaking PHOTO: RIKKI WARD

**CLIMATE ONE**

CONTINUED from page 1

actually in-state, not shipped off to China.

One national problem is that America has focused too heavily on consumption. Katz argues that a "misguided growth model" caused the Great Recession, and he contends there is a big structural

shift underway in how we think about who runs America. It is the cities and regions that are really driving exports and innovation. And that's a good thing. There has been much talk in recent years about the necessity of manufacturing to a robust economy that cannot thrive on services alone.

As for San Francisco's own manufacturing, Mayor Lee said

the "SF Made" nonprofit has started a successful movement to create locally made products. "People from China come over and they ask me, 'What is made in San Francisco?' because they will buy it," Lee said. "It's good quality."

**BUILDING THE NEWER ECONOMY**

With so many businesses focusing on labor costs, America's manufacturing industry makes up only 11 percent of the economy, Katz said. In comparison, 70 percent of Germany's economy is production. It's not just about wages, it's about quality and reliability of your energy supply, he said.

"Technology is going to play a big role in advanced manufacturing, and I think it's going to happen right here in San Francisco," Lee said.

In addition to driving economies and exports, Katz contended that cities are also on the cutting edge of reducing carbon

pollution and preparing for the climate impacts already baked into the Earth's operating system. Climate change is an existential threat, and delinking carbon pollution from the economy is an imperative, Katz said. "We need to get beyond labels that mostly come out of Washington, D.C., ... about what the clean economy is."

Lennar's Bonner pointed out that the Hunters Point developments are LEED certified and are taking measures to prepare for sea level rise and uncertainties that scientists say we can expect in coming decades. Buildings are being raised, for example, more than three feet above base flood elevation and are being set back from the water's edge to facilitate flood control. The neighbor-

hood also plans to have an automated waste recovery system that conjures images of the Jetsons. Trash will be collected via tubes and sent to a central processing center.

If the project gets built and comes in on budget, that would be an example of a resilient community poised for the uncertain times coming our way.

"America is the most resilient society and the most innovative economy," says Katz. "This time around it will come from the communities."

**Hunters Point is prepared for sea level rise and other climate changes.**

Greg Dalton is the host of *Climate One*, a project of The Commonwealth Club of California. Podcasts of all *Climate One* programs, including the "Metro Revolution" show featuring the speakers quoted in this article, are available free in the iTunes Store.

**The In-Box:**  
Letters to the *Times*

**BUBBLE III**

The Commonwealth Club's opinions as reported in the article "Mid-Year Economic Forecast" (Business & Finance, September 2013, page 13) presented a rosy outlook on the city's current and

future economic affairs, and they cited the tech industry as the main driver of the phenomenal growth.

However, you can't tell me that San Francisco miraculously bounced back from the Great Recession by private invest-

ment alone and the Club's panelists didn't take into account the main factor: The huge amount of government money involved in the Bay Area economy. The Federal Reserve is pumping \$85 billion per month into the national economy, and California is getting a huge slice of the pie. However, the money interests are contributing big bucks to our congressional rep — Nancy

Pelosi — and also the legislature in Sacramento, and they're returning the favor by steering billions to the city and the Bay Area.

The result of this huge bump in government money has been hyper-inflated rents and home prices, and even more of the noxious environmental problems associated with explosive population growth.

This is a prime example

of what happens when the government starts monkeying in socio-economic affairs, and the result has been the creation of a third bubble, and another boom/bust cycle is on the horizon.

Galen L. Dutch  
San Francisco

**FROM THE RIGHT**

Why must you ruin your article by starting it

off with liberal bulls--t? ("America's Cup half full?" October 2013, page 1.)

Romney did not travel to London to tell our closest allies that they were going to screw up the Olympics or anything else, for that matter. Can't you leftists ever tell the truth? Or do you just have to lie like that a-hole Obama?

John P. Hurabiell, Sr.  
San Francisco





# FALL IS

# FUN

## ...AT AMBIANCE

November is packed with great events! Be sure to join us:

**Fri Nov. 8th–Mon Nov. 11th**  
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**Fri Nov. 29th–Sun Dec. 1st**  
Thanksgiving Weekend Sale  
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**North Beach Restaurant** has served the finest Cucina Toscana in the Bay Area. Famous for its home-cured prosciutto and extra virgin olive oil from owner Lorenzo Petroni's Sonoma olive groves, the restaurant is a dining destination with great food, award-winning wine list, relaxed atmosphere and superb service.

**Lunch in North Beach** Although open seven days a week for lunch and dinner, our lunch offers a unique opportunity to try some new dishes in a relaxed setting and at lower prices. Many offerings are unique to our restaurant and not available elsewhere.

Some suggestions: Calamari Vinegarette, Pappa al Pomodoro, Frittata Lucchese, Farro, Cold Fresh Pickled Halibut with Onions, Burrata Pugliese, Osso Buco. And all of the fish we offer is both fresh and wild caught.



**Petroni Vineyards** Since 1992 North Beach Restaurant owner, Lorenzo Petroni, has produced award-winning wines in Sonoma: estate grown and organically farmed Brunello di Sonoma, Cabernet, Syrah, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.

Now at North Beach Restaurant you will sample Brunello di Sonoma – America's first Brunello – when you dine at North Beach Restaurant. And you can save 20% on all Petroni award-winning wines when you join the Petroni Vineyards VIP Wine Club. For a Wine Club application, please call (707) 935-8311 or e-mail wine@petronivineyards.com



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**VALET PARKING**

## THE BACK STORY :: Historic places



PHOTO: YNOTJETLAG / PANORAMIO.COM

# Let's toast the return of Tosca Cafe

by ernest beyl

**W**HEN SEAN PENN INTERCEDES to save a North Beach landmark, I sit up and take notice. One assumes Penn has more pressing things to do — like going to bat for UNESCO's Haitian Relief organization, or acting in award-winning movies, which he does with regularity. But we're happy to note that saving Tosca, Jeannette Etheredge's classy North Beach saloon on Columbus Avenue, was a high priority with him.

Tosca was about to go under and Jeannette Etheredge, who ran it for more than 30 years, was distraught. There were those who spoke darkly of Tosca becoming a strip club. That fizzed for a bit, then fizzled. Several months ago Penn, a Tosca regular, got in touch with some buddies in New York, Ken Friedman and his chef-partner April Bloomfield, who operate the Michelin-starred Spotted Pig, a Manhattan hotspot. And faster than you can say shazam, it was a done deal. Not only did Tosca continue as a beloved North Beach saloon, but also when it reopened last month there was a dividend: a new and improved Tosca that also served food. Under Etheredge, Tosca — its full name is Tosca Cafe — only served booze, ambience and attitude. Under Friedman and Bloomfield the booze, ambience, and attitude continues, but the pair has added Italian cuisine, what they describe as "rustic Italian fare." No reservations. Service until 1 a.m. How's that for a success story?

### A CAPPUCCINO OF CONVENIENCE

All of this news makes me wish Sean Penn lived in North Beach. We need him. His head is screwed on straight. Imagine him saving Tosca. I wonder if he could have saved the Pagoda Palace Theater. But enough celebrity adulation. What's the rest of the Tosca back story?

Tosca dates to November 1919, when three Italians came to San Francisco after World War I and decided to open a bar in North Beach. They named it Tosca after the daughter of one of the founders. They opened the bar, and less than two months later they received a monumental jolt — Prohibition went into effect. What to do?

One partner took off to Healdsburg to operate a brandy still. The others imported two espresso machines to steam the milk to add to the brandy. Soon, they were off and running with a house cappuccino — chocolate, steamed milk, and brandy. It was a cappuccino of convenience. The hell with Prohibition.

### A NORTH BEACH SANCTUARY

And so Tosca has survived to this day. It made it through the Volstead Act, the Depression, World War II, the Beats, the Hippies, the Willie Brown era, and on it goes — and it still serves the house cappuccino.

Jeannette Etheredge has a fascinating family history that reads like a John Le Carre novel. Her mother, Armen Balianz, was born in Manchuria. Her Armenian parents fled to Russia and later to China to escape the Armenian Genocide of 1915–17, the Ottoman government's extermination of its Armenian minority.

Her mother married import-export businessman Aram Balianz in Tsingtao, China, where Jeannette and her brother were born. During World War II, the family wound up in a Japanese prison camp where they spent four years. Later they spent two years in a refugee camp in the

**Less than two months after opening the bar, the owners received a monumental jolt — Prohibition went into effect.**

Philippines. A woman of great conviction and courage, Armen Balianz then undertook the long journey to San Francisco and the happy sanctuary of North Beach.

### THE CONSTANT WHIFF OF CELEBRITY

The concept of sanctuary is apt when reflecting on the history of this North Beach watering hole. The near-legendary Back Room at Tosca has been a sanctuary for Etheredge's special "friends" and harder to gain access to than the Vanity Fair Academy Awards bash. Sean Penn, of course, had an all-access pass. So did Francis Ford Coppola, Philip Kaufman, Sam Shepard, Johnny Depp, Ed Harris, Hunter S. Thompson, Norman Mailer, Bono, Nick Nolte, and Nicholas Cage — just to skim some celebrity cream off the top. Nick Nolte played pool there wearing only hospital greens and granny glasses. Philip Kaufman huddled in a corner working on scripts. Bono was so taken with the North Beach landmark that he opened a bar in Dublin called Tosca.

What actually was in the famed Tosca Back Room? A pool table and the constant whiff of celebrity. Under the new ownership, we are told that the Back Room has become a storage area and perhaps a banquet room. But don't believe it. It will continue to be a private haven for North Beach slumming celebrities. If I'm wrong,

TOSCA, continued on 7



## TOSCA

CONTINUED from page 6

I'll stand a round at the bar at Capp's Corner. If I'm right, you owe me one.

### A HIGH AUTHORITY

And that brings up a curious right-coast, left-coast difference. In New York, restaurants and saloons go to great lengths to display their celebrities. At joints like the much-missed Elaine's on the Upper East Side, Woody Allen and other seemingly shy folks were seated prominently in the front of the house so the rest of us could ogle them. And when I was a lad hanging out in that quintessential New York saloon Toots Shor's, one could see Ernest Hemingway at the great oval bar near the entrance. Or perhaps Jack Dempsey. Jackie Gleason was on hand to guzzle martinis by the half gallon and to display his wobbly Jackie Gleason shuffle.

But here in San Francisco we pretend to hide our A-list celebs like cloistered Trappist monks who murmur only to themselves and to a higher authority. In the case of Tosca, the higher authority was (and I assume still will be) Jeannette Etheridge.

### A LOVER OF BALLET

But how did Jeannette Etheridge acquire so much juice with our culture icons — pop and otherwise? She can thank her mother for that. Shortly after Armen Balianz arrived in San Francisco, she opened her own restaurant at Sansome and Jackson using an emerald ring for bank loan collateral. Later the restaurant moved to Pacific and Battery. She called it Bali's and soon it was the in spot for a diverse group of dancers, writers, and filmmakers, and of course their hangers-on and wannabes. Balianz, a beautiful and scintillating woman, was a ballet enthusiast and she loved to cosset the stars. She befriended Rudolf Nureyev when he defected from the Soviet Union in 1961. And she became a close friend and confidant of Mikhail Baryshnikov. Everyone who was anyone — as they once gushed in the society columns — turned up at "Madam Bali's." She was beloved. She held court with caviar, champagne, and Russian vodka. Her rack of lamb, marinated in pomegranate juice made *The Godfather* genius Coppola — an Armen Balianz acolyte — almost weep with joy.

Daughter Jeannette grew up in this regal milieu. She got to know the cast of characters in her mother's life. Then in 1980 Armen convinced Jeannette to buy Tosca. She said it was the first bar she entered when she came to the United States, and she grew to love it. For several years, Armen and her Bali's restaurant shared the North Beach spotlight with Jeannette's Tosca saloon. Bali's closed in 1985. Armen Balianz died in 2007.

Soon Tosca with its coveted Back Room became hallowed ground. And it looks as though it will continue to be just that. Thank you Sean Penn. Now, how would you like to open a theater in North Beach?

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POLICE BLOTTER :: From San Francisco's Northern Station

# Crime on the beat

The crimes below are a small snapshot of what the officers of Northern Station are doing. For a more comprehensive list, visit [www.sf-police.org](http://www.sf-police.org); under Compstat, there is a link to CrimeMAPS.

**THE NON-GETAWAY CAR**  
Wednesday, Sept. 4, 11:15 p.m.  
Grove at Polk streets

Uniformed patrol officers watched a vehicle parked facing the wrong direction on Grove Street. A male got into the car and quickly made a u-turn; officers stopped the vehicle before it could flee, and a computer check showed that it had been stolen. The occupants of the car were arrested.

Officers discovered a "shaved" key in the ignition and suspected meth in the car. The subjects were booked at Northern Station.

**TEMPERED TIPLER**  
Friday, Sept. 6, 12:15 a.m.  
1100 block of McAllister Street

Responding to reports of a possible shot being fired, officers were unable to discover any evidence. However, they did encounter an intoxicated male, who called them names and challenged them to a fight. The officers tried to detain the male for a temporary four-hour sober-up detention, but he resisted and continued attempting to fight. He was handcuffed and driven to Northern Station.

The subject continued to resist officers and act belligerent during his

booking and placement in a sobering cell. Yelling. Profanities. Kicking out the glass in the cell.

The officers documented his behavior and sent him to county jail. Meanwhile, the Northern Station sobering cell was out of commission for the night; the subject was also charged with felony vandalism.

**JUST CHECKING IN**  
Friday, Sept. 6, 2:15 a.m.  
Unit block of Culebra Terrace

Officers met with a victim who told them he had been asleep in his room when he saw a subject's hands attempting to raise his bedroom window. The male subject managed to get 90 percent inside when the victim said he was calling the police.

The subject fled, but not before the victim was able to get a good look at him; the victim gave that description and the direction of travel to the officers, who were able to track down and detain the subject. The victim was sure that the police had detained the correct person, who was booked at Northern Station.

**MOBILE HOME**  
Monday, Sept. 9, 2:33 p.m.  
Ash at Gough streets

Officers responding to a homeless complaint found two male subjects sleeping inside a Mercedes with no front plate. The subjects told the officers they were just sleeping in the car; they didn't know who owned it.

Running a computer check on the vehicle, the officers found that it had been stolen. Despite attempting to conceal their identities, the subjects were identified by the police officers. Both of the subjects had multiple warrants for their arrests; they were booked at Northern Station.

The Mercedes was towed; officers were unable to reach the vehicle's owner.

**ARMED AND RANGOROUS**  
Thursday, Sept. 12, 12:53 a.m.  
1100 block of Polk Street

A bartender asked a patron who had fallen asleep at the bar to leave the establishment. The subject refused and an argument ensued that resulted in the subject shoving the bartender hard. The subject pulled out a pocket knife and said, "I'm going to kill you."

The altercation was interrupted by the arrival of an officer from Northern Station. The subject told officers that he had "two guns" on him, but a search of him revealed no firearms. He was booked at Northern Station.

**"I KNEW THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN"**  
Friday, Sept. 13, 4 p.m.  
Union at Laguna streets

Officers responded to a complaint about someone using counterfeit money to purchase clothing. A store employee pointed out the female subject to the officers and said, "She just used fake money in my store — look." The officer examined the bill and agreed that it was fake.

When the officers detained the subject, she said, "I knew this was going to happen." Officers discovered she had used numerous fake bills in the area, and a computer

check revealed an outstanding warrant from San Bernadino County. The subject was booked at county jail and the incident was reported to the Secret Service.

**TIME DELAY**  
Friday, Sept. 13, 9:20 p.m.  
Eddy at Laguna streets

Northern Station's Special Investigation Team investigators led officers to the perpetrator of a restaurant burglary several days earlier. After pulling and reviewing the video evidence, they were able to recognize the subject and put out a warrant for his arrest. Plain clothes officers spotted the subject and quickly had him in custody. He was booked at Northern Station.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT CRIME STATS**

Changes year-to-date

- Violent Crimes**  
+200% Homicide\*  
-42% Rape  
+8% Robbery  
+8% Aggravated Assault  
+7% Overall

- Property Crimes**  
-9% Burglary  
+3% Auto Theft  
+77% Theft from Vehicles  
+29% Other Theft  
+35% Overall

\* The outsized increase in homicides represents three homicides year-to-date versus one homicide last year.

FROM THE CAPTAIN OF NORTHERN STATION :: Crime control

# Don't be a victim of i-theft

by capt. greg mceachern

**H**AVE ANY OF YOU BEEN a victim of a theft of an electronic device on the street? If not, do you know anyone that has been a victim? The chances are that each of you has either been a victim or know someone who has. Electronic devices continue to be the #1 choice of thieves on our streets, and the thefts of these devices account for more than 80 percent of all robberies in the city.

The numbers are staggering and, unfortunately, the recovery rate of these electronic devices is not very high. Fortunately, we do recover some of the devices and invariably we recover them because of technological advances that each of you control. I'm talking about a technological advance such as the Find my iPhone feature. Many of you know what Find my iPhone is, but for those who don't, Find my iPhone allows your phone to be GPS-tracked to wherever it is currently located by simply turning on the notification in the iCloud setting. Though it might seem difficult to set up, it's not. For those interested in finding out how to easily set up the Find my iPhone feature for whatever phone you currently have, simply type "find

my phone set up" and your phone brand into a search engine and you will be you on your way to setting up your phone and hopefully having it quickly found should you lose it or become a victim of theft.

You might be asking, "Can the police actually locate my phone and get it returned to me?" The answer is absolutely.

Here is an example of a recent incident: Two people were walking in the lower Haight Street area when they were robbed of their iPhones. The victims called our dispatch to report the theft and the dispatcher asked the victims if they had Find my iPhone turned on. The victims said yes. Dispatch immediately notified responding officers and one officer called the victim back even prior to our arrival to obtain the victims' log-in information so we could immediately begin to track the phone. Within a minute, our officers had set up the iPhone tracking, which indicated the phone was just a few blocks from the robbery. Our officers descended into the area, tracked the phone's exact location, located the suspect, and arrested him within minutes of the robbery — recovering both iPhones that were taken. Though we are not always able to recover every phone taken in a robbery, utilizing Find

my iPhone in this robbery was instrumental in not only recovering the stolen phones but in taking a dangerous thief off of our streets.

In order to assist us in any future robberies, I ask that you consider using this tracking tool as it is often instrumental in helping police to recover your phone.

**SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL CAMPAIGN**

In my last article, I wrote about the return to school for our students and the need for motorists to be aware of students walking to and from school ("Preparing for fall, for kids and adults," September 2013, *Marina Times*). I also wrote that uniformed officers would be visible in and around schools to see that the streets were safe for students, parents, and residents. I was pleased to see that we had no incidents involving students and motorists, and I was equally pleased to see that we issued very few citations for violations by motorists around the schools in our district. I firmly believe that education and awareness was the key to our successes, and I'd like to especially thank all of you who live in our district for heeding our students, being aware of the concerns I raised, and for contributing to the successful campaign to keep our students safe.

**OFFICERS ON THE BEAT**

Staffing levels at Northern Station have remained relatively consistent over the past year, even with fluctuations up and down based on retirements and hiring. We are past the large wave of retirements that our department endured over the past few years, where we lost more than three hundred officers. Thankfully we are now offsetting those losses with hires, and we've seen four recruit classes come through training at Northern Station in the past year.

Currently our sworn numbers are at 102 officers at Northern, and I'm hopeful that the number will steadily grow for the next year as we continue Academy classes. I'm hopeful that within the next couple of years Northern station staffing will be back near 120 officers, which will allow for increased patrol officers, increased traffic officers, increased undercover officers, and of most importance, the reinstatement of many of our foot beats that were suspended due to lower staffing levels. I will keep you updated on our personnel at Northern as we move on throughout this year and next year.

Speaking of foot beats, we lost one on the Polk Street cor-

ridor recently when longtime Polk Street foot beat officer Philip Papale was transferred to the Traffic Unit (motorcycle officers) after having waited a long time for the assignment. While I was happy for Officer Papale to finally get his chosen assignment, I was disappointed that he would be leaving his long-time beat, where he knows so many of you and had done such a magnificent job.

But, with all dark clouds, there is a silver lining. Officer Papale recently finished his motorcycle training and he was reassigned back to Northern Station as our newest traffic officer. I'm pleased to have Officer Papale back where he is so familiar and in a capacity where he can continue to serve the public's needs. You may see Officer Papale riding his motorcycle on the Polk Street corridor and other locations, and when you do, say hello to Phil and welcome him back to the Northern community. His addition to Northern Station fulfills a need for a traffic officer on the night watch, and he will complement the traffic officer we currently have working on our day watch.



# Free Wi-Fi coming to San Francisco's parks, plazas, and open spaces

by supervisor mark farrell

**B**ACK IN MAY, AFTER MORE than two years of negotiations, I announced the establishment of a generous gift from Google to provide free Wi-Fi to 31 parks, plazas, and open spaces across San Francisco. This project will further cement San Francisco's role as a national leader in creating technologically driven solutions to improve the quality of life for our city's residents and visitors.

Though San Francisco is becoming the central location of the technological revolution that we are experiencing, we as a city have been a slow adopter of the innovation and opportunities that are happening in our backyard. For example, our Recreation and Parks Department still uses the outdated mode of dial-up to connect to the Internet at many of our recreation centers across the City. Outdated technologies slow our city's ability to provide efficient and timely services that our residents deserve and depend upon.

Free Wi-Fi service across many San Francisco parks and plazas will have a number of positive benefits and implications: it will further close the digital divide in communities where Internet access is limited, it will increase government efficiency by providing our city's Recreation and Park Department staff with more tools to more effectively manage their recreation centers and community programs, and finally, it will enable organizations that serve our youth, seniors, and populations with no Internet access the free opportunity to further enhance their programs' effectiveness and outcomes.

Like many cities across the nation, San Francisco has a vested interest in working to close or lessen the digital divide that exists among our residents and in our various communities city-wide. In working to close that divide, we will make an investment in San Francisco's human capital and San Francisco will reap the positive benefits that

come by making Internet use more readily accessible. More accessibility means more opportunities for creativity, innovation, and quality of life improvements — all are areas our City should actively encourage and support.

Despite previously failed attempts to bring free Wi-Fi to San Francisco, I still believed a public-private partnership could

have a tremendous impact, as opposed to trying to conquer bringing free Wi-Fi citywide. We knew and still believe that when we get this project done right and well, we can hopefully use it as a model moving forward with the ultimate goal of bringing free Wi-Fi across the City.

Throughout my discussions with Google, it was a personal priority that the project would be able to touch every corner of our city while keeping in mind parks, plazas, and open spaces that receive the most use. Ultimately, due to the size of the gift that we received, we were

able to fund 31 sites across San Francisco that will soon be receiving free Wi-Fi. For a full list of the locations, please visit <http://sfbos.org/index.aspx?page=15191>.

In terms of public process, there are steps that need to be completed to bring this project into reality. The acceptance of the gift from Google has to go through the legislative process, which provides the opportunity for public input at our

Recreation and Parks Commission and at our Board of Supervisors. I plan to introduce the resolution that will allow the City to accept the generous gift before the end of the year. Barring no major setbacks, we expect to start installation at the 31 sites by spring of 2014.

San Francisco should be a leader in bringing technological solutions to civic issues that we face. Free Wifi in our parks, plazas, and open spaces is a first-step to giving our residents greater access to technology and the Internet. I imagine a city that allows an individual to work from a park in Chinatown, download a useful app while visiting our Civic Center, and make it easier for Recreation and Parks Staff to sign up children and families for recreational programs at recreation centers across San Francisco. Please join me in supporting free WiFi in our parks, plazas, and open spaces, so that we can turn this vision into a reality for our city residents.

*Mark Farrell is the District 2 supervisor and can be reached at 415-554-7752 or [mark.farrell@sfgov.org](mailto:mark.farrell@sfgov.org)*

## More accessibility means more opportunities for creativity, innovation, and quality of life.

achieve the goal that we as a city have been seeking for so long. Thanks in part to a family friendship that stemmed from high school, I worked over the past two years with the government relations team from Google to reopen discussions about free Wi-Fi in San Francisco. In our discussions, we came to the conclusion that it was best to tackle an area where free Wi-Fi would

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**New ideas and people abound**

by john zipperer

**NEW GREENS TOP CHEF**

Annie Somerville, executive chef at trendy gourmet vegetarian restaurant Greens in Fort Mason Center, announced the hiring of Jessica Mackay as the restaurant's new head chef. Mackay succeeds John Paul Ueber in the position, following Ueber's death.

**OVERHEARD AT RISTROBAR**

Customer reading menu: "I just had my cholesterol levels checked today, so its salad, salad, salad for me. Oh! — I'll have the rabbit."

**AMERICA'S CUP WANNABES TAKE NOTE**

Adrian Stanway has found the Northside to be the perfect place for his company. The sailing Brit moved to San Francisco in 2008. He was frustrated at not being able to find software to help keep his boat maintained, so he developed his own.

His Cow Hollow-based company, Intelligent Maintenance LLC, now has 17 apps out and more on the way. He reports that his first app, A ShipShape Sailboat,

is now the best-selling boat maintenance software on the market. Other popular apps that appeal to the Marina boating fraternity include What's on my Boat? and Man Over Board, (MOB), which has already sold more than 2,000 copies.

"Sadly, an MOB situation is a fairly common occurrence," said Adrian. "Every day, somewhere in the world, an MOB is either rescued or lost at sea. What really delights me is the feedback we get about people using the app to practice MOB procedures. It clearly makes practicing fun — especially for youngsters."

Intelligent Maintenance is located at 3053 Fillmore Street, Suite 240, [support@intelligentmaintenance.com](mailto:support@intelligentmaintenance.com).

**VOM FASS IS HERE**

VOM FASS Oils, Vinegars, Spices celebrated its October opening in style: Venticello's chef unveiled recipes using VOM FASS products, and Olympic figure skater Brian Boitano welcomed customers to the new Ghirardelli Square (900 North Point Street, Suite E. 205) store.

**WALKING FOR GOOD**

More than 1,500 people were expected to participate in the Oct. 27 Walk to Cure Diabetes on the Great Meadow at Fort Mason. The JDRF Greater Bay Area chapter is hoping to raise more than \$1.5 million for research to cure type 1 diabetes and its complications. You could do worse things on your Sunday.

**TURFING MARINA GREEN**

Following some America's Cup damage to part of Big Marina Green, S.F. Rec and Park is reseeded the western two-thirds of the land and reseeded the eastern third. Little Marina Green will be re-sodded. Big Marina Green closed in mid-October, and Little Marina Green will be closed starting Nov. 11; both reopen in mid-January.

**OVERHEARD ON THE STREET**

Man talking into cell phone: "So it looks like we can rent those studios out for only \$2,000 each ..."

Got any tips for Northsider? E-mail: [john@marinatimes.com](mailto:john@marinatimes.com)



# Ferlinghetti Plaza, signs of the times and highly important trivia

by ernest beyl

IS THIS A SIGN OF THE TIMES, OR IS IT just the season of the glitch?

I received an e-mail from the law offices of that mover and sometimes-persistent shaker, Angela Alioto. It read, "October 3 press conference cancelled." It went on to state, "There is a new plan for unveiling the Piazza — more to come."

Readers will recall that this message from Angela's office refers to a press conference presumably to announce the go-ahead for the Lawrence Ferlinghetti concept to turn that short block of Vallejo Street between Grant and Columbus into an Italianate pedestrian walkway and park, complete with benches, trees and creature comforts; in short, an urban oasis with the Church of St. Francis of Assisi's Porziuncola at one end and Caffè Trieste at the other. Ferlinghetti proposed this idea several years ago — it's his baby — and he has worked tirelessly to raise approximately \$2 million to get it built. Necessary city approvals have been gained, and there has been considerable fund raising.

Angela got into the act a few years ago, and has stated repeatedly she would come up with the necessary funds for what she — and even a benevolent Ferlinghetti — are both referring to as the Piazza St. Francis.

## NO NEWS IS BAD NEWS

I'm sure Lawrence has just as good a pipeline to St. Francis as Angela does. And I'm wondering if bringing his vision to fruition is going to take divine intervention.

Angela's press conference — presumably to show us the money and get things going — was first scheduled for Aug. 3. Then it slipped to Sept. 3 and then to Oct. 3. And now the date has slipped again with the message, "More to come." So we are not yet ready to canonize Angela.

Now the old adage "no news is good news" needs modification — "no news is bad news" — that is, bad news for poet Ferlinghetti's plan. Once more, we ask: Can we please get this thing completed in Lawrence's lifetime?

As an afterthought, my preference would be to call this project Lawrence Ferlinghetti Plaza. I'm sure St. Francis would understand.

## A HELLUVA TOOTHACHE

Does it occur to anyone else that if back in 2004 the big bore Telegraph Hill Dwellers hadn't stopped the Pagoda Palace Theater from becoming (logically) a theater or (second plan) condos with underground parking and a Mexican restaurant, North Beach would not be facing the painful dental extraction on Powell Street of the really Big Bore now tunneling its way toward our neighborhood? That's a helluva toothache.

## BERNARDO QUINTANA MOVIE

My North Beach buddy Bernardo Quintana plans a sequel to *Bum Rap: A Noir Fantasy*, the short film in which he stars. With the ultimate in typecasting, Bernie plans to have this humble columnist play journalist Walter Winchell. "Good evening Mr. and Mrs. North America, from coast to coast and border to border, and all the ships at sea. Let's go to press."

## GOOD WISHES FOR LINDA

When news got out that Linda Ronstadt has Parkinson's disease, North Beach flaneur

Greg Hearn went over to Saints Peter and Paul and talked to a priest there about saying a mass for her good health and long life — a fine idea. Greg wanted to get one of those ornate Mass cards sent by mail to the famed songstress but didn't know her address. So he asked my favorite cop, Jimmy Dignam, from Central Station, to find her address. She lives out in the Richmond. Cops can do anything, you know. But Jimmy the Cop had a better idea: He decided to deliver the holy good wishes in person.

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

After that heavy-duty neighborhood news, it's probably time for some trivia: a few signs that have caught my eye.

Focaccia heaven in North Beach is located precisely at the corner of Stockton and Filbert. It's the Liguria Bakery that has made the tasty flatbread at the same location since 1915. In chipped gold lettering on Liguria's large window facing the sidewalk is a sign reading: **LIGURIA BAKERY — Soracco & Co. Tel: GARFIELD 13786**

Prominently displayed on the Wall at Capp's Corner at Powell and Green is a large white sign. It reads: **EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS: Grab your coat, don't forget your hat. Leave your worries on the doorstep. Just direct your feet to the sunny side of the street!**

On an exterior wall of the NorthStar, a saloon at Powell and Green, is this irreverent but sidesplitting sign: **Voted Best Happy Hour by the Betty Ford Clinic.** On another exterior wall at the NorthStar is this: **Drinking Consultants since 1885.**

We also like this all-encompassing sign at Gigi's Sotto Mare on Green: **Welcome to the Chaos.**

Then there's this sign at Tupelo's on Upper Grant: **"Come let's make poor decisions together."**

O'Reilly's Irish Pub has a sign reading: **It's Tacos on Tuesday.** Irish tacos?

In a second-story window at iconic City Lights Booksellers and Publishers on Columbus is the edict: **Turn Left.**

I called your attention in an earlier column to this sign by Banksy, the genius graffiti artist. But we consider it again because it's been some time ago. Look at the building wall at the southeast corner of Broadway and Columbus: **If at first you don't succeed, call an air strike.**

Over the entrance at Vesuvio's on Columbus: **We are itching to get away from Portland, Oregon.**

More from Vesuvio's: **When the shadow of the grasshopper falls across the trail of the field mouse, on green and slimy grass as a red sun sets above the western horizon silhouetting a gaunt and tautly muscled Indian warrior perched with bow and arrow cocked and pointed straight at you, it's time for another martini.**

In the window at Ali Baba Smoke Shop next to the Psychic Shop on Columbus: **Used Skulls**

At The Underground (Licensed Grateful Dead and Rock 'n' Roll Merchandise): **Take Me Drunk, I'm Home.**

Let's close this column with an apt Ferlinghettism. On the sidewalk along Kerouac Alley adjacent to City Lights: **Poetry is the shadow cast by our street-light imaginations.**

E-mail: [ernest@marinatimes.com](mailto:ernest@marinatimes.com)

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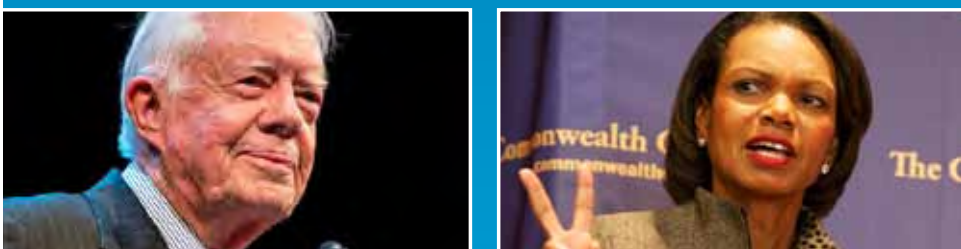
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**MONEY & HEALTH** ∴ A policy check-up

## It's time to review your Medicare coverage

by david sayen

**M**EDICARE'S ANNUAL OPEN ENROLLMENT period has begun, and I want to encourage everyone with Medicare to review their current health and prescription drug coverage.

Open enrollment runs through Dec. 15, 2013. If you want to change your Medicare Advantage or Medicare Part D (prescription drug) plan, this is the time of year to do it. Any new coverage you select will kick in on January 1, 2014.

If you have Original Medicare and you're satisfied with it, you don't need to do anything during open enrollment. Also, Medicare's open enrollment has nothing to do with the Affordable Care Act's new Health Insurance Marketplace. If you have Medicare, you don't need to worry about Marketplace plans.

My agency, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, or CMS, announced recently that the average Medicare Advantage premium for 2014 is projected to be \$32.60. CMS estimated that the average basic Part D drug premium in 2014 would be \$31 per month, holding steady for four years in a row.

Since the Affordable Care Act was passed, average Medicare Advantage premiums are down by 9.8 percent. The deductible for standard Part D drug plans in 2014 will be \$310, a \$15 decline.

Meanwhile, the quality of Medicare Advantage and Part D drug plans continues to improve, with more than one-third of Medicare Advantage plans receiving four or more stars (out of a possible five stars) in 2014 — a 28 percent increase over last year. Medicare Advantage and Part D drug plans with five stars are allowed to enroll beneficiaries at any time during the year.

Medicare plans' coverage options and costs can change each year, and Medicare beneficiaries should evaluate their current coverage and choices and select the plan that best meets their needs. If you think your current coverage will meet your needs for 2014, you don't need to change anything.

For more information on Medicare open enrollment and to compare benefits and prices of 2014 Medicare Advantage and Part D drug plans, please visit [www.cms.gov/Center/Special-Topic/](http://www.cms.gov/Center/Special-Topic/)

[Open-Enrollment-Center.html](http://Open-Enrollment-Center.html).

A variety of resources are available to help people with Medicare, their families, and caregivers compare current coverage with new plan offerings for 2014. You can:

- Visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) to see plan coverage and costs available in your area, and enroll in a new plan if you decide to make a change. Open enrollment information is available in Spanish.
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) for around-the-clock assistance to find out more about your coverage options. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. Counseling is available in a wide variety of languages.

- Review the 2014 *Medicare & You* handbook. This handbook has been mailed to the homes of people with Medicare and it's also online at [www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/10050.pdf](http://www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/10050.pdf).

- Get one-on-one counseling assistance from your local State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Local SHIP contact information can be found at [www.medicare.gov/contacts/organization-search-criteria.aspx](http://www.medicare.gov/contacts/organization-search-criteria.aspx), on the back of the 2014 Medicare & You handbook, or by calling Medicare (see the contact information above).

People with Medicare who have limited income and resources may qualify for Extra Help paying for their Part D drug plans. There's no cost or obligation to apply for Extra Help, also called the low-income subsidy. Medicare beneficiaries, family members, or caregivers can apply online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp/) or call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778) to find out more.

Please watch out for scammers during Medicare open enrollment season. Don't give personal information to anyone who shows up at your home uninvited or makes an unsolicited phone call to sell you Medicare-related products or services. If you believe you're a victim of fraud or identity theft, please contact 1-800-MEDICARE. More information is available at [www.stopmedicarefraud.gov](http://www.stopmedicarefraud.gov).

*David Sayen is Medicare's regional administrator for Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Pacific Territories. You can always get answers to your Medicare questions by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).*

## S.F. residents upbeat — wary of cost

by marina times staff

**N**EARLY ONE-THIRD of San Franciscans say the City's cost of living is their biggest problem today, and another 60 percent included it in their top three problems. The results were part of the first San Francisco Survey, produced for the Committee on Jobs, a local business association focused on long-term economics in the City.

"Though San Francisco residents don't like the city's costs, they still feel it's worth it to live here," said David Latterman of the San Francisco Survey. Indeed,

90 percent of them either strongly or somewhat agreed that San Francisco is a good place to live; 50 percent strongly or somewhat agreed that the City is a good place to raise families; and 47 percent somewhat or strongly agreed that it's a good place to run a small business.

They're also optimistic: 75 percent believe San Francisco's economic conditions will remain as they are or get moderately better in the next half-year, and nearly half believe that it's extremely important for the City to focus on creating local jobs. Forty-one percent listed homelessness as one of the City's top three problems, and

just over a quarter of respondents think it's important or extremely important to curb development downtown.

"As rents have gone up, as parking meters have become more costly, and as city fees have continued to rise, it's not a surprise that residents are becoming more and more concerned about their costs," said Ruth Bernstein of the San Francisco Survey.

The survey included a cross section of registered voters in the City and was prepared by EMC Research and Fall Line Analytics. More info on the survey results can be found at [www.thesanfranciscosurvey.com](http://www.thesanfranciscosurvey.com).





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# Across the Bay...



**SALITO'S CRAB HOUSE & Prime Rib**—Long a part of the local “scene”, Salito's in Sausalito is fresh, bright and full of casual ambience. Large, multi-leveled decks overlook the water and the beauty of the area is absolutely breathtaking.

The versatility of the food offerings allows you to have anything from a selection of cheeses and salumi with house made kettle bread and a bottle of wine to a full-blown feast of Dungeness crab and succulent prime rib. The menu is accessible. It's simple food, well-sourced, abundant and comforting yet sumptuous.

You can craft your dining experience by beginning with oysters or sizzling iron-skillet roasted mussels, shrimp and crab and move to specialties such as a crab enchilada, fresh fish or prime rib. Sweets have their own category with

freshly made beignets, Tortuga Caribbean rum cake and salted caramel vanilla crunch cake.

It's the perfect getaway on a foggy city day. You can take a ferry and pretend you're on vacation in a faraway village. At least for one day! Sitting on beautiful

**The large covered, heated patio and twinkling lights set the stage for dining under the stars with the possibility of romance a foregone conclusion.**

Richardson Bay, the blue sky and sparkling water are the perfect setting for an afternoon or evening of cocktails and dining *al fresco*.

The large covered, heated patio and twinkling lights set the stage for dining under the stars with the possibility of romance a foregone conclusion.

They serve breakfast on the weekends beginning at 10:00 am. Crab benedict, hot buttered rum pancakes and open face skillet omelets are but a sampling of the weekend menu.

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## FOOD & WINE

NOT-TO-MISS DISHES :: Delectables

# Two for the price of one edition

by tony ching & susan dyer reynolds

### Fog City

1300 Battery Street (at Embarcadero), 415-982-2000, www.fogcitysf.com

#### 1. Braised pork cheeks.

Bruce Hill's revamped Fog City is already one of our favorite spots. The braised pork cheeks rival Chris Cosentino's at Incanto and exceeded our expectations in a big way. The fall-apart tender cheeks are served on a bed of ethereal, creamy polenta.

#### 2. French crullers.

French crullers (fluted, ring-shaped doughnut made from choux pastry) used to make us think of going to Bob's Donuts, but after having them at Fog City we never want to eat them anywhere else. The French crullers come out fresh and hot from the cruller machine, light and fluffy with a citrusy hint of orange blossom. These are the best French crullers in the City, so be sure to save room for dessert.

### Tosca Cafe

242 Columbus Avenue (near Jack Kerouac Alley), 415-986-9651, www.toscacafesf.com

#### 1. Crispy pig's tails.

When you bite into the fried skin, the fat comes oozing out, like pork rinds and bone marrow in a perfect marriage but a lot easier to eat. This is one dish chef April Bloomfield should always keep on the menu.

#### 2. Bucatini with guanciale.

House-made bucatini (spaghetti with a hole in the middle) with guanciale (Italian salt-cured pork jowl) in a spicy toma-

to sauce is Bloomfield's take on the classic all'amatriciana. The pasta is always perfectly al dente, but it doesn't have the same sauce every night (we know because we've been there almost every night since Tosca reopened!).

### North Beach Restaurant

1512 Stockton Street (at Columbus), 415-392-1700, www.northbeachrestaurant.com

1. **Abalone doré.** Every time we visit classy North Beach Restaurant we're

reminded of why co-founders Lorenzo Petroni and Bruno Orsi are still one of the best teams in the business after more than 40 years. The authentic Tuscan cuisine is not to be missed, and we especially love the abalone doré, which is coated in a light egg batter, pan-fried until golden brown, and topped with a lemon sauce flecked with fresh parsley. People think nothing of spending \$75 on a great steak these days, so next time skip the artery-clogging red meat and head to NBR for abalone, a true delicacy found in very few

restaurants (and almost never prepared properly).

2. **Spaghetti Lorenzo.** We judge an Italian restaurant by the most deceptively simple dish — pasta in tomato sauce. Spaghetti Lorenzo is the perfect version of this classic; thin, al dente spaghetti is just chewy enough and coated in a bright but not-too-acidic tomato sauce with just the right amount of garlic. Better yet, each serving has just 247 calories and no cholesterol (verified by testing at UC Berkeley),

which means you can splurge on one of our other favorites: chicken livers sautéed with mushrooms and Barbera sauce.

### The Cavalier

360 Jessie Street (inside the Hotel Zetta), 415-321-6000; thecavaliersf.com

#### 1. Cavalier salad.

This one has us ordering salads all over town hoping they'll all taste like the Cavalier salad, but no such luck. The freshest seasonal greens are coat-

ed in a truffled vinaigrette and topped with aged goat cheese and fennel. Simple but satisfying.

#### 2. Sunday Roast Chicken.

This roast chicken gives Zuni Café a run for its money. Every bite is juicy and moist, even the breast, thanks to bacon larding. The accompanying horseradish mashed potatoes are whipped almost to Joel Robuchon perfection (but with a lot less butter). When the server pours bacon-mustard jus over the bird, it's just icing on the cake.

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com; tony@tonylondonly.com



Abalone is a delicacy, and the abalone doré at North Beach Restaurant is the best in town

PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

**Every bite of The Cavalier's roast chicken is juicy and moist, even the breast, thanks to bacon larding.**

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Clockwise from left: Akiko's Restaurant owner Ray Lee pushes the boundaries of traditional sushi; The ikura at Akiko's is cured with sage and truffles; You'll find sustainable, often unique seafood like imperial shrimp at Akiko's PHOTOS: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

## DISHING

CONTINUED from page 1

so I can put faith in their hands to pick out exactly what I want. They follow us on Facebook and see the final form, and it motivates them to get the best. I don't haggle — I've worked in places where chefs argue over price, and they may get the lower price but the ingredients are inconsistent. I ask for the best and for consistency, and I'm willing to pay for it — but if it's not exceptional, don't send it."

To showcase the fresh seafood, Lee created a daily-changing nama (raw) menu detailing processes, preparations, and places of origin, such as Japanese prefecture or, in the case of American product, country or city. Today's selections include shoulder and belly from a 450-pound Boston pole and line-caught black tuna, and Akiko's is the only place in San Francisco where you'll find it. A "super freezer" that keeps a temperature below minus 86 degrees Fahrenheit allows Lee to purchase large fish and keep them pristine (only Lee and famed Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto have super freezers).

"If I find a fish like that, I buy the whole thing," Lee says. "You're not allowed to catch them with long lines or trawl nets, and it's regulated by the government."

While other restaurants might serve long line-caught fish, Lee will not. Long lines have baited hooks extending 50 miles or more, attracting anything that swims by. According to the Monterey Bay Aquarium, nearly 20 percent of shark species are threatened with extinction as a result, and hundreds of thousands of seabirds and marine mammals such as whales, dolphins and porpoises die as bycatch, along with 200,000 loggerhead and 50,000 leatherback sea turtles. Biologists have found a 78 percent drop in leatherback nests, and leatherbacks could be extinct in 20 years. Conscientious sushi connoisseurs searching for environmentally sensitive options are flocking to Akiko's, where even the occasional farmed fish is sustainable. "Our salmon from New Zealand has no GMO [genetically modified organisms], steroids or antibiotics," Lee says. "They're farmed in the wild in super-clean water in pens so big that life forms around them."

As for wild fish, Lee also shops with a conscience. "I support fishermen doing the right thing." Those robust relationships also bring unusual, seasonal and hard-to-find seafood often exclusively to Akiko's, such as kanburi (cold yellowtail), available only during fall and winter months. Winter seafood, which has more fat to protect it from the frigid waters, has an unctuousness that sets it apart from lighter spring and summer catches. Lee's purveyors also send sweet, creamy keiji sake ("infant salmon") which represent only one out of 10,000 catches and average 30 to 40 percent fat as opposed to the usual 2

to 15 percent (a four-to-five pounder can cost \$1,000). Akiko's also features rich, oily deep-sea fish like akamutsu (red fish) and kinki (thorny head). "Thorny head takes a special fisherman who goes out on a small boat, catches a fish, brings it to the dock, and it comes straight to me," Lee says.

Besides fish, Akiko's serves other unique items like Madagascar shrimp and imperial shrimp, both served with surprisingly ethereal fried heads. The tails of the imperial glisten like a rainbow; the bluish flesh of the Madagascar is tender and sweet. Ensui uni (sea urchin simply cleaned and immersed in an exact replica of ocean water) has a firm texture and is so fresh it's practically neon orange with a bright flavor to match — clean and sweet, as if you cracked it yourself on the shore; it is far superior to uni at lesser sushi bars. Ditto for the unadorned brininess of unprocessed hotate (scallop) overnighed from Japan. For carnivores, the 28-day aged Japanese wagyu beef dusted with a snow of autumn truffle is a must.

It isn't just Lee's expert sourcing that makes Akiko's special; preparation is equally important. "We're meticulous about detail and technique," Lee says. "We bend rules and manipulate traditions." Lee, however, doesn't bend and manipulate just for the sake of doing it, but rather to respect the ingredients and enhance the diners' experience. Soy sauce is aged in-house with applewood and dashi; sonic vibrators agitate the blend of regular, light and white soy and create the equivalent of a two-year age in just a few months. Ikura (salmon roe) still in the skein (sac) is placed in salt water for softening and then bagged with truffles and sage. Lee cures the ruby red roe by draining the liquid and repeating over a 24-hour period, after which he painstakingly removes the eggs from the skein one by one. Most of the fish has been pressure-cured in kombu (sheets of edible kelp) to bring out the essence of the fish. Lee prepares abalone using a six-hour sous vide (vacuum sealed in a bag and cooked in a low-temperature water bath) to keep it tender and lock in flavor nuances. Saba (mackerel) is pressure-marinated with a scant two ounces of vinegar for a subtler taste, and cured with sodium nitrate to preserve its translucence (rather than in salt, which is harsher and turns the fish white). All of this takes time, and it's not uncommon for Lee to put in long hours. "I've sometimes worked here for 16 hours, six days a week," Lee says, "but it's not hard when you're passionate and love what you do."

Lee also has plans for the future: "I want to do an intimate, 12- to 18-seat restaurant where I can just focus on Michelin-level quality."

**Akiko's Restaurant**, 431 Bush St. (near Claude Lane), 415-397-3218, [akikosrestaurant.com](http://akikosrestaurant.com)

E-mail: [susan@marinatimes.com](mailto:susan@marinatimes.com)

# Fisherman's Wharf is calling your name



## THE FRANCISCAN CRAB Restaurant-

Don't let the name fool you—this Fisherman's Wharf mainstay serves food that goes well beyond steamed crab on a platter. The menu includes delightful artisanal salumi and burrata, specialties that include the best fish and chips you've ever tasted, a barbecue shredded short rib sandwich and flavorful pastas like seafood linguine.

But oh, the crabs: what a delight they are. You can start with a Dungeness crab cocktail or an order of crab cakes, move on to a crab Louie salad, and make your entrée a whole roast-

ed crab, crab Alfredo pasta, or the crab Enchilada—my favorite. No matter which way you order, it is guaranteed to be fresh, flavorful and masterfully prepared.

The Franciscan's other seafood options are also stellar, from the garlic-steamed clams, the fresh fish prepared in four signature styles, to the hearty seafood cioppino, perfect for a cold day by the bay. And if you can find room, try a decadent dessert made with their house made frozen custard ice cream.

Pier 43 1/2, 415.362.7733, [franciscan Crab Restaurant.com](http://franciscan Crab Restaurant.com). Open daily at 11:30 am.



"Hands down the best food you'll find on Fisherman's Wharf." *Sunset Magazine*

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## Cow Hollow 10-year-old shows off cooking chops on 'Masterchef Junior'

by julie mitchell

**M**ANY OF US HAVE KIDS WHO LIKE to experiment in the kitchen, but often, the results are chocolate-chip cookies or brownies. There aren't too many 10-year-olds who spent the summer perfecting their raspberry cheesecake.

But that's what Cow Hollow resident and Cathedral School for Boys sixth grader Gavin Pola did. Gavin is one of 24 kitchen-savvy kids from around the country between the ages of 8 and 13 currently appearing on *Masterchef Junior*, Fox TV's new show highlighting the talents of these budding chefs. Similar to the popular *Masterchef* show, the junior chefs are judged on their best seafood, pasta, or dessert by star chef



Masterchef Junior Gavin Polo

Gordon Ramsay, restaurateur and winemaker Joe Bastianich, and chef Graham Elliot. At press time, the enthusiastic and articulate Gavin was still in the race.

Gavin says his love of food and cooking started with going out to eat with his family. "There are so many great restaurants in San Francisco," he says, "and so many

foodies. I just love going to different restaurants and saying, 'Oh, that looks good,' and then I go home and try to recreate it, but make it even better. It's kind of like a game for me; can I make a dish even more delicious than the restaurant?"

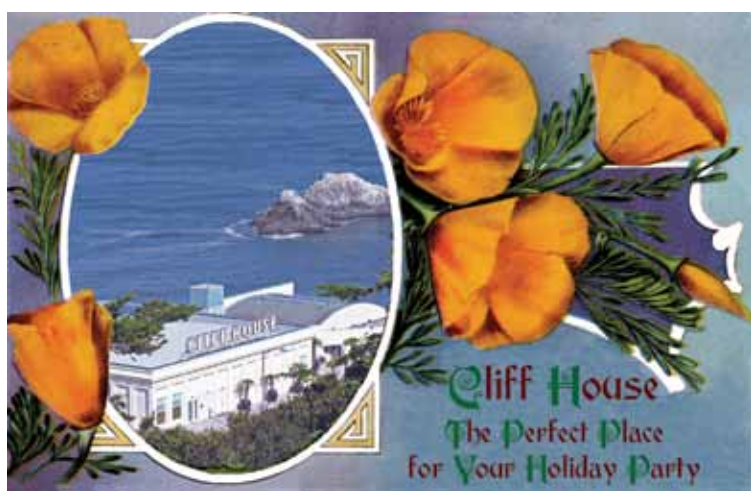
In addition to cooking, Gavin is also interested in acting and appeared in ACT's *A Christmas Carol* last winter. Right now, though, he's busy with cooking and schoolwork. And even though *Masterchef Junior* was taped last April, Gavin says he stays in touch with his fellow contestants. "I made so many friends doing the show," he says. "We were like a family."

Gavin counts some of his neighborhood eateries among his favorites here in the city. "I love the Balboa Cafe," he says. "Their burger is so good, and

I also love Isa and the sushi at Ace Wasabi." But his favorite haunt is North Beach. "I'm a big fan of Italian food," he says emphatically. "Especially fresh pasta."

And yes, Gavin makes his own fresh pasta at home.

E-mail: [julie@marinatimes.com](mailto:julie@marinatimes.com)



Recreated from an original Cliff House postcard c. early 1900s.

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## SAN FOOD-CISCO :: Supper clubs

## Epicurean delights

by evalyn baron

**E**VEN BEFORE MOVING here almost three years ago, I'd heard that this town was famous for food. From the slow food, pioneering work of Alice Waters, to the smallest hole-in-the-wall eatery in Chinatown, legend had it there was not a bad meal to be found. It's been a rare form of entertainment in itself, as we have discovered how true this legend turns out to be.

Several weeks ago, we had an interesting food experience in the home of friends as part of a new food "thing" that's happening here. No, it wasn't eating our meal entirely in darkness, as they do at one particular chic restaurant. An intriguing notion, but I'm not that adventurous yet.

We were simply the fortunate guests at a dinner party so unique, I can't help but think of it as very San Franciscan, and consistent with the spirit of this city. The trend? Private "supper clubs" where chefs come

together to collaborate and experiment with great recipes, and local wine makers showcase products for select groups of people. And because not everyone invited knows each other, it becomes a social as much as a foodie event.

Our friend Dori invited us to an evening of "childhood favorites." Her husband, chef Noah Jacob, invited three chef pals, instructing them to concoct two dishes each based on their own childhood favorites. All dinner guests cleaned each plate, and drained glass after glass of the paired wines, even after being warned ahead of time to not necessarily eat all the food because the eight courses and accompanying wines would probably be too much for us. I can fairly say that three-and-a-half hours later, as we all slowly waddled away from the table, everyone felt as if we'd had a feast of unique pleasures.

Noah and his chef pals Hanjiro Ambrose, Tim Symes and Mark Nargi,

wove nouvelle fantasies around such familiar comfort foods as fish and chips (their take? semolina fried sardines, lemon, fennel; JoJo potato, Romesco, garlic mayo); "Hamburger Helper" beef stroganoff (braised bison short rib, sheep's milk ricotta gnudi, Himalayan truffle crème, maitake mushroom), pork and beans (fresh chorizo, baked gigante beans, burnt tomato, cilantro-almond pesto — yum!); chicken nuggets (roast chicken, garlic chanterelle polenta, curried tomato chutney, truffle aioli, beer mustard); and "SpaghettiOs" (hand-cut pasta semolina Os al timbrare, ground veal, grana padano espagnole). Whew!

There was even a surprising version of "Shake 'n' Bake" — sous-vide pork tenderloin, with a homemade crumble and calvados veloute, which was so tasty, one guest asked to take some of it home. His wish was granted.

Dessert was Pop Tarts — gently fried pastry dough





The bar at Café Claude Marina PHOTO: AUBRIE PICK PHOTOGRAPHY

## Café Claude Marina opens in Cow Hollow

by julie mitchell

**I**N SYNC WITH BRISK FALL WEATHER, another intimate, clubby, neighborhood restaurant and bar has opened. Café Claude Marina is located on Greenwich Street in a historic turn-of-the-century building near Fillmore Street. It's the sister outpost to Franck LeClerc's long-time success story, Café Claude, downtown.

Nostalgia is hot right now, and this 49-seat spot oozes old-world charm, with its antiqued-tin ceilings, burgundy flocked wallpaper, wood wainscoting, and vintage French chandeliers. In addition to outdoor seating, Café Claude Marina also boasts a six-person private chef's table with a crescent-shaped leather banquet.

"I chose the location for Café Claude Marina because while there are plenty of bars in the neighborhood, there are very few casual places nearby for people to stop in to enjoy a meal. We offer a welcoming, friendly place for locals to have a glass of wine and approachable French food," said LeClerc. He admits to getting miffed e-mails from Marina residents indignant because the restaurant is actually in Cow Hollow, but somehow, "Café Claude Cow Hollow didn't have the right ring," he says.

Chef Doug DeGeeter, wine director Sarah Knoefler, and bar manager Carlos Yturria have concocted menus that feature traditional bistro-style cooking and regional classics. The bar features a plentiful wine list with a focus on grape varietals from the Loire Valley, a selection of aperitifs, international and locally made beers, and a low-alcohol aperitif cocktail list designed to open the palate before a meal. Aperitifs include the Greenwich Stoli, with pineau de

charentes (a fortified wine), lime and honey, and a citrus twist; and the Bitter Grin, with bonal (an infusion of gentian root, quinine, and herbs), lemon juice, and soda water. On a recent weeknight, the bar was busy but low key; it was not necessary to raise one's voice to carry on a conversation.

Serving dinner (and soon, brunch), Café Claude Marina features French bistro classics such as charcuterie, cheese and pâté plates, onion soup gratinée, and steak tartare; and mains that feature a salade niçoise with seared albacore tuna, red romaine hearts, cherry tomatoes, green beans, and fingerling potatoes; roasted chicken with greens; New York strip steak and frites; and of course, Le Burger with a brioche bun, red romaine, tomato-shallot jam, and aioli. Desserts range from tarte aux pommes to mousse au chocolat and crème brûlée. The assortment of cheeses, served both as an appetizer and after dinner, is an offering of three or four different French cow, goat, and sheep cheeses with fruit compote, candied walnuts, and walnut levain. Nightly specials include short ribs and bouillabaisse. Espresso drinks are also available.

Francophiles, neighbors, and afternoon shoppers can all delight in this charming cafe poised to please a variety of palates and appetites.

**Café Claude Marina:** 2120 Greenwich Street (at Fillmore), 415-375-9550, [www.cafe-claude.com](http://www.cafe-claude.com); aperitif hour Sunday-Saturday 4:30-5:30 p.m.; dinner Sunday, Tuesday & Wednesday 5:30-10:30 p.m., Thursday-Saturday 5:30-11:30 p.m.

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### SAN FOOD-CISCO CONTINUED from page 16

filled with rose chocolate, concord grape-lavender jelly and peanut butter. Ridiculously fabulous! If only I'd had more room, I'd have finished every sugary bite.

A particularly unique beginning item was the frozen ice pops called Otter Pops, but in such appetizer-ish flavors as frozen vichyssoise and icy gazpacho. Amazingly good, as we pushed them up from authentic Otter Pop plastic wrappers — so clever!

But the best part?

How we all enjoyed it *together*, each dish prompting vocal sounds of pleasure with every bite, and subsequent conversations centering on our own childhood memories of our favorite foods. It was an event of getting to know new things, new food, new people, and that made the evening unforgettable. Various wines from the elegant young sommelier, Jessalyn Krauss, who shared her knowledge of wines with us as she poured, added to the memorable experience.

I am all the fatter for it, but the happier too, so if

you're interested, it being holiday time and all, I suggest you contact [www.comestiblesf.com](http://www.comestiblesf.com) and see what new adventures they have in store. Maybe they'll invite you! They are very nice people who love to cook, and who also love to share what they cook with people who will enjoy it.

We moved here from New York to discover new ways to relish life, and our evening with Noah, Dori, and their talented friends filled that bill — and our stomachs — entirely!

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THE TABLEHOPPER ∴ What's new

# Tosca Cafe gets a second wind, State Bird reopens, new projects in the mix

by marcia gagliardi

ALL THE TOWN IS ABUZZ ABOUT the new digs of beloved **Tosca Cafe** (242 Columbus Avenue, 415-986-9651). Fortunately, new owners Ken Friedman and April Bloomfield were exceedingly careful about not changing much and kept the update more on the enhancement side. The patina on the walls, paintings, and the checkered floor remains, although the paintings have a bit more light for you to admire them. The jukebox is just as you left it, but now there's a better sound system for you to hear Johnny Cash and Un Bel Di. White-jacketed bartenders are still in effect (Isaac Shumway is leading the show), now serving drinks off a cocktail list (11 drinks in all), and they also did a nice update to the house "cappuccino," which will still get steamed from one of the remaining espresso machines on the bar. The capp now has better spirits in it, and ganache from local Dandelion Chocolate.

So, the changes. The Back Room is no longer a place where you can traipse in and huddle with your friends at a table for drinks — it's now a dining room, with the booths newly outfitted in red leather, and tables full of hungry diners. You'll note a brand-new, open kitchen to the left, with plans to serve food until 1 a.m. nightly (Bloomfield is working with chef de cuisine Josh Even). The menu includes antipasti, from roasted Treviso to the rugged bites that we look for from Bloomfield, like oxtail terrine and crispy pig tails; first courses of chicken liver spiedini and a couple of salads; pasta like gemelli (but instead of saying cacio e pepe, the menu says black pepper and young pecorino) and bucatini (with tomato, guanciale and chile — yup, that's all'amatriciana, but you can see the team isn't making this a facsimile of an Italian ristorante). Hefty meat courses include grilled short rib and roasted chicken for two or trout. Cannoli for dessert, natch. I enjoyed looking over Ceri Smith and Randall Grahm's wine list (and the glowing wine wall in the dining room), and saw that Ceri is even securing Monteraponi in classic straw-covered fiaschi for the restaurant. There's also a Tosca ale on the menu from Fort Point, with four taps in all. And you can finally pay with a credit card, how novel. Open Tuesday–Sunday 5 p.m.–2 a.m.

After closing for a remodel and expansion, **State Bird Provisions** (1529 Fillmore Street, 415-795-1272) has reopened. Not only will they now serve Sunday dinner and take reservations, but also there are some additional design touches, plus two tables for large groups (dubbed the alcove tables). They each accommodate six to eight people, or can be reserved together for a group of sixteen at 5:30–6 p.m. or 8–8:30 p.m. Groups can choose a tasting menu of small plates, or everything on the menu.

Chef-owner Rob Lam of Butterfly has created a new lunchtime pop-up concept called **Pan Grill Sandwich Shop** (Pier 33,

415-864-8999) — pan is the Japanese word for bread. Swing by the takeout window on the south side of the restaurant from Wednesday–Sunday (11 a.m.–3 p.m.) for a menu of affordable and flavor-packed bites with Japanese influences. Sandwiches are made on a milk bun (think of your favorite bao bun and then multiply it by 10 — Lam worked with a baker to perfect the bun, and they are crazy good). Sandwiches include pork katsu with yuzu slaw and pickled white onion, kimchi pulled pork with mizuna, tsukune chicken meatball, and hanger steak with a scallion-chimichurri sauce (all \$7). Of course Lam is already plotting more combos. The three salads (ahi tuna, shichimi chicken, or miso garlic Caesar) have ingredients like furikake rice strips. Looking for something extra hearty? There are three donburi options — ahi tuna poke, curry pork katsu, and that hanger steak (\$8–\$9). Lam is also a fan of ikura, so he has some ikura yaki onigiri on the menu, too.

Over in the Presidio, **Traci Des Jardins** (working with Bon Appétit Management Company) will open a restaurant and retail shop. The restaurant will be Californian with Spanish influences, and one of her previous chefs at Jardinière, **Robbie Lewis**, will be leading the kitchen. The 112-seat space is opening in Building 101, one of the Montgomery Street Barracks in the Main Post. It will be open for breakfast and lunch, offering espresso, takeout

## State Bird Provisions has reopened, with new design touches plus tables for large groups.

meals (great for picnics), and the lunch option to dine in; evenings will have more of a bistro vibe. Look for an opening around Valentine's Day 2014. There will also be a mercantile and larder retail shop featuring handcrafted, artisan local foods: jams, breads, local cheeses, charcuterie, and other items. Additionally, culinary classes will be offered, and catering options will launch in time for the holidays for those holding events in the Presidio.

Cool news, Thai food lovers: Pim Techamuanvitt, of Chez Pim fame, will be opening a restaurant called **Kin Khao** (55 Cyril Magnin Street) in the Parc 55 Hotel on Union Square. She will take over the 70-seat Smooth Thai location, and is working on the venture with the owner, Chupot Janlaor. Michael Gaines (Central Kitchen, Manresa) will join her in the kitchen. Look for authentic dishes featuring numerous house-made, local, and sustainable ingredients. Marc Glassberg will assemble the wine list; there's also full liquor, and the Bon Vivants (Trick Dog) will be consulting on the cocktail menu. Additional details: There will be "Thai" iced coffee that Verve will custom roast for them. Late hours are also in the works: Hello 2 a.m. nightly. November is the targeted opening month.

*Marcia Gagliardi is the founder of the weekly Tablehopper e-column; subscribe and get more food news and gossip at [www.tablehopper.com](http://www.tablehopper.com). Follow her on Twitter: @tablehopper. E-mail: [marcia@marinatimes.com](mailto:marcia@marinatimes.com)*





Butternut squash risotto

## Butternut squash risotto and rutabaga-carrot mash

by susan dyer reynolds

**F**ALL IS MY FAVORITE time of year, and Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday (it's like Christmas without all the hustle, bustle and hassle). Many cooks prefer the seasonal bounties of spring and summer, and while English peas rate as my all-time favorite vegetable, I appreciate the often overlooked and incredibly versatile squash and root vegetables that represent the autumn months.

When you think of side dishes for Thanksgiving, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, and green bean casserole may come to mind, but I like to introduce a little orange at the table with a simple but satisfying carrot-rutabaga mash and a surprisingly simple butternut squash risotto.

Don't be afraid of risotto — it's not as hard as those TV chefs make it look. Like all Italian recipes, it's about starting with the right ingredients and timing. My mother actually didn't call this dish risotto, she called it zucca e riso, or squash and rice. She sometimes used pumpkin in her recipe, but you can use any fresh squash you have available. Like my mom, I always add fresh sage leaves from our garden — I love the flavor of sage and squash together, but it's completely optional. Thankfully, this version doesn't involve standing over the pot and constantly stirring, yet it's every bit as delicious as its more labor-intensive counterparts. For tools, I highly recommend an enameled cast iron Dutch oven (like Le Creuset or Staub), a sturdy, sharp chef's knife, and a wooden spoon —

essentials every serious home cook should have. If you don't have a good chef's knife (or you don't feel comfortable working with hard squash), you can find cubed butternut squash at most markets.

### ZUCCA E RISO (SQUASH AND RICE)

Serves 4-6

- 1 cup yellow onion, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 1 cup celery, cut into 1-inch chunks
- 3 tablespoons good-quality olive oil
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 3 to 4 fresh sage leaves (optional)
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt, divided
- 5 to 6 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 butternut squash (about 4 cups or 1 pound), peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2 cups Arborio or Carnaroli rice (it's important to use Italian short-grain rice for the high starch content, which gives risotto its trademark creaminess)
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, plus more for the table
- Freshly cracked pepper

Using a food processor or a blender, mince onion and celery to a fine, paste-like consistency. Set aside.

Add olive oil and 3 tablespoons unsalted butter to a Dutch oven (or a heavy, low-walled stock pot) over medium heat. When butter melts completely, add sage leaves and stir constantly for about 1 minute to release oils. Add onion and celery paste with a pinch of salt and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, or until dry. Add stock, stir, and bring to a boil. Add squash,

salt, rice, and stir to combine. Return to a boil, cover, and reduce heat so the mixture bubbles gently. Simmer until rice and squash are cooked through and creamy, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Turn off heat, uncover, and add 2 tablespoons butter, stirring constantly until thoroughly incorporated. Add cheese and stir until combined. Ladle risotto into bowls, and serve immediately with extra cheese and freshly cracked pepper to taste.

### CARROT-RUTABAGA MASH

Serves 4-6

- 8 medium carrots, peeled and roughly chopped into uniform pieces
- 2 medium rutabagas, peeled and roughly chopped into pieces same size as carrots
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Freshly cracked pepper
- Sea salt

Place carrots and rutabagas in a medium stockpot and fill with cold water, about 1 inch above the vegetables. Add salt and bring to a boil. Cook until tender, 45 to 50 minutes (a knife should go through them easily). Remove from heat, drain thoroughly in a colander, return to the pot, and add butter. Smash with a potato masher or in a food processor until mashed (but not puréed — you still want some texture). Season liberally with pepper and a few pinches of sea salt.

Serve as you would mashed potatoes, covered with gravy or topped with butter.

E-mail: [recipes@marinatimes.com](mailto:recipes@marinatimes.com)

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# Richard Brautigan: The hippies' chosen icon

by ernest beyl

RECENTLY I WAS THINKING about Richard Brautigan, the counterculture novelist and poet who hung out in North Beach in the 1950s and 1960s. I was cutting across the grass in Washington Square on my way to lunch, and I passed the bronze statue of Benjamin Franklin in his knee britches and frock coat. I stopped for a moment and envisioned Brautigan leaning against it just as he appears on the cover of his novella, *Trout Fishing in America*. And although I barely knew Brautigan, on that day in Washington Square I missed him. He added a loopy edge to North Beach. He could be charming one minute and irascible the next.

I saw him one day many years ago at Enrico's on Broadway. He was sitting at an outdoor table with friends. He wore his usual costume: western outlaw attire, and a strange, broad-brimmed, fawn-colored felt hat with an exaggerated high dome. The complete Brautigan package included a long, droopy handlebar mustache and granny glasses. Because we had a nodding acquaintance from seeing each other around the neighborhood, I walked up to say hello. He stood, held out his hand for me to shake, and tipped that kooky hat in a courtly manner, and we talked for a while. It was one of his good days. Frequently Brautigan could be just the opposite of courtly — testy and irritable. He was like a trap full of crabs ready to snap. The man had a habit of looking askew at the world, but I couldn't fault him for that.

## THE BUBBLING LITERARY SCENE

Richard Brautigan was born in Tacoma, Wash., in 1935 and grew up in the Pacific Northwest, first

in Tacoma and later in Eugene, Ore. He came from a broken home, a poor family with a mother who worked as a waitress. He never knew his father. He never attended college. He wanted to be a writer.

In 1955, he came to San Francisco and associated with the Beats. He contributed his poems to small, local publications, and tried to make ends meet. Before fame and some fortune found him, he delivered Western Union telegrams, sold his blood for cash, and worked in a chemical laboratory while he surveyed the bubbling literary scene. In North Beach, he met heavyweight poets like Michael McClure, Jack Spicer, Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Philip Lamantia.

## BLABBERMOUTH NIGHT

Those were heady days. Poetry was being read aloud in North Beach joints like the Cellar, then on Green between Grant and Stockton, where it was recited to the accompaniment of live, improvised jazz. Kenneth Rexroth, poetic guru of the time, said, "If we can get poetry out into the life of the country, it can be creative. Homer or the guy who wrote *Beowulf* was in show business. We simply want to make poetry part of show business." Brautigan was show business personified. He fit right in. He recited his poetry on street corners and attended Blabbermouth Night at the Place on Upper Grant, a Beat club where you could read your work or just sound off about whatever was on your mind. He also liked to hang out at the Co-Existence Bagel Shop, a Beat haven at Grant and Green.

Brautigan bridged the gap between the Beats and the hippies. He was the hippies' chosen icon but he drank like a

Beat. By this time, his poetry was being published here and there, and in 1964, he published his first novel, *A Confederate General from Big Sur*. The hippies loved it. It was outrageous and outlandish, a disjointed satire on the hippie life. Other novels, stories and poetry followed, including *In Watermelon Sugar*, 1968, and *Trout Fishing in America*, which he wrote in 1961 but wasn't published until 1969. These remain his best-remembered books, although he wrote 11 novels. He received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and in 1966 and '67, he served as poet-in-residence for the California Institute of Technology.

## UNDERGROUND IN MONTANA

He once wrote eight poems that were printed on seed packets and sold under the title *Please Plant This Book*. At that point, his work was immensely popular and sold well. He spent some time in Japan where he was lionized, and then in the 70s, he moved to Montana and went underground.

He had a place in Livingston, Mont., along Pine Creek, and there he hung out with neighbor novelist Thomas McGuane, who in a quarrel once told him, "You're nothing but a pet rock ... a hula hoop. You should get down on your knees everyday and thank God for creating hippies." Brautigan's visitors to his Montana wilderness included such louche and loose characters as actors Rip Torn, Dennis Hopper and Jeff Bridges, and rock singer-songwriter Warren Zevron.

## HAPPINESS IS A WARM HIPPIE

By 1984, everything was crashing down around Brautigan's ears. He felt neglected; his work was being ignored, and he didn't know

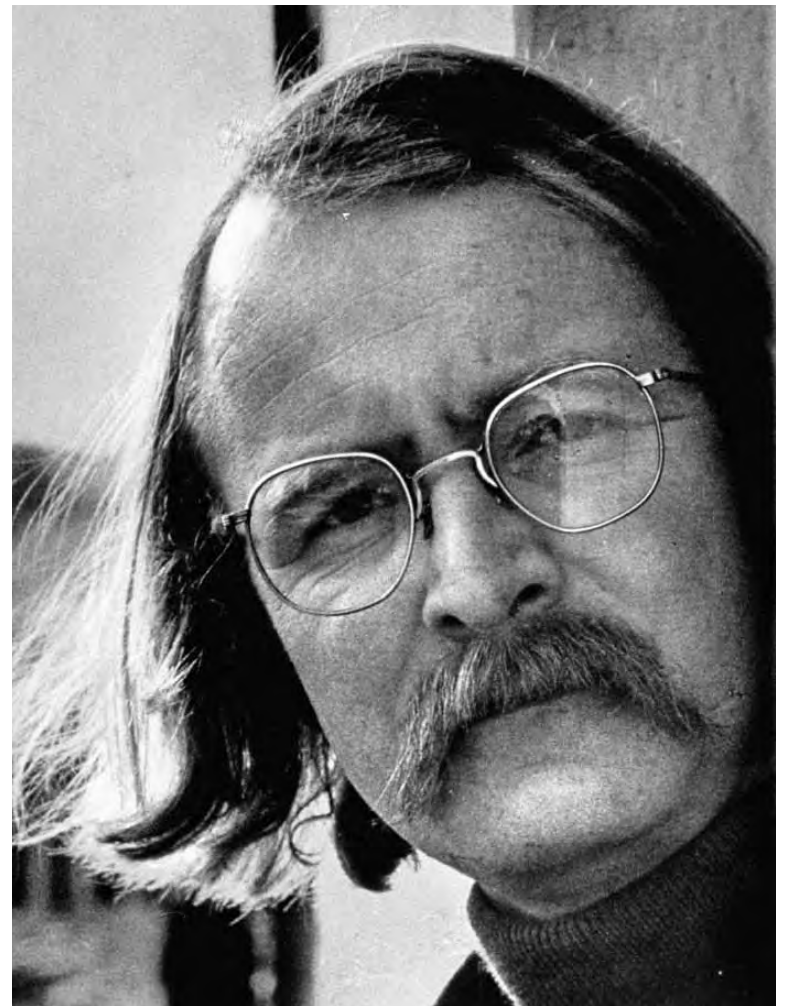


PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

how to recapture the exhilaration he had felt when he was a young North Beach literary giant. Jonathan Yardley, Pulitzer Prize-winning book critic for the *Washington Post*, said Brautigan was "... the Love Generation's answer to Charlie Schultz. Happiness is a warm hippie," he added.

When I first picked up *Trout Fishing in America* in 1969, I thought I was going to be reading a trout-fishing guidebook. Instead, I found lyric passages, much about trout, trout streams, and creeks. Brautigan was obsessed with trout. As I read along, I was perplexed. The narrative took me places I had never been. It includes anecdotes — quirky and a bit childlike — from his life, laced together with offbeat and dreamy observations. He once wrote, "I'll think about things for 30 or 40 years before I'll write about it." That's not only chronologically untrue, but Brautigan's prose reads like it popped out of his head and onto the paper at just that moment.

## THE ABSOLUTE END OF TWILIGHT

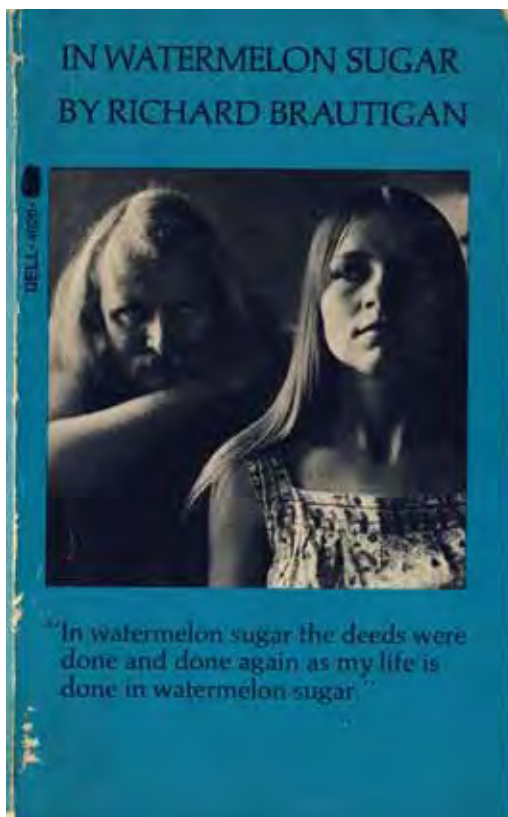
Brautigan committed suicide Sept. 14, 1984 at the age of 49. He was no longer the darling of the hippies. He had begun to lose it just as the hippies lost it.

He had run into an old girlfriend, San Francisco artist Marcia Clay. Let's have Marcia wind up the story as she told it to me:

"I met Richard in the mid-seventies in a North Beach club called *Dance Your Ass Off* at the corner of Columbus and Lombard. I was there one night, and I danced with him. He danced like a cornstalk in the wind. That led to a long friendship between us. We dated, and he took me all over North Beach. He encouraged me with my painting and my writing. At that time, he considered me his girlfriend, but I wasn't sure I wanted to be that. It was clear that he had personal demons. He was a flawed but wonderful guy. Those were exciting days for me. Then he married and was later divorced and was out of my life.

"In 1984 I ran into him at Enrico's and he asked me to call him at his Bolinas hideaway in a few days. I called him on Sept. 14, 1984, and he said he was writing again and wanted to read to me from his new book, which he called, 'The Absolute End of Twilight.' He asked me to call him back in a few minutes; that would give him time to find the lines he wanted to read to me. I did, and I got his answering machine. I called and called, and each time the machine answered. Something was wrong."

It is widely believed that Marcia Clay was the last person to talk with Brautigan before he shot and killed himself with a borrowed .44 caliber handgun. He once wrote, "The act of dying is like hitchhiking into a strange town where it is raining and you are alone again."



Left to right: *In Watermelon Sugar*; *The Pill Versus the Springhill Mine Disaster*; *Trout Fishing in America*

BOOK COVERS: © DELL PUBLISHING

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THE COASTAL COMMUTER ∴ It was a dark and stormy novel

# Noir-lit titans straddle mighty cities — ray of moonlight, dash of danger

by michael snyder

**L**ISTEN HERE, YA MUGS! I'm a longtime lover of detective fiction. Naturally, that would include the classics of the genre — and there are no private eyes in the literary world more classic than Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade and Raymond Chandler's Phillip Marlowe. Coincidentally, one of these literary gumshoes worked

my City by the Bay, and the other prowled my Southland HQ, the City of the Angels. To be more specific, Spade's noir-ish turf consisted of the mean streets of San Francisco or, if you will, the shadowy corners of the Barbary Coast, while Marlowe made his rounds on the sun-bleached, high-end boulevards and sin-soaked back alleys of Los Angeles. Just the sort of environs where Mike the

Knife (my underworld persona) is right at home.

I totally understand how San Francisco must have inspired Hammett and his terse, no-nonsense journalistic style. Most nights in this hilly wonderland whisper mystery as the fog creeps in under the Golden Gate Bridge and over Mount Sutro, sidling into Chinatown and North Beach. It's on nights like that when you can imagine shady antiques dealers and their henchmen executing a break-in at a Geary Street gallery and absconding with a priceless statue destined for the South of Market warehouse offices of an import-export company. And a relentless P.I. in hot pursuit. Hammett's characters are dark, driven creatures or possessed of a liquid in their veins that's colder than the winter swells off Fort Point.

Have you ever actually torn into a T-bone at John's Grill on Ellis Street? This Tenderloin destination was an actual setting in Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* and a vital stop for fans of Sam Spade (whether we mean the guy in the books or the one portrayed on screen by the immortal Humphrey Bogart). Sitting at the bar in John's Grill and downing a Scotch is probably as close as you're going to get to the Sam Spade experience — unless you're beaten in a nearby alley by

a gungel and wake up with a hangover the size of the Hindenburg — and just as likely to explode and go down in flames.

Speaking of the movie version of *The Maltese Falcon*, Hollywood was wild about the exploits of hard-boiled dicks and crime fiction from the 1930s through the 1950s, as studios adapted popular novels and commissioned original scripts in the genre. It was the heyday of film noir, and one can't help but think that the desperation and class distinctions that are the underside of the Tinseltown dream of stardom and riches helped fuel the authors and filmmakers. And the most iconic of Los Angeles mystery writers was Raymond Chandler.

Today, James Ellroy writes terrific novels in the Chandler tradition, usually period pieces such as *The Black Dahlia* and *L.A. Confidential* — the latter turned into a compelling, award-winning feature film. And similarly, timeless crime movies such as *Chinatown* are, in most ways, the spawn of Chandler's gritty prose, conflicted heroes, manipulative villains, and amoral shenanigans. From *The Big Sleep* to *The Long Goodbye* to *Farewell, My Lovely* and

more, Chandler's tales of hard-luck tough guys, devastating dames, and twisted ne'r-do-wells in the L.A. Basin set a standard for trenchant dialogue, witty narrative, and dark drama rife with fateful retribution. And though they may seem from a long-gone black-and-white world, these creations of his took pretty well to director Robert Altman's sharp, savvy, early 1970s, post-Love Generation sex-and-drugs-and-rock-'n'-roll update of *The Long Goodbye*, starring a wry and laconic Elliot Gould as Marlowe — a role that would seem better suited to another screen Marlowe, Robert Mitchum, but fit Gould like a rumpled, well-worn suit.



they're in the booth next to yours when you head back to Hollywood for a nightcap at Musso & Frank — a decades-old watering hole where Chandler, Bogie, Mitchum, and their peers used to hold court.

And yes, when I dine at Musso & Frank on Hollywood Boulevard or

the venerable Tadich Grill in S.F.'s Financial District, I will occasionally take a moment and imagine myself as the gritty, resilient protagonist of a detective

novel — preferably one written by Chandler or Hammett.

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

**Even today, Raymond Chandler's characters seem to lurk around every corner as the sun goes down and a sultry evening starts to unfold.**

Even today, Chandler's characters seem to lurk around every corner as the sun goes down and a sultry evening starts to unfold with the scent of jasmine wafting through the air from the garden entrance of a Los Feliz bungalow. They're on the block when you make your way to a cocktail lounge downtown on 6th at Spring for a libation, and



Top right: The original maltese falcon prop from the John Huston film; Above: *The Long Goodbye* movie poster  
TOP RIGHT: HANK RISAN / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; ABOVE: © UNITED ARTISTS

HUMOR ∴ Turketiquette

## Unwanted Thanksgiving advice

by sandy fertman ryan

**N**OVEMBER IS HERE, AND it's time to give thanks for many things, like your health, your loved ones — and that Thanksgiving only comes once a year! I hope these Q.s and A.s will help you make it more the former than the latter.

**Do I really have to go see my family?** Yes, of course you do. You love them! Sure, it can be annoying to hear crazy Uncle Billy repeat how he came up with the "idea" for *The Hunger Games* before Hollywood ripped him off (apparently, he had a vision at the all-you-can-eat brunch buffet at the Cliff House). And when cousin Midge tells everyone how adorable it was when you forgot your lines and fainted during a sixth grade play, remember how lucky you are to have a family who cares enough to remember all those

little tidbits of your life! Just make sure you let someone else handle the electric knife to slice the turkey.

**I want to show my family around during the holiday. Where should we go?** Before you indulge in your year's most decadent (public) pig-out, show them the magnificent Golden Gate Bridge, charming Fisherman's Wharf, and the enchanting Union Square. After dinner, limit your tour to the airbed, a nearby hotel or the hospital for a quick stomach pump. Gotta rest up for tomorrow's leftovers!

**I can't stand seeing my siblings because we always argue. How should I handle this at Thanksgiving?** It's true: It can be tough to see the people who rolled you down the staircase in a laundry basket sealed with duct tape when you were seven years old, but isn't it time to let bygones be bygones? Be friendly, loving, and

avoid any topics that may cause conflict (like announcing that your sister once stole your parents' car to cruise Twin Peaks, or that your brother hid Budweisers in your Barbie Dream House) — and then lock them in the bathroom while they're using the toilet.

**Should I invite friends to my family dinner?** Though Thanksgiving is a fun holiday, it is also traditionally jam packed with family gossip (which can be boring unless your relatives include Lady Gaga or Kathy Griffin) and unsolicited complaints about things like hair, weight, and driving skills. After a few glasses of wine, you may even hear the *real* story about what happened to your childhood dog, Zippy.

As kind as it is to think of your friends who don't have anywhere to go on Thanksgiving, it may be kinder to let them enjoy an iHop Turkey and Waffles din-

ner than put them through your family's Annual Therapy Night. Remember that old saying, "If you love them, let them go" by Kahlil Gibran? Yep, he was talking about Thanksgiving.

**What is the best topic to discuss at the dinner table to avoid any conflict?** It's difficult to find a topic that's not controversial, unless you stick with the weather. Even the price of sweet potatoes may set off an explosive discussion about inflation, politics, and whether you should serve Tofurky next year. Surprisingly, current events, like George Lucas's bid to build an art center at Crissy Field, could spark a hissy fit about preserving the coastline — and an all-out brawl over who likes Jar Jar Binks. So if you want to keep your Thanksgiving argument-free, stick with the weather and compliments, beginning with the stuffing. Sure, it tastes like puree of wood, but it's better than eating crow. Or Tofurky.

**Why do women usually stay in the kitchen on Thanksgiving?** That's easy: They don't like sprawling out on a La-Z-Boy all

day, drinking beers and watching multiple football games. And, of course, by staying in the kitchen they are much closer to the chocolate.

**Why is the turkey never on time?** Maybe the bus was slow. Maybe he never got your invitation. Maybe he doesn't like executions?

**How do I avoid feeling too full after Thanksgiving dinner?** You can't feel too full at Thanksgiving. The goal of the holiday is to overeat until you can actually feel gravy pulsing through your veins and you have to unzip your pants or change into that lovely floral-print muumu. When you're so loopy from tryptophan that you can barely respond to your own name — and not just when you're being asked to help with the dishes — you'll know your Thanksgiving has been a resounding success!

*Sandy Fertman Ryan has written for numerous national magazines, including Parade, Seventeen and Cosmogirl. She is looking forward to her family's holiday twerking contest. E-mail: yipee633@yahoo.com*





Meet two of the unlikeliest art collectors PHOTO: MEGUMI SASAKI

# ‘Herb and Dorothy 50x50’: A story of art and giving

“What we did then is now art history.”  
— Herbert Vogel

by Sharon Anderson

**I**N 2008, FILM DIRECTOR MEGUMI Sasaki released the film *Herb and Dorothy*, a story of two unlikely art collectors. Herbert and Dorothy Vogel, a postal employee and librarian, respectively, accumulated what is considered one of the most important collections of minimalist and conceptual art in the United States. Despite their modest means, the couple amassed thousands of works by artists including Richard Tuttle, Christo, Nam Jun Paik, and Sol LeWitt — artwork that lived with them on the walls, under the bed, in closets or anywhere it would fit in the Vogel’s one bedroom New York City apartment.

The Vogels loved art and befriended many of the artists whose work they collected. The rules were simple: They had to like the art, and it had to be small enough to fit in a cab and carry back to their apartment. Sometimes they paid on installment plans. Both explored painting as a hobby early in their marriage and were self-educated in art history, but what remains is their incredible collective vision for art that would remain relevant.

The sequel is now in theaters. *Herb and Dorothy 50x50* presents the final chapter in the story of

the couple’s art collection, which was donated in its entirety to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. The Vogels were never concerned with the millions of dollars that could have been theirs had they sold their

50x50 project was born. Because the gallery could not contain the entire collection, 50 works from the Vogel collection were donated to galleries in 50 states. The film shows the impact the artworks continue to have on the public. Across the country, visitors receive an education with no small amount of head scratching. The Vogel’s contemporary collection has been called challenging, avant-garde and inaccessible, yet many great adventures begin with the question, “Why is it art?” The work provokes, educates and inspires a journey of discovery. It also helped breathe new life into galleries and museums struggling in a market where private collectors often have more liquidity than public institutions to purchase art at auction.

The Vogels collected abstract art in an era when its value wasn’t wholly understood. Herbert Vogel died in July 2012, and Dorothy announced that their collection is now closed. Art collecting was something they did together, and though that chapter has ended, *Herb and Dorothy 50x50* documents the final destinations of the Vogel’s collection and their astonishing, unique and sometimes moving story of generosity.

Sharon Anderson is an artist and writer in Southern California. She can be reached at [www.mindtheimage.com](http://www.mindtheimage.com).



POSTER: © FINE LINE MEDIA

**The Vogel’s contemporary collection has been called challenging, avant garde.**

collection. Instead, because they worked their entire lives as civil servants, they believed their art belonged to the public.

In collaboration with National Gallery curator Ruth Fine, the

**@NITE**

CONTINUED from page 1

es us to snuggle under a blanket with someone special. The rain (captivating in its offbeat, pitter-patter way) may visit, but the big storms won’t find us here. While we

**Restaurants are tailoring their menus to autumn.**

may have to deal with BART strikes and bridge traffic, we’ll never worry about digging our cars out of three feet of snow to make our dinner reservations on time.

Not that the powdery stuff is lacking in sex appeal. (After all, that’s why we have Tahoe.) But I can honestly say that San Francisco is where I want to be in November, the month that ushers in the holiday season. As we scramble to make travel plans and check items off our to-do lists, the City beckons us to take a break from the chaos, to slow down and savor autumn’s festive and romantic side.

One of the most sensual treats is eating out. Local restaurants, already sparkling with holiday adornments, are tailoring their menus toward pears and pumpkins and other late-harvest delectables, and serving up soups, pies and other warm, nurturing dishes. November also marks the arrival of the Beaujolais nouveau, and what’s cozier than sipping some on a chilly night with a good meal and good friends? OK, maybe sipping the said wine (or hot cocoa, or a hot toddy) in front

of a roaring fire. Lucky for us, local spots like Blackwood, Terzo, The Brixton, and Original Joe’s make that possible by keeping their fireplace coals stoked all season long.

After dinner, the fires are still burning at the watering holes. Choices range from Matrix Fillmore, where well-heeled hipsters gather around a modern hearth, to the Big 4, a more refined fireside setting nestled within the Huntington Hotel. Falling somewhere in between is Sheba Piano Lounge on Fillmore, where you can listen to jazz while resting on a comfy couch next to the fire. In fact, the whole music district, from Fillmore to the Civic Center, is abuzz right now. The opera

and symphony are in full swing, and the SF Jazz Center and the surrounding clubs are keeping us happily entertained.

For football fans, a perfect date is heading to one of the local sports bars, where large-screen TVs, chicken wings, and beer are the seduction. Those who prefer the dramatic arts can celebrate the kick-off of the holiday film and play season by

snuggling in the back of a theater with hot popcorn (and possibly a hot date). And if you’re missing the frozen ponds from your Midwest hometown, grab your sweetie’s hand and hit the ice at one of the skating rinks going up this month (along with the Christmas trees!) at the Embarcadero Center and Union Square. Where else can you drink hot chocolate out of paper cups, listen to pop music that makes you feel 13 again, and, if you’re lucky, get away with only a bruised tuchus when that figure-8 attempt sends you bouncing on the ice?

There’s so much to do now, but honestly, just strolling around the City (finally, looking season-appropriate in a hat and scarf) is enchanting.

The main drags aglow with lights, and you can’t shop in our neighborhood without being tempted by a cinnamon-scented candle or egg-nog-flavored latte. And who’s strong enough to walk past Williams-Sonoma as the smell of a baking pumpkin spice cake wafts out onto the sidewalk?

The City looks, tastes and smells so scrump-

**The City looks, tastes, and smells so scrumptious now.**

tious right now, that for those of us planning to get out of town for the holidays, there’s some regret. Yes, our city is imperfect, with its confused leaves and overabundance of bad-hair days. But those who have been here long enough understand what Tony meant in that oldie-but-goodie, and we can be thankful that no matter where we are eating our turkey this year, we’ll eventually be coming home to the place we left our hearts.

Maryann LoRusso is a San Francisco-based journalist who also writes a blog for women at [www.redtypewriter.com](http://www.redtypewriter.com).



# Yes, sir to 'Big Sur'

by michael snyder

AS SOMEONE FASCINATED by the Beat Generation, its auteurs and their Bay Area haunts, I'm probably the ideal target for director-screenwriter Michael Polish's faithful-to-a-fault adaptation of Jack Kerouac's 1962 novel, *Big Sur*.

The source material, for all of its stream-of-consciousness poetics, is considered at least semi-autobiographical in its portrayal of the by-then-renowned author's unstable mental state a number of years after his seminal novel *On the Road* began serving as a de facto primer for the youthful seekers of the 1950s — some of whom came to be known as beatniks. It would go on to inspire the beatniks' subsequent hippie brethren in the 1960s, but for the hard-drinking, nomadic, and admittedly "bored and jaded" Kerouac, the fame of *On the Road* would become a burden by the time he was in his 40s. From all accounts, it appears that *On the Road* set an artistic standard he could never live down — nor, in his mind, could he live up to the power and reputation embodied in such an influential work.

*Big Sur* the movie deals with the time when, plagued by angst and self-recrimination, Kerouac

took advantage of an offer from his friend and colleague Lawrence Ferlinghetti. The acclaimed poet, publisher and proprietor of the landmark San Francisco book store City Lights, Ferlinghetti owned a cabin in the sylvan glades of Big Sur, down the coastline from San Francisco, and he offered it as a getaway to Kerouac. Though Kerouac was torn, frayed, and more than likely to get hammered and pass out in a Skid Row flophouse, he did go to the Big Sur cabin on a few occasions — alone and with his running mates, including Neal Cassady who was the legendary real-life model for free-booting Dean Moriarty in *On the Road*. Out in the beauty of nature, Kerouac still agonized, but his Big Sur experiences and his fitful romance with Neal's mistress back in S.F. are represented as fuel for the novel *Big Sur* that seems to have been largely nonfiction.

Rather than use the book's fictionalized names in his film version, Polish couches the movie as a hither-and-yon docudrama about Kerouac and the people in his life at that time. It shimmers with exquisite cinematography depicting the truly lovely coastal vistas in and around Big Sur, and gains verity from period-dressed location shooting in San Francisco (including sequences at

the revered City Lights Books and the beloved Tosca Cafe). There's even a witty anecdote recounted by a Kerouac crony who attributes the tale to none other than Herb Caen. But Polish's *Big Sur* is also heavy with word-jazz narration adapted from the book and delivered with appropriate disenfranchisement and pain by Jean-Marc Barr, whose performance as Kerouac is the weary soul of the film. It's not so easy to gain sympathy for a self-loathing talent whose success hasn't brought him happiness, but Barr creates a compelling figure on a downward spiral.

In general, the cast does right by the material. In addition to Barr's rough, tattered, reluctant sage and herald of a generation, there's rowdy Josh Lucas as good ol' boy adventurer Cassady (fuming under his cavalier exterior); Radha Mitchell as Cassady's lovely but long-suffering wife, Caroline; a luminous Kate Bosworth as pretty, tormented Billie, Cassady's mistress turned Kerouac's lover; and Anthony Edwards, avuncular and steadfast as still-living legend Ferlinghetti.

We get drunken revels at house parties populated by tormented artists and their acolytes, and road trips along craggy cliffs overlooking the beautiful churn of the



Jean-Marc Barr as Jack Kerouac in *Big Sur* PHOTO: © 3311 PRODUCTIONS

Pacific under glorious Central Coast skies, often to the sound of cool be-bop. There are muted confrontations between Kerouac and Cassady. There are Kerouac's enlightened or twisted moments of solitude. Driven mad by notoriety, his words are as much a nihilistic, anti-celebrity manifesto as an outpouring of sadness from a man uncomfortable in his own skin and unwilling to embrace praise and favor.

If anyone thought the book *Big Sur* was unfilmable due to its episodic, fragmented, anecdotal, philosophical nature, Polish evidently disagreed. His first splash as a filmmaker was directing the 1999 festival and art-house sensation, *Twin Falls Idaho*, wherein he also played one of a set of conjoined twins alongside his actual brother (and co-screenwriter) Mark Polish. So there's no way that *Big Sur* could have been an insurmountable

challenge. As for any suggestion of the material being too dated, naive or innocent in its occasional notes of ecstatic Zen spiritualism, it should be noted that the Beats may just be getting their due on the big screen these days. In fact, *Big Sur* is coming on the heels of *Kill Your Darlings* — a fine feature about the early, tumultuous days of Kerouac, William Burroughs, and Allen Ginsburg in New York City during the late 1940s. The latter is far more of a conventional narrative than Polish's film, yet even taken as a sort of visual tone poem, *Big Sur* moved me.

*Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture every week on KPFK/Pacific Radio's David Feldman Show, and on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, available online at YouTube and Digidiv TV. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster*



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# NOVEMBER EVENTS

## WHAT NOT TO MISS THIS MONTH

### MAJOR EVENTS

#### 12th Annual U.S. Half Marathon

Sunday, Nov 3, 6 a.m. & 7 a.m.

Start: Van Ness Ave. at Beach

Finish: Aquatic Park

Support St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in this popular half marathon course across the Golden Gate and back. Grab the kids for the family fun miler first and finish in time for the longer race. Afterward, enjoy live music, massages, and refreshments at the finish line festival. \$20-\$110, [www.ushalf.com](http://www.ushalf.com)

#### 4th Annual Fall Luxury Chocolate Salon 2013

Sunday, Nov 10, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Conference Center, Bldg A, Fort Mason Center

Discover, savor and taste the finest artisan, gourmet and premium chocolates and confections for the season and the holidays from over 30 chocolatiers. Highlights include chef and author talks, wine tasting and more. \$20-\$25, [www.fallchocolatesalon.com](http://www.fallchocolatesalon.com)

#### 15th Annual S.F. International Hip Hop DanceFest

Fri-Sun, Nov 15-17

Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

Cutting-edge hip-hop performances from international dance companies celebrate this rich and exciting dance form with Bay Area roots. \$39.99-\$81.50, 415-392-4400, [www.sfhiphopdancefest.com](http://www.sfhiphopdancefest.com)



Cirque du Soleil: Amaluna

Wednesday, Nov 13 thru Tuesday, Dec 31

Big Top, AT&T Park, (Third St. & Terry A. Francois Blvd.)

In the wake of a storm, a group of young men lands on an island governed by goddesses, triggering an epic, emotional story of love between Queen Prospera's daughter and a brave young suitor who then face numerous demanding trials and setbacks before achieving mutual trust, faith and harmony. \$50-\$270, [www.cirquedusoleil.com](http://www.cirquedusoleil.com)

#### 56th Annual International Auto Show

Thu-Mon, Nov 28-Dec 2, 10 a.m.

Moscone Center

On display are 2014 model cars, trucks and vans including exotic sports cars and alternative-fuel and hybrid vehicles from the world's major manufacturers. Free-\$10, 415-331-4406, [www.sfautoshow.com](http://www.sfautoshow.com)

### LAST CHANGE

#### Alonzo King Lines Ballet: Writing Ground

Fri-Sun thru Nov 3

Lam Research Theater, YBCA (701 Mission St.)

Deeply evocative and emotionally intimate, this physically demanding and visually stunning program is set to sacred choral odes and a range of rich instrumentals. \$20-\$65, 415-863-3040, [www.linesballet.org](http://www.linesballet.org)

#### 38th Annual S.F. Open Studios

Sat-Sun thru Nov 10, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Various S.F. venues

Visit over 900 artists in their studios during this citywide event, which is the oldest and largest open studios in the country. 415-861-9838, [www.sfoopenstudios.com](http://www.sfoopenstudios.com)



SF Playhouse: Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo

Tues-Sun thru Nov 16

Kensington Park Hotel (450 Post St.)

In this Pulitzer Prize finalist, which explores the power and perils of human nature, two U.S. Marines and an Iraqi translator are thrust into a world of greed, mystery and betrayal after an encounter with a now-deceased but still very angry tiger. \$20-\$100, 415-677-9596, [www.sfplayhouse.org](http://www.sfplayhouse.org)

#### ACT: Underneath the Lintel

Tue-Sun thru Nov 17

405 Geary St.

In this riveting ghost story, an eccentric librarian finds a weather-beaten book in a return bin, discovers that it is 113 years overdue, and sets off on a quest to unravel the secrets of the book and the person who borrowed it. \$20-\$140, 415-749-2228, [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org)

#### 42nd Street Moon: I Married an Angel

Wed-Sun thru Nov 17

Eureka Theatre (215 Jackson St.)

An angel comes to earth, falls in love, loses her wings, and havoc ensues accompanied by a dazzling Rogers and Hart score. \$21-\$75, 415-255-8207, [www.42ndstreetmoon.org](http://www.42ndstreetmoon.org)

### HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

#### Holiday Ice Rink at Embarcadero Center

Daily, Nov 6-Jan 5, 10 a.m.

Justin Herman Plaza

Enjoy nine weeks of ice-skating fun during the holiday season at this largest outdoor rink. Skate rental \$4, admission \$9.50-\$13, 415-772-0753, [www.embarcaderocenter.com](http://www.embarcaderocenter.com)

#### Holiday Ice Rink in Union Square

Daily, Nov 6-Jan 20, 10 a.m.-11:30 p.m.

Union Square

Ring in the holiday season at this outdoor rink with sessions starting every 90 minutes. Skate rental \$5, admission \$7-\$11, 415-781-2688, [www.unionsquareicerink.com](http://www.unionsquareicerink.com)

#### Embarcadero Center Lighting Ceremony

Friday, Nov 22, 6-7 p.m.

Embarcadero Center

Don't miss the annual dramatic illumination of Embarcadero Center and the S.F. skyline, featuring 17,000 lights throughout the holiday season, followed by a grand fireworks display. A Winter Carnival precedes ceremony; see listing in Child's Play for details. Free (including parking), 415-772-0700, [www.embarcaderocenter.com](http://www.embarcaderocenter.com)

#### 49th Annual Ghirardelli Square Tree Lighting Ceremony

Friday, Nov 29, 1 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Ghirardelli Square

Enjoy live music and family entertainment, culminating at 5:30 p.m., when the 55-foot tree lights up the square. Free, 415-775-5500, [www.ghirardellisq.com](http://www.ghirardellisq.com)

### COMMUNITY CORNER

#### Souls4Shoes Shoe Donation

Mon-Sat, thru Nov 1

1 Daniel Burnham Ct., Ste. 260C

Recycle your gently worn shoes at Better Homes & Gardens Mason-McDuffie Real Estate office, which will then be distributed to men and women to help break the cycle of poverty by earning a sustainable income. [www.giveshoes.org](http://www.giveshoes.org)

#### Marina Community Association Annual Meeting

Wednesday, Nov 6, 6 p.m.

Golden Gate Yacht Club

A great way to catch up with neighbors and meet the board of directors, the meeting includes speakers Mayor Ed Lee, Assembly Member Phil Ting, Northern Station Police Captain Greg McEachern and District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell, and the annual election for the board of directors. [www.sfmca.org](http://www.sfmca.org)

#### 13th Annual S.F. Green Festival

Sat-Sun, Nov 9-10

S.F. Concourse Exhibition Center (635 Eighth St.)

This environmental festival features influential speakers and leaders in the social justice and environmental community, yoga and more in a unique marketplace of natural, eco-friendly products and food, including beer and wine sampling and a dedicated kid's area. \$10-\$32, 212-253-0474, [www.greenfestivals.org](http://www.greenfestivals.org)

#### Veteran's Day Parade

Sunday, Nov 10, 11 a.m.

Market Street (Second to McAllister to City Hall)

Show your support for all who have served our country in this salute to the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. Free, 415-861-4920, [sfveteransdayparade@gmail.com](mailto:sfveteransdayparade@gmail.com)

#### North Beach Citizens 10th Annual Community Recognition Award Dinner

Sunday, Nov 10, 6-9:30 p.m.

S.F. Italian Athletic Club (1636 Stockton St.)

Founded by Francis Ford Coppola, North Beach Citizens is a community-based nonprofit serving the needs of the homeless and those at risk of being homeless in North Beach, and will honor Richard Armanino for his community contributions. \$175 & up, 415-772-0982, [www.northbeachcitizens.org](http://www.northbeachcitizens.org)

### GALAS & BENEFITS

#### Grapes of Rock Festival

Sunday, Nov 3, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

Featuring Brett Michaels and Pop Rocks, over 15 wineries, 5 craft breweries, local food from The Melt, this concert benefits the Salvation Army. Ages 21+, \$45-\$80, [www.grapesofrock.com](http://www.grapesofrock.com)

#### 8th Annual Simply the Best Dinner Gala

Saturday, Nov 9, 6 p.m.-midnight

Fairmont Hotel

ABC7's Cheryl Jennings emcees this event that raises awareness and funding for early detection and lung cancer research, honors survivors, and recognizes Pfizer for their Lung Cancer Patient Profiles Campaign. \$500, 415-357-1278, [www.abreathawayfromthecure.org](http://www.abreathawayfromthecure.org)



35th Annual Celebration of Craftswomen

Sat-Mon, Nov 9-11, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Herbst Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

This holiday crafts fair, with live music and gourmet food, is the largest event for women crafters in the nation and benefits The Women's Building, a community service center serving women and girls. \$7-\$9, 650-615-6838, [www.celebrationofcraftswomen.org](http://www.celebrationofcraftswomen.org)

#### 32nd Annual La Soirée

Friday, Nov 22, 7 p.m.-midnight

Terra & Mer Gallery (511 Harrison St.)

If you can't get to France for the uncorking of the first wine of the year, come to this French American Chamber of Commerce gastronomy & wine show, and enjoy French food, wine tasting, and a silent auction in an elegant and fun Roaring 20s atmosphere. \$55 & up, 415-442-4717, [www.faccsf.com](http://www.faccsf.com)

#### Glide Annual Holiday Festival

Wednesday, Dec 4, 6 p.m.

War Memorial Opera House

Celebrating 50 years helping the community, the festival features live entertainment, two receptions offering hors d'oeuvres and libations, a program featuring Maya Angelou and others, and benefits Mo's Kitchen and Glide programs. \$75-\$500, 415-864-3330, [www.glide.org](http://www.glide.org)

### ART & CULTURE

#### Graced With Light

Daily thru Nov 30

Grace Cathedral

Experience this stunning, music-inspired visual art installation that incorporates over 20 miles of ribbon and the cathedral's vaulted ceiling arches by the Artist in Residence Anne Patterson. Free, 415-749-6300



Andy Goldsworthy: Tree Fall

Sat-Sun, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. &

weekdays by appt thru Dec 1

Powder Magazine, Main Post, the Presidio

Constructed from a eucalyptus tree removed as part of the reconstruction of Doyle Drive and clay sourced from surrounding land, this imposing architectural interior installation serves as a powerful reminder of the relationship between the Presidio's natural and built environments. Free, 415-561-5300, [www.presidio.gov](http://www.presidio.gov)

#### The Art of Bulgari: La Dolce Vita & Beyond, 1950-1990

Tue-Sun thru Feb 17

De Young Museum

Founded in Rome in 1884, Bulgari has become synonymous with innovation and luxury in jewelry design. With over 150 pieces, this exclusive U.S. exhibition highlights a pivotal period in the evolution of its distinctive Italian style and features the jewelry of celebrities and jet setters. Free-\$20, 415-750-3600

#### 26th Annual Stillwell Student Exhibition

Wed-Sat, Nov 12-Dec 5, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

(closed Nov 27-30)

Fine Arts Gallery, SFSU

This peer-juried exhibition features students' latest work in video, photography, textiles, metal arts, ceramics, sculpture, printmaking, and more. Free, 415-338-6535, [www.sfsu.edu](http://www.sfsu.edu)

#### Verdi: His Music, Life & Times

Wed, Nov 20, 5:30 p.m.

Commonwealth Club

Join this discussion of George Martin's biography of the life of composer Giuseppe Verdi, who was instrumental to the political reunification of Italy known as the Risorgimento. Free-\$5, 415-597-6705, [www.commonwealthclub.org](http://www.commonwealthclub.org)

#### LEVYdance ROMP

Thu-Sat, Nov 21-23, 8 p.m.

The General's Residence, Fort Mason Center

LEVYdance hosts audiences in an experience that invites them from room to room, revealing fantastic surprises around every corner and culminating in a holiday meal for all. \$40, 415-701-1300, [www.levydance.org](http://www.levydance.org)

### PERFORMANCES

#### BATS Improv: DuoProv Championship - Family Drama

Friday, Nov 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29, 8-9:50 p.m.

Blue Bear School of Music, Bldg D, Fort Mason Center

In the first half, three teams of two improvisers — each representing their favorite genre — compete for the right to have the whole cast perform their genre in the second half. \$17-\$20, 415-474-6776, [www.improv.org](http://www.improv.org)





### Isabella Rossellini: Green Porno

Sunday, Nov 3, 7 p.m.  
Jewish Community Center

The iconic actress and model brings her provocative, critically acclaimed short film series about the reproductive habits of marine animals and insects to the stage. \$50-\$60, 415-292-1233, www.jccsf.org

### S.F. Composers Chamber Orchestra: Moonlight Concerto

Wednesday, Nov 9, 8 p.m.  
Old First Church (1751 Sacramento St.)

The season is turning, with a bracing chill in the early sunsets, and it's time for a program of mysterious shadows and blazing light, including oboist-composer Philip Freihofner's Filled with Moonlight, a three-movement work tinged with the resonances of Japanese music. \$14-\$17, 415-474-1608, www.oldfirstconcerts.org



### Lamplighters: Upside-Downton Abbey

Sunday, Nov 10, 4 p.m.  
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

Don't miss this sure-to-be hilarious spoof, featuring familiar characters and plot themes from the TV series, but with a whole host of comic twists. Set to the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan and others, this unique event guarantees an afternoon of fun. \$35-\$97, 415-978-2787, www.lamplighters.org

### S.F. Opera: The Barber of Seville

Various dates, Nov 13-Dec 1  
War Memorial Opera House

With the help of a wily barber, a strong-willed young woman outwits a lecherous old man in this eternally fresh comic masterpiece featuring Rossini's wittiest, most charming score and two charismatic casts. Special two-hour family version performed in English on Sunday, Nov. 24 and Saturday, Nov. 30. \$23-\$357, 415-864-3330, www.sfopera.com

### Magic Theatre: Arlington

Tue-Sun, Nov 13-Dec 8  
Bldg. D, Fort Mason Center

Lovely and upbeat Sara Jane waits on the home front for her soldier husband to return. Fueled by a visit from mom and a few innocent cocktails, her mind wanders from concern for her husband to reflections on the nature of war, posing perilous questions along the way. \$12-\$16, 415-441-8822, www.magictheatre.org

### Triskela Celtic Harp Trio

Sunday, Nov 17, 3:30 p.m.  
St. Mary's Cathedral (1111 Gough St.)

Delight in lively jigs, reels and other classic Celtic fare in a fusion of folk traditions, early music and original works reflected in arrangements for three lever harps, voice, Irish whistle, flute, and percussion. Free-will offering, 415-567-2020 ext 213, www.stmaryscathedralsf.org

## NIGHTLIFE

### Mason Jennings

Friday, Nov 15, 8 & 10 p.m.  
Yoshi's (1330 Fillmore St.)

Singer/songwriter Jennings mixes poetry, politics, and a jazz infusion into a rock performance. \$24-\$29, 415-655-5600, www.yoshis.com

### Vienna Teng

Saturday, Nov 16, 9:30 p.m.  
The Independent (628 Divisadero St.)

The Associated Press calls her music "ambitious yet always tuneful ... gorgeous and haunting." Come be haunted by the singer and pianist who has appeared on Letterman, NPR and more. \$25, 415-771-1421, www.theindependentsf.com

### Dr. Mojo

Tuesday, Nov 26, 9:30 p.m.  
Boom Boom Room (1601 Fillmore St.)

It's time for some soul and R&B, and Dr. Mojo brings it with energy and feeling. Boom Boom Room promised "no holiday tunes." Free, 415-673-8000, www.boomboomtickets.com

## FILMS & LECTURES

### Garrison Keillor: O, What a Luxury

Thursday, Nov 7, 7 p.m.  
Jewish Community Center (3200 California St.)

Keillor leaves his Prairie Home to go on the road with his latest poetry collection, O, What A Luxury: Verses Lyrical, Vulgar, Pathetic and Profound. \$25-\$45, 415-292-1233, www.jccsf.org

### 6th Annual French Cinema Now

Thu-Sun, Nov 7-10  
Landmark's Clay Theatre (2261 Fillmore St.)

Grab your beret and head to Fillmore where the S.F. Film Society rolls out nine French films, including 2 Autumns, 3 Winters and A Castle in Italy on opening night, followed by a reception. \$10-\$25, 415-561-5000, www.sffs.org

### TEDxPeacePlaza

Saturday, Nov 9, 10 a.m.  
Pa'ina Lounge (1865 Post St.)

A new event in the trendy TEDx series features Lateefah Simon, Katherine Woo, Tulio Cardozo, Goh Nakamura, and others exploring the theme of "What's Possible." \$100, 415-758-3398, www.tedxpeaceplaza.com

### Graham Nash

Friday, Nov 15, 7 p.m.  
Nourse Theatre

The Crosby, Stills & Nash singer-songwriter talks music, his life, and his environmental causes. \$15-70, www.commonwealthclub.org

### Robert Reich: Inequality for All

Wednesday, Nov 20, 6 p.m.  
Fairmont Hotel (950 Mason St.)

The former secretary of labor argues that we're all hurt by the expanding gap between the richest and the poorest in this country. \$10-\$45, 415-597-6705, www.commonwealthclub.org

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



### Sustainability and the Living Roof at the Academy of Science

Friday, Nov 15, noon  
The Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

Frank Almeda, the senior curator at Cal Academy, will explain the challenges of creating and operating the five-acre roof garden. Free-\$20, 415-597-6705, www.commonwealthclub.org

### SynBioBeta San Francisco 2013

Friday, Nov 15, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.  
Mission Bay Conference Center (1675 Owens St.)

If you're part of the Bay Area's large synthetic biology community, come and network, learn, and partner with new startups and established players. \$125-\$495, http://synbiobeta.com/sf2013/

### Warm Gun 2013

Friday, Nov 22, 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m.  
Hotel Kabuki (1625 Post St.)

The new-business funder known as 500 Startups is hosting this one-day website design conference featuring more than 550 designers and developers from companies such as Airbnb, Apple, MailChimp, YouTube, and more to explore and explain how to find good talent, improve design, match business goals with user behavior, and much more. \$349, www.warmgun2013.eventbrite.com

## POTABLES & EDIBLES

### Southern Italian Desserts

Sunday, Nov 3 & 17, 4 p.m.  
Museo Italo Americano (Bldg C, Fort Mason Center)  
Cookbook author Rosetto Costantino presents her new book followed by tasting of regional desserts and wines. Free, (space limited), RSVP to 415-673-2200, www.museoitaloamericano.org

### Veterans Appreciation Day Dining

Sunday, Nov 10  
McCormick & Kuleto's (Ghirardelli Square)  
All U.S. military veterans receive a free lunch or dinner entree in appreciation for their service to our country. Proper identification required. 415-929-1730, www.mccormickandschmicks.com



### Joyce Goldstein: Inside the Food Revolution

Monday, Nov 18, 7 p.m.  
Jewish Community Center

Join the celebrated chef-author with Patricia Unterman as Goldstein discusses her new book and traces the California food culture from the 1970s to the present, when farm-to-table, foraging and fusion cuisine have become part of the national vocabulary. \$22.50-\$25, 415-292-1200, www.jccsf.org

### San Francisco Vintners Market

San-Sun, Nov 23-24, 1-4 p.m.  
Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center  
Sample wines from up to 200 top-notch California wineries and buy them on the spot. \$80-\$200, 415-596-1191, www.sfvintnersmarket.com

## SPORTS & HEALTH

### Snowbomb Ski & Board Festival

Sat-Sun, Nov 9-10  
AT&T Park  
This weekend of ski and snowboard activities includes exhibits featuring ski resort, ski gear, travel deals, wine and beer tasting, a kids' zone, live entertainment, a huge winter sale, and more. \$10-\$50, 530-581-0553, www.sfskifest.com

### Keeping Weight Off During the Holidays

Wednesday, Nov 13, 5-8:30 p.m.  
Conference Room, CPMC (2333 Buchanan St.)  
Holiday eating doesn't have to expand your waistline or set back your weight management goal. Learn ways to enjoy healthful meals, while staying true to traditions this holiday season. \$10 donation suggested, register at 415-923-3155 or cpmcchrc@sutterhealth.org; www.cpmc.org

### How to Keep Your Brain in Shape

Monday, Nov 18, 5:15 p.m.  
Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)  
Learn how the most recent scientific discoveries can lead to a clear action plan, including an understanding of what really matters about learning for cognitive health and longevity. Free-\$20, 415-597-6700, www.commonwealthclub.org



### Run Wild San Francisco

Sunday, Dec 1, 9 a.m.  
Crissy Field  
Get "SantaMental" and support the S.F. Firefighters' Toy Drive by running or walking in this 5K. All entrants receive a Santa hat before the race to decorate to their liking. \$15-\$35, 415-759-2690, www.rhodyco.com

## JUST FOR FUN

### International Vintage Poster Fair

Fri-Sun, Nov 1-3  
Conference Center, Bldg. A, Fort Mason Center  
Devoted exclusively to original vintage posters, this fair features over 15 dealers from six countries offering thousands of original posters for sale including styles of Art Deco Modernism, Art Nouveau, Victorian, and more. \$15, 800-856-8069, www.posterfair.com

### West Coast Craft

Sat-Sun, Nov 16-17, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center  
This craft and design show features over 100 West Coast craftspeople working in a variety of media and creating items that exemplify the mood and aesthetics of their West Coast lifestyle. Free, http://westcoastcraft.com

## CHILD'S PLAY

### Saturdays are Special: Spinning Tops

Saturday, Nov 2, 10 a.m.  
Randall Museum (199 Museum Way)  
Create scientifically beautiful artwork with spinning tops that make awesome designs in this special drop-in, hands-on art workshop. In addition, family ceramics starts at 10:15 a.m. and other drop-in ongoing art and science workshops are available between 10:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. All ages welcome, but kids under 8 must be accompanied by an adult. Free admission; workshops \$4-\$6, 415.554-9600, www.randallmuseum.org

### Storytime with a Sloth

Sunday, Nov 10, 2 p.m.  
Exploratorium (Pier 15)  
Sloths, scientists and storytelling! Hear the story of Lost Sloth, read by the author and illustrator J Otto Siebold, explore Sloth biology with Exploratorium staff scientists, and get your copy of Lost Sloth signed by the author. 415-428-4360, www.exploratorium.edu



### Winter Carnival

Friday, Nov 22, 4-6 p.m.  
Holiday Ice Rink, Embarcadero Center  
Kick off the holidays with this spectacular featuring cookie decorating, interactive arts and crafts booths, balloon twisters, caricature artists, musical performances, and more. Skate, dance, watch live performances of Disney On Ice presents Rockin' Ever After, see Mickey Mouse, and visit with Santa. Culminates with the lighting ceremony of the Embarcadero Center followed by fireworks 6-7 p.m. Free (including parking), 415-772-0700, www.embarcaderocenter.com

### Robin Hood

Sat-Sun thru Nov 17  
Young Performers Theatre, Fort Mason Center  
Robin Hood and his outlaw band of merry men play pranks on the Sheriff of Nottingham and hatch schemes in their secret hideout in Sherwood Forest. \$10, 415-346-5550, www.ypt.org

### Circus Bella: High Low Fast Slow

Saturday, Nov 23, 2 p.m. & 3:30 p.m.  
Randall Theatre, Randall Museum (199 Museum Way)  
This fun-filled family concert features talented — and silly — acrobats, jugglers and clowns in an adventurous exploration of motion and music as clowns and classical music collide onstage. Free, 415-692-3367, www.sfchamberorchestra.org

## CREATURE FEATURES

### A "Pawsitive" Holiday Evening

Friday, Dec 6, 5-7 p.m.  
Jest Jewels (1869 Union Street)  
Enjoy "cocktales," treats, fun, surprise raffles, and get holiday photos of your pooch by a pet photographer to support Pets Unlimited and raise awareness for their adoption and care programs. A portion of proceeds from all dog ornaments sold until Dec 24 will also support the shelter. 415-563-8839, 415-563-6700

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FITNESS FIRST :: Good preparation

Winter's approach means preseason training for snow sports enthusiasts

by julie mitchell

SHORTER DAYS, COOLER weather and the advent of rain in the Bay Area may have some city dwellers feeling grouchy, but for skiers and snowboarders, winter's approach means snow. And they can't wait to get to the mountains.

season winter conditioning include endurance, SAQ [speed, agility and quickness] drills, balance, core, strength, and flexibility training."

Because snow sports require a mix of muscle endurance and strength as well as balance and flexibility, it's easy to develop a dry-land workout to get

you in shape. For strong thighs, hamstrings, and ankles, necessary for both skiing and boarding, fitness experts recommend a series of squats and lunges. Single-leg lunges,

with your back leg up on a chair, step, or BOSU trainer, are especially good for working on strength and balance. Lower body strength is key in preventing knee injuries.

Snowboarding and skiing both involve side-to-side movements and balance, and trainers and ski resort instructors recommend exercises that mimic these movements

such as lateral shuffling and side-to-side hopping or jumping from one leg to the other. These moves can be combined with squats and lunges in short bursts, or intervals, to add cardio training, also critical for mountain sports. Other activities recommended by ski instructors include core workouts — like basic crunches — while seated on a stability ball that will also challenge your

balance; and calf raises, because calves are used a lot while skiing. Walking and jogging, especially uphill, are excellent cardio workouts, and key if you plan on cross-country or Nordic skiing that involves lots of climbing hills. For maximum flexibility, stretching will round out your workout.

Ngarangad stresses, "A safe and effective conditioning program must be progressive, gradually building intensity over time. Not all training techniques are appropriate for everyone. Mastery of a new skill is acquired both through repetition and practice, but also careful attention to the details of the quality of the movement." While she advises at least one one-on-one coaching session to develop a customized preseason workout, Ngarangad says that group exercise classes including Pilates, yoga, BodyPump, indoor cycling, and others can also help you cross train and prepare you for

Right now is the best time to get into shape for snow sports.

So right now is the best time to get in shape for snow sports. But wait, you may be thinking, *I already work out, so do I really need a special conditioning program for winter sports?*

Personal trainers and professional skiers agree: To be ready for the special challenges your body will face in downhill or cross-country skiing or snowboarding, it makes sense to start sports-specific training six-to-eight weeks before you hit the slopes.

Susie Ngarangad, a senior personal trainer and group exercise instructor at the Presidio YMCA, recently offered a ski conditioning clinic and often works with snow sports enthusiasts. She says, "To perform at your best, prevent fatigue and reduce the risk of injury while on the slopes, essential training strategies of pre-

Snow sports require endurance and strength, as well as flexibility.

your best ski or boarding season ever.

Susie Ngarangad, 415-850-0632, [sngarangad@ymcasf.org](mailto:sngarangad@ymcasf.org); Presidio YMCA, 415-447-9622, [www.ymcasf.org/presidio](http://www.ymcasf.org/presidio)

E-mail: [julie@marinatimes.com](mailto:julie@marinatimes.com)



Susie Ngarangad instructs a YMCA member on proper conditioning PHOTOS: PRESIDIO YMCA





Dr. Noah Simons is a local pediatrician based in Presidio Heights

## Choosing a pediatrician

by liz farrell

**W**HETHER YOU ARE HAVING A baby or have just moved to the City, finding a doctor for your child's health care needs can be a bit daunting. You will spend a lot of time in the first year of your child's life with your pediatrician, who will then chart

tion. Your ob/gyn doctor might also be a great resource. He or she sees many pediatricians around the hospital and knows your personality so may be able to offer some suggestions for a good fit.

**Interview potentials.** This could be the most important step, because you will get a good feel for the situation after talking to the doctor and visiting the office. When considering location of the office, keep in mind you will want it to be convenient, easily accessible for a stroller, and with available parking.

### You want the doctor's office to be convenient, accessible for a stroller, and with parking.

your child's growth and development in most cases through adolescence. When deciding who that person will be, think about how you chose your own doctor and what was important to you. I think you will find the same criteria will apply. For our family, I was looking for a few key things, with the most important elements being trust and a good rapport. I wanted someone who was going to take my concerns seriously and who really understood our family. Here are a few steps for making that decision a little easier:

**Know what you want.** This is completely personal and will vary from family to family, but spending some time thinking about what is important to you will help you in the decision process. Some things to consider include: (1) Office hours (are there early morning or evening appointment times?); (2) Response time to questions or concerns (how long does it typically take for a call back, and is the doctor available by e-mail or text?); (3) Is it a solo or group practice (do you see different doctors at every appointment, or is there only one doctor available?); and (4) Does the doctor share your philosophy when it comes to vaccines, antibiotics, or homeopathic alternatives?

**Ask for referrals.** One of your best resources and a good place to start is trusted family and friends. Find out whom their children see and what they like or don't like about their pediatrician. If you are new to the area or don't have friends with children yet, ask parents in your mother's group, at the park, or use an online resource like the digest from Golden Gate Mother's Group to post the ques-

The second consideration is cleanliness. Doctor's offices can be a haven for germs, so be on the lookout for lots of hand sanitizer and clean, well-kept toys and books, and maybe even a separate sick entrance. This is something our pediatrician has that I greatly appreciate. Another element to observe is the waiting room — is it crowded? Do people seem to be waiting a long time?

This is also a good time to observe the staff's demeanor. Are they friendly and helpful or rushed and disinterested? When meeting with the doctor, inquire about his or her background and ask questions about how he or she would handle important parenting issues. This is a time to trust your instincts about whether this person is a good fit for your family's needs.

With three children between wellness appointments, sick calls, and the random ailment, I see our pediatrician a lot throughout the year. I am grateful for the

### When meeting with the prospective doctor, inquire about his or her background.

trust, responsiveness, and attention shown to our family. Luckily, we haven't had any major illness or issues, but there have been some concerns along the way, and having a good relationship with your pediatrician is imperative for your child's health and your well-being.

*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*

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## THE URBAN HOME & GARDEN

# Ladder safety

by julia strzesieski

**M**ANY HOMES IN SAN FRANCISCO feature high ceilings, making simple tasks like changing a lightbulb sometimes difficult. A reliable ladder is useful and necessary around the house, and for safety and practical purposes, should be chosen to suit your task.

The three basic types of ladders are extension (straight), step, and combination step/extension. Ladders are rated by load capacity and grade (household, commercial, and industrial; see table below). Ladder rungs are either flat, round or D shaped. The minimum size considered acceptable for round rungs is 1 1/4" to 1 1/2" for D rungs. To ensure safety, rungs are required to carry a much higher load than the rated load for the entire ladder.



**For safety and practical purposes, a reliable ladder should be chosen to suit your task.**

### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A LADDER

*Type of activity involved.* The type of activity dictates which type of ladder you'll need. Use a stepladder for interior painting, dry walling, spackling, and wallpapering. Stepladders include step-stools and platform ladders, generally for home or light commercial use. Stepladders are self-supporting and may include a pail hook or shelf. Extension ladders are best for painting exteriors, cleaning gutters, replacing shutters and siding, and other areas involving height.

*Demands of the application:* Make sure the ladder is suitable for the physical demands of the application. The rated load capacity must exceed the maximum aggregate weight of the user along with his or her clothing and tools. Duty ratings are also color-coded. Look for the proper duty ratings to match the highest level of use.

*Height the ladder must reach.* For a climber to work from a safe position, the ladder's top should extend about three feet above the working surface when in use. Stepladders should be high enough for the user not to have to stand above the second step from the top. On extension ladders, stand no more than four rungs from the top.

*Basic material.* The most common ladder materials are wood, aluminum, and fiberglass. Wood ladders are nonconductive when clean and dry. Wood also provides a natural firm grip for feet and hands. However, wood tends to be heavy, and is vulnerable to moisture and therefore rot. Aluminum is lightweight and strong, but does conduct electricity, so aluminum ladders should never be used when working near energized electrical lines. Fiberglass offers a blend of desirable qualities. It is nonconductive, strong, and an excellent choice for a variety of activities.

### LADDER SAFETY TIPS – DO

- Learn the proper methods for working with a ladder

- Keep your ladders well maintained (for wood, treat with a wood preservative that leaves a clear surface)

- Choose duty ratings to match the highest level of use

### LADDER SAFETY TIPS – DON'T

- Use or repair a bent or damaged ladder
- Test a ladder by jumping on it
- Use a ladder on slippery surfaces or uneven ground

- Place ladder feet on power cords or have the ladder meet electrical current or power lines

- Climb down a ladder with your back to the ladder or carrying a load in your arms

- Overreach, lean to one side, or stand on one foot

- Hurry or skip steps when getting on or off a ladder

- Leave a ladder unattended

- Position the ladder where it blocks foot traffic or where it could be bumped by a door

- Place the ladder on boxes,

chairs, furniture, or other moveable object to try to climb higher

- Climb from one ladder to another or try to move a ladder while still standing on it

- Climb a ladder when ill or using drugs or alcohol

- Drop or throw ladders

- Paint a wooden ladder (paint hides damage and can create a slippery surface for climbing)

### EXTENSION LADDER LENGTH CHART

HEIGHT TO EAVES	BUY THIS LENGTH	MAX. WORKING LENGTH
9 1/2' MAX.	16'	13'
9 1/2' - 13 1/2'	20'	17'
13 1/2' - 17 1/2'	24'	21'
17 1/2' - 21 1/2'	28'	25'
21 1/2' - 25'	32'	29'
25' - 28'	36'	32'
28' - 31'	40'	35'

### LADDER DUTY RATING TABLE

GRADE	TYPE	RATED LOAD	COLOR CODE
Extra-Heavy-Duty Industrial	IA	300 lbs.	BLACK
Heavy-Duty Industrial	I	250 lbs.	BLUE
Medium-Duty Commercial	II	225 lbs.	YELLOW
Light-Duty Household	III	200 lbs.	RED

Julia Strzesieski is the marketing coordinator for Cole Hardware and can be reached at [julia@marinatimes.com](mailto:julia@marinatimes.com).

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# The data-driven buyer

by John Zipperer

**H**OME BUYERS HAVE MANY approaches to picking their homes and neighborhoods. They consult friends and family who know the area. They search Zillow. They talk to real estate agents. They Google the neighborhood. They check online crime statistics. They even drive through the neighborhood wistfully looking for open-house signs. Rental Roost Inc., a one-year-old Bay Area company, is aiming to help people make decisions based on data — data about the neighborhood and data about the buyer.

There are a lot of factors that could change which neighborhood you select. Are you single? Will you have a roommate? Are you looking for a home for a family of four? One bedroom, one bath, or maybe three bedrooms, two baths? How old are your children, and what schools might they be attending? Will your dog be welcome? How available is good shopping and dining?

“We always assume people say ‘I want to live in San Francisco; I want a 3 bed, 3 bath,’” says Vikram Raghavan, one of Rental Roost’s three co-founders. But that’s not how people really do it; he says

they want something that fits their lifestyle. For example, they want to live in San Francisco and commute to their job in Oakland. So his approach is to see how the various components of a neighborhood would work for them.

“Pick Glen Park,” he says. “It is right on a BART line, so if you work elsewhere but want to live in San Francisco, that’s a good compromise.”

Rental Roost pulls the information from databases about school zones, safety, public transit, restaurant locations, and other searchable characteristics, and matches it with information from the home-hunter’s own social media data. For example, the user logs in with their Facebook credentials, and Rental Roost can make more-targeted recommendations. It can tell that if you have a 13-year-old child, for example, you are likely to be interested in a place with a good high school within walking distance; it can find a place that is near those Thai restaurants you like so much. Cow Hollow, for example, doesn’t rate as high as the Financial District or SOMA when it comes to shopping, though it has stronger than average schools.

“Let’s say you were looking to either rent a one bedroom, one

bath, or buy that,” says Raghavan, who, along with co-founder Nitin Shingate (attorney Harini Venkatesan is the third), showed the *Marina Times* how people use this data to find homes. “If you rent, you would pay around \$3,100. If you were looking to buy, the home would cost you roughly \$510,000.”

He digs into his data, assembling a basis for making a rent-versus-buy decision. “Assume you put in a 5-percent down payment, then assume a mortgage rate of 4.85 percent,” he says. “It really depends on how much you think your home is going to appreciate relative to how much you think your [rent] will increase,” looking over the next 30 years. If the house is just appreciating at the rate of inflation (that’s not as radical as it sounds in these days of price spikes; smooth out the ups and downs over three decades and it becomes less eye-popping), and rent is going up a similar amount, “we found that for your first four years, you’re better off renting. From the fourth year onward, you make more money buying.”

As for a three-bedroom, three-bathroom unit, he says “You’re almost 100 percent of the time better off renting. Once you get to three bed, three bath, the average listing in those neigh-



Left to right: Nitin Shingate; Vikram Raghavan PHOTOS: COURTESY RENTAL ROOST

borhoods [on the City’s north side) is \$2.9 million. This assumes your house appreciates at the same pace. But let’s assume house goes up 10 percent — then buying is better.”

“Rental markets tend to be more linear,” Raghavan adds. “The constraint is how much cash there is in the market. If you actually apply real-time home performance, even paying \$2.9 million to get 3-bed, 3-bath house is still better.”

Now, what if you’re not the renter but the investor — the owner of rental property? Are you better off owning rental units in an expensive neighborhood such as the Marina or in a less expensive neighborhood like the Tenderloin? “That’s a great question,” says Raghavan. He returns to his database. “Let’s assume the people renting can afford to buy — that’s a bad assumption in itself, but we’re going to pretend

you could. Because of the appreciation, it almost always makes sense [to own the rental property in a high-value neighborhood]. If you believe that your house is going to appreciate at least 10 percent, you’re better off owning investment property there and renting it out, because most of the money you’re making is coming from appreciation.” If you believe it’s only going to appreciate at the rate of inflation, you might be better off selling it and buying investment property elsewhere.

What makes the Tenderloin interesting, he adds, is that people who can afford to buy are not looking to buy in the Tenderloin, so most of those who do own property there are investors.

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



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For bid documents, see <http://www.sfredevelopment.org/index.aspx?page=127> or call Kevin Masuda at (415) 749-2508. Bid Date: November 6, 2013 at 2:00 pm.

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## REAL ESTATE UPDATE : A foot is not a foot

# Is square footage important or not?

by stephanie saunders ahlberg

**T**HROUGHOUT MY YEARS AS A Realtor, and with even greater frequency lately, I've been asked the question, "What is the square footage?" I understand why you would want to know — price per square foot is a convenient way to compare one property with another. In many parts of the country it's an easy question to answer — especially in planned communities or suburbs where there are specific floor plans and the square footage is easy to

tax assessor added the additions to their record? All of these considerations make it more difficult to calculate true measurements.

Quoting square footage can be dicey for sellers. You might provide a number that you believe to be true, but then what happens if the buyer finds a lower number from another source during the purchase process? Even though the buyer was perfectly happy with the home at the original price, there is suddenly a perception of reduced value, and a request for a price reduction is sure to follow.

## Hard as it is to believe, more often than not we really don't know the actual square footage of a home.

Square footage is quoted everywhere online. It's one of the first descriptors you see on many sites. While that might be fine in many communities, in San Francisco it's not as relevant. Square footage is a factor, but we evaluate homes on so many more aspects as well, including location, condition, remodeling,

determine. However, San Francisco is not one of those communities.

To begin with, hard as it is to believe, more often than not we *really* don't know the actual square footage. We can of course see what the tax record says, and we can look on an appraisal, but we can't be sure the figures quoted are correct. For example, I recently sold a fabulous condominium in Pacific Heights. Four different sources came up with four different figures for the square footage, and they varied by over 400 square feet — a huge discrepancy. So, in this instance, when asked about the square footage, I would simply tell people what the range was, cite the sources and say "somewhere in there is the truth."

curb appeal, view, parking, outdoor space, similar sales, and more. A single square foot in one home does not equal a single square foot in another home, even if they are next door to one another. Each home has to be looked at individually for a true evaluation.

We can take two properties of similar square footage and find that their feel and usable space are dramatically different. A Victorian will have a long hallway that is large in square footage but basically unusable space. An Edwardian, in contrast, won't have that, and will instead have larger rooms. Same square footage, different allocation of space. Even so, if you've always

How could square footage vary so much? In this case, one source was the condominium map, another the tax record, and two others were appraisers who did not have the same answer. Appraisers vary in their method of measuring. The condo map should be accurate, but again it is a human doing the measuring and it depends on that person's method. Some measure from the inside of the wall and don't count stairs, some do a gross measurement on the outside of the building and deduct for light wells. Methods vary a great deal.

## We can find that two properties of similar square footage can have dramatically different feel and usable space.

dreamed of owning a Victorian, you're going to choose that home over the Edwardian. How the home feels to you as a buyer is really what matters most — not its square footage.

What's more, in San Francisco owners often add on to their homes. Were the additions done with permits? Are they legal dwelling spaces? Has the

*Stephanie Saunders Ahlberg has been a real estate agent for over 30 years and joined Hill & Co. in 1983, where she has consistently been among the top 10 salespeople. She can be reached at [www.realtyinsanfrancisco.com](http://www.realtyinsanfrancisco.com).*

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# The Marina Times Real Estate Market Report: September 2013

By Hill & Co.

## SINGLE FAMILY HOME SALES

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	1630 Greenwich Street	3BD/4BA	\$2,965,000	Above	6
	3020 Laguna Street	5BD/4.5BA	\$4,400,000	Below	27
	2827 Greenwich Street	5BD/4.5BA	\$5,700,000	Above	9
Lake	6423-6425 California Street	3BD/1BA	\$875,000	Below	20
	1714 Lake Street	6BD/2.25BA	\$1,955,000	Above	17
Laurel Heights (no sales)					
Lone Mountain (no sales)					
Marina	35 Rico Way	3BD/3BA	\$2,400,000	Above	8
Nob Hill (no sales)					
North Beach (no sales)					
Pacific Heights	2201 Lyon Street	6BD/3.5BA	\$5,250,000	Above	12
	2700 Pierce Street	5BD/4.75BA	\$8,890,000	Above	46
Presidio Heights	3481 Washington Street	4BD/4.5BA	\$7,325,000	Below	1
Russian Hill (no sales)					
Sea Cliff (no sales)					
Telegraph Hill (no sales)					

## CONDOS

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	1551 Filbert Street #2	1BD/1BA	\$725,000	Above	10
	1755 Filbert Street #1R	1BD/1BA	\$800,000	Below	63
	2244 Greenwich Street	2BD/2BA	\$1,050,000	Below	76
	2668 Greenwich Street	3BD/2BA	\$2,500,000	Above	14
Lake	239 26th Avenue #201	2BD/1BA	\$520,000	Above	21
	108 4th Avenue	2BD/2BA	\$700,000	Above	33
	180 5th Avenue	2BD/1.5BA	\$826,000	Above	12
	4504 California Street	2BD/2BA	\$860,000	Above	53
Laurel Heights	38 Heather Avenue #A	2BD/1BA	\$780,000	Above	34
Lone Mountain	20 Parsons Street	3BD/1BA	\$745,000	Above	19
Marina	1540 Lombard Street #K	2BD/1BA	\$910,000	Above	14
	1175 Bay Street	2BD/1.5BA	\$1,250,000	Above	26
	55 Capra Way	3BD/2BA	\$2,000,000	Above	0
Nob Hill	1340 Leavenworth Street	0BD/1BA	\$420,000	Above	17
	1177 California Street #215	1BD/1BA	\$552,000	Above	31
	1630 Clay Street #3	1BD/1BA	\$625,000	Above	42
	1554 Jones Street	2BD/2BA	\$845,000	Below	0
	1776 Sacramento Street #605	2BD/2BA	\$887,500	Above	14
North Beach	1200 California Street #27D	2BD/2BA	\$2,350,000	At	24
	650 Chestnut Street #302	3BD/2BA	\$1,050,000	Above	12
Pacific Heights	807 Columbus Avenue #301	1BD/1BA	\$765,000	Above	0
	2410 Pacific Avenue #1	1BD/1BA	\$730,000	Above	12
	1990 Green Street #107	1BD/1BA	\$800,000	Above	13
	2111 Franklin Street #3	3BD/2BA	\$1,250,000	Above	9
	2421 Buchanan Street #B	2BD/2BA	\$1,261,000	Below	42
	2200 Sacramento Street #1405	1BD/1BA	\$1,340,000	Above	1
	2090 Pacific Avenue #301	2BD/2BA	\$1,500,000	Above	7
	2200 Sacramento Street #1206	2BD/2BA	\$1,625,000	Above	16
	1552 Green Street #P	3BD/2BA	\$1,637,500	Below	43
	3294 Clay Street #6	3BD/2BA	\$1,685,000	Above	9
	1925 Gough Street #41	4BD/3.5BA	\$2,695,000	At	112
Presidio Heights	2064 Jackson Street	3BD/2.5BA	\$5,710,000	Below	55
	333 Presidio Avenue #1	1BD/1BA	\$639,000	At	53
Russian Hill	102 Walnut Street	4BD/3BA	\$3,000,000	Below	182
	2164 Hyde Street #201	2BD/2BA	\$1,450,000	Below	92
Sea Cliff (no sales)	2340 Larkin Street #2	2BD/2BA	\$2,400,000	Above	11
Telegraph Hill (no sales)					

The data presented in this report is based on the San Francisco Multiple Listing Service and is accurate to the best of our knowledge, but cannot be guaranteed as such. For additional information, contact Hill & Co., 1880 Lombard Street (at Buchanan), 415-321-4362, www.hill-co.com.

## MYSTERY HOUSEBUYER ∴ The art of negotiation



Would you rather negotiate with the rottweiler, the suspected terrorists, the war hero, or the screaming agents? PHOTOS:LEONARDO SAKAKI

# Tales from the home front

by anonymous

**B**UYING AND SELLING A HOME IS the closest most people come to real negotiation and interpersonal politics with real value at stake. Yes, people might know how to haggle with a street vendor over the price of a scarf, but if they overpay by \$10, who really cares? And though people might think they're pros about dealing with car salespeople, most of them are lambs for slaughter when it comes to actually sitting down across the table with a seasoned car deal-

demand that she be able to interview the neighbors' dog.

The seller acceded to her unusual request, and the interview went well. In fact, she says the Rottweiler did not live up to the breed's stereotype — it behaved like a real pussy cat.

*Yet another:* A cousin of mine was moving from Chicago to New Mexico. Their Chicago home was a co-op (which is basically what the rest of the world calls San Francisco's TIC arrangement). They found a buyer, but the closing was complicated and brutal — from what she told me about

it afterward, it could have been a scene from *The Good Wife*: The buyers, the sellers, and both parties' agents all in the conference room with the agents bickering over everything and literally shouting at each other.

By contrast, laid-back New Mexico lived up to its reputa-

## When it comes to a house deal, most nonprofessionals are making it up.

er. Now, when it comes to a house deal, hundreds of thousands of dollars can be at stake, and most nonprofessionals involved in the deal are basically making it up as they go along.

And that creates some interesting and sometimes amusing tales.

*True story:* About a decade ago, an acquaintance of mine sold his house. But he was more interested in playing junior sleuth than in being a seller, and he almost ended up screwing up the sale.

The time was shortly after 9/11. The house was in a major East Coast city, and he had lived there for decades. Property values had risen dramatically, so he was pretty much guaranteed to make a large profit. When two men of vaguely Middle Eastern appearance made an all-cash offer on his home, he was split between wanting to roll in dollar bills and wanting to play his part in the international war on terrorists.

So, as it was related to me by a mutual acquaintance, the homeowner called up the FBI and told them he thought the potential buyers were al Qaeda. "Why do you think that?" the FBI wisely asked. So he told them about their appearance and the all-cash offer. They said they didn't think the men were al Qaeda, but they'd check them out. After the FBI completed their check, they called back the homeowner. "They're not al Qaeda; they're European bankers."

He sold his house.

*Another true story:* A young San Francisco woman bought her first home — a condo — seven years ago. An animal lover herself, she had a dog and a cat, so she wasn't worried about animals in the building. But when she heard that the upstairs neighbors had a Rottweiler, she wrote into her offer the

tion. The closing on their Albuquerque home was so calm it might as well have taken place in a day spa.

*And another:* A relative of mine was selling her home to move into a smaller one. Luckily, in fairly short order, she sold her home and made a successful bid on her new house. But then the pressure started from the buyers. Could she move out a couple days earlier, because they needed to get out of their place earlier than expected because the buyer of their home was in the armed forces and needed to complete the move before he was shipped overseas.

So my relative approached the sellers of the home she was buying to see if they would let her move in a couple days earlier. Luckily, that house had been sitting empty (the previous occupant had passed away and the family was handling the sale), so they let her move in a couple days early without charging her anything. All good? No; the buyers of my relative's house then came back and asked for a move-in date another few days earlier than the new, earlier date she had just arranged.

## Home sales are stressful enough without solving everyone else's problems.

It's hard enough to negotiate a deal with a buyer and seller, it's even harder when it's a chain of four or five sellers and three or four buyers, all trying to get an advantage and schedule movers, repair people, and the like. So she said no.

Home transactions and moving are stressful enough without trying to solve everybody else's problems along the way.

*Anonymous is real.*



# Ready, set, go!

Finding a home online is easy — or maybe not

by carole isaacs

**T**HE REAL ESTATE MARKET has been going crazy for months now, and it is clear it is not settling down in the way buyers would like. Maybe you haven't even looked online yet, because you were waiting for a sign that it was time to begin your search for a home in San Francisco. The recent buzz around Twitter's IPO is that newly minted millionaires will create even more pressure in neighborhoods like Noe Valley and the Mission — and because all real estate trickles down, the rest of the City, too. This plus interest rates bumping up a point or so, and it looks like for some buyers it may be now or never to begin a search for a home.

The first stop for a home search for most people is online at one of the many real estate websites. Within a few minutes of searching you will be saying to yourself, *Gee wiz, it looks like there are a few places available in my price range.* This is better than you thought, so you click on the "Contact an Agent" button and in no time you are talking to an agent, or you

sent an e-mail to an agent and in a short while you have a response.

The news is often not what you expected. The property that tempted you is in contract or possibly even sold. How could that be? You just found it online! The answer is that on many websites it is up to the individual agents to update their listings, and sometimes that does not happen quickly. Even in good faith there is so much information changing hands that no matter how fast people work, listings may not be up to date. The obvious question you will ask is, "How can I make this work for me?"

Here are things buyers need to know about searching online.

**One:** When you first begin searching online, search for properties that have been on the market only a few days to avoid disappointment. This is known as "Days on Market" or DOM. Your first online searches are educational, and you are not going to miss anything if you don't look at properties that have been on the market longer. Properties are selling so quickly there is no reason to spend time on listings that are for sale a

week or more until you are up to speed on your search.

**Two:** Understand what it means when a property is listed "active," "active continued," or "pending." There are other sub-categories, but knowing what these three mean will get you started in your search.

**Active:** Property is for sale. It is not in contract. The seller is actively seeking offers.

**Active continued:** Property is in contract. Buyer and seller have ratified an offer agreeing on price and terms. The seller may still be showing the home until all contingencies are removed.

**Pending:** All contingencies have been removed. Buyer and seller are awaiting funds to be transferred and escrow signings to be completed before escrow closes. Cash offers may close escrow in as little as three days, while buyers who need financing will normally close escrow in as little as 25 days or as much as 45 days.

**Three:** Do not assume information you find online is correct. The best thing is to consider the information you find to be a lead that will be the first step in learning about the property.



Being successful at home hunting online requires getting off on the right foot. PHOTO: WIKIMONSTER

**Four:** Believe it or not, the fastest way to find out correct information is to ask your agent. It is never too soon in your search to have an agent. Part of a Realtor's job is to provide information on properties for sale, and you will not be wasting their time. If your agent is too busy to help, maybe it is time find a different agent.

**Five:** When you contact an agent about a property online, do not be surprised if the agent asks if you are working with an agent. Agents do not get paid until their buyers close escrow and do not want to spend time with buyers who have agents.

We have all heard of deals being completed start to finish online

with agents never meeting buyers or even sellers in person, but for the most part this is limited to investors or the very wealthy, not the average person looking for a place to call home. The Internet is without a doubt the place where just about everyone, at least in the Bay Area, begins a home search. To make the best use of your time, follow the guidelines I have suggested, and eventually the invisible pieces of the real estate puzzle you are working on will come together and you will own a home.

*Carole Isaacs is a Realtor with McGuire Real Estate. Visit her online at [www.caroleisaacs.com](http://www.caroleisaacs.com) or call 415-608-1267.*




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WEEKEND TRAVELER ∴ Start holiday season here

# Cozy up on the Monterey Coast



Clockwise: Old-school charm at Restaurant 1833; sunrise from a room at the Monterey Plaza Hotel; pomegranate in the garden of the historic Pacific House; Olio, a nostalgic emporium of vintage fun; the view from scenic Oceanview Boulevard PHOTOS: GARRICK RAMIREZ



by garrick ramirez

**T**HE MONTEREY PENINSULA is a seaside stunner any time of year, but it really shines during fall. Crowds thin, leaves turn golden, and its towns dress up nicely for the holidays. Yep, this month is the official start of the season. Whether you plan to organize or flee the family this year, a cozy getaway will serve you well. With its scenic beauty and ubiquitous crackling fireplaces, the Monterey Coast exhibits that fond concept the Germans call *gemütlichkeit*: peace of mind, coziness, and a sense of unhurry. So bundle up and let the calm, undulating waves of the Monterey Bay set the pace.

## SHOP

Carmel-by-the-Sea's quaint, elfin shops with storybook architecture are especially charming during the holidays. The local candy store, **Cottage of Sweets**, looks like Hansel and Gretel's pied-à-terre. Stroll the town's side streets, duck down alleyways strung with lights and discover hidden courtyards. Seek out **Fjorn** for ultra-desirable Scandinavian tableware, kitchen items and wool blankets to outfit your home for the season (831-624-5170, [www.cottageofsweets.com](http://www.cottageofsweets.com); 831-620-0123, [www.fjorn.com](http://www.fjorn.com)).

Pop in to **Happy Girl Kitchen Co.** in Pacific Grove and stock up on artisan preserves for your holiday spreads. You might recognize their delectable jams and pickled vegetables from your local farmers' market. Sign up for one of their workshops and bring home a batch of your own (831-373-4475, [www.happygirlkitchen.com](http://www.happygirlkitchen.com)).

If the weather outside is frightful, find comforting shelter in one of the area's many antique shops. **The Cannery Row Antique Mall** is a two-story wonder that houses over 150 dealers. In downtown Monterey, **Olio** is a nostalgia-filled boutique with kitschy fun objects from pop-culture's past. Easy to imagine Ralphie from *A Christmas Story* discovering his coveted BB rifle here (831-655-0264, [www.canneryrowantiquemall.com](http://www.canneryrowantiquemall.com); 831-375-6546, [www.olio-vintagefun.com](http://www.olio-vintagefun.com)).

## PLAY

Eschew the touristed 17-Mile Drive for the road less traveled: Oceanview Boulevard and Sunset Drive toward **Asilomar Beach**. This dual-named stretch of road skirts the same beautiful coastline, but offers better opportunities to pull over and gape at what the Monterey Coast does best. The inspiring panoramas are enough to convert the least artistic to landscape painting (831-646-6440, [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)).

Famed for its seaside beauty, Monterey is less regarded for its role in California's formation. Don't pass up the 19th century estates that comprise the **Monterey State Historic Park**. They hide beautiful, peaceful gardens with fountains and year-round blooms. The first weekend of December, the houses are lit by candlelight and come alive with festivities for a popular Christmas in the Adobes event (831-649-7118, [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)).

## DINE

Wake to **Carmel Belle's** refined, ingredient-driven dishes like poached eggs with country toast and Hobbs bacon served in a light-filled atrium. Craving something cozier? Tradition reigns at **Katy's Place** where your coffee comes in a heavy white porcelain mug and accompanies a stack of soul-warming pancakes (831-624-1600, [www.carmelbelle.com](http://www.carmelbelle.com); 831-624-0199, [www.katysplacecarmel.com](http://www.katysplacecarmel.com)).

For a casual lunch, **Paprika Cafe** is a bijou gem. Enjoy sandwiches made of garlic chicken or lamb stuffed into a crisp, fluffy flatbread. You'll love the

Northwest: Drink hearty beer. **Cannery Row Brewing Company** boasts a large selection of seasonal ales among its 73 craft beers on tap, and **Peter B's Brewpub** brews their own specials, including a newly released Pumpkin Ale (831-643-2722, [www.canneryrowbrewingcompany.com](http://www.canneryrowbrewingcompany.com); 831-649-2699, [www.portolahotel.com/dining/brewpub](http://www.portolahotel.com/dining/brewpub)).

Make a sunset drink at **The Inn at Spanish Bay** a new ritual. On an expansive patio with a sweeping view of the coast, families and couples cuddle under blankets surrounding blazing fire pits piled high with wood.

Cup your hands around a warm coffee drink as you watch the sun dip into the glimmering bay. Whether you appreciate the musical accompaniment depends on which camp you fall into on bagpipes (831-647-

7500, [www.pebblebeach.com/accommodations/the-inn-at-spanish-bay](http://www.pebblebeach.com/accommodations/the-inn-at-spanish-bay)).

I can't imagine pet or owner being any happier than at the **Cypress Inn**. Co-owned by celeb and noted animal lover Doris Day, the attractive 1929 Spanish-style hotel and restaurant extends a special welcome to four-legged family members. Enjoy stirred cocktails and small plates in a convivial atmosphere filled with fun Doris Day memorabilia and friendly locals. Outside, twinkling lights and an outdoor hearth warm up a charming courtyard (831-624-3871, [www.cypress-inn.com](http://www.cypress-inn.com)).

**Restaurant 1833** offers a truly enchanting setting for

your holiday dinners. Housed in an atmospheric 19th century home, the restaurant's rich interior is dressed with period pieces and lit by flickering candelabras and dazzling fireplaces. You won't find more charm west of New Orleans' French Quarter. The sumptuous ambience inspires feasts. The menu accommodates with a strong wine list and dishes like a wood-fire roasted whole truffle chicken. Afterward, a ceremonious Art Deco absinthe cart roams the dining rooms seeking out the brave (831-643-1833, [www.restaurant1833.com](http://www.restaurant1833.com)).

## STAY

With the same auspicious setting as the famous aquarium down the street, **The Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa** treats its guests to views of dolphins and sea otters frolicking just outside their rooms. The interior views aren't so bad either. Upscale finishes like warm teak and Spanish marble feel dignified. With a well-trained staff and meticulous in-room amenities, it's hard to go wanting here. Plus, I'm fairly certain the room's full-length mirror takes off 10 pounds — a boon during the holidays. The spa deserves your attention, and you won't want to miss soaking in the rooftop whirlpool tubs perched high above the bay. The only time I wasn't relaxed here was at 11 a.m. on the morning of check-out. Then a deep panic set in (831-646-1700, [www.montereyplazahotel.com](http://www.montereyplazahotel.com)).

Garrick Ramirez can be reached on Twitter at @WeekendDelSol or at [garrick@weekenddelisol.com](mailto:garrick@weekenddelisol.com).

**Don't pass up the beautiful 19th century estates that comprise the Monterey State Historic Park.**

house-made baklava the owner sneaks to you at the end of your meal. Eat in the charming interior or take it to nearby, scenic San Carlos Beach Park (831-375-7452).

Only kayakers who packed a lunch are eating any closer to the water than diners at **Schooners Coastal Kitchen**. With large picture windows overlooking nothing but blue, the handsome dining room feels more akin to a cruise ship at sea. Solid renditions of popular seafood items like oysters, prawns, and chowder keep the locals happy (831-372-2628, [www.schoonersmonterey.com](http://www.schoonersmonterey.com)).

When the temperature dips, do like they do in the Pacific





Tyler the kitten was adopted from and photographed at Animal Care & Control.  
 Photographed by Jessica Mironov www.quotidianphotography.com



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## THE CATHOUSE :: Doing what animals do



At least this bird was safe from Charlie PHOTO: JOHN ZIPPERER

# My psychopathic pet

by john zipperer

**F**ORGET SPOT OR PROFESSOR Fluffball; meet Hannibal Licker.

Earlier this year, the media had a field day writing about a study from the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service that reported that outdoor felines were responsible for a much higher killing spree than previously thought. According to the author's summary on [www.nature.com](http://www.nature.com), *We estimate that free-ranging domestic cats kill 1.4-3.7 billion birds and 6.9-20.7 billion mammals annually. Un-owned cats, as opposed to owned pets, cause the majority of this mortality.*

As I digest that information and look at my tuxedo cat, Ashes, I know she looks and acts adorable, but she's thinking, *Those birds had it coming.* Perhaps, Ashes, perhaps. But of course it also suggests that we have to come to terms with two things: First, people helped cause this problem by letting cats breed like, um, rabbits; and second, it should hardly be big news that a carnivorous animal eats other animals.

Frankly, behavior we find adorable in our cats is behavior that we usually would diagnose as psychopathic in a human. Felines are amazingly selfish, relentlessly predatory, and totally amoral — if they “behave” according to our “rules,” it is because they don't see another way of getting what they want.

This, of course, is not as crazy as the humans who contacted the authors of that Smithsonian study with whining, threatening, vilifying messages. When your cat is

better behaved than you are, then it's time to take a time-out.

“Those who dislike [cats] see them as sneaky, moody, manipulative, even off-puttingly *feminine*,” Jessica Pressler wrote in a June 9, 2013, article for *New York* magazine. “But to the majority, cats are beloved. Currently, nearly 90 million occupy roughly one third of American

homes, and ... there are signs that we are again living in an age of cat deification, the most obvious being that we allow them to poop in boxes inside of our homes.”

In a city like San Francisco, with densely populated neighborhoods and a large population of cat owners, certainly good neighborliness would behoove more people to keep their cats indoors rather than letting them roam free for nocturnal hunting.

Ashes and her bully of a brother, the big Maine coon Charlie, never see the great outdoors. They are perfectly happy with this arrangement. Both of them were rescue cats, the products of unbridled passions between unknown feline ships that passed in the night but paused long enough to make kitty whoopee. Now they are condemned to a lifetime of indoors pampering: two people who fuss over them; a nice home to sleep, eat, and use the litter box in; and a steady supply of expensive and healthful cat food, which really only means they've got humans somewhere else who kill those birds and fish and mice and convert them into packaged cat food so they don't have to do it themselves.

Psychos, I know.

E-mail: [john@marinatimes.com](mailto:john@marinatimes.com)

**When your cat is better behaved than you are, it's time for a time-out.**

## ANIMAL COMMUNITY :: Adoption

# A totally paws-some holiday

**C**OME OUT TO GET a holiday photo taken of your dog and support animal adoption and care programs at the same time. Jest Jewels (1869 Union Street) is hosting a “Pawsitive Holiday Evening” Friday, Dec. 6 from 5-7 p.m. to raise

money for and awareness of Pets Unlimited's adoption and care programs on Fillmore Street.

Jest promises “cocktails,” treats, fun, and surprise raffles. You can also pick up a dog ornament to adorn your Christmas tree; a portion of all proceeds from

the sale of those ornaments from that evening until D. 24 will benefit Pets Unlimited.

Representatives from Pets Unlimited will be on hand, as will some of their furry adoptee candidates and a pet photographer to snap some holiday pix of your dog.



# LEAVE NO DOG BEHIND.

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## NOE

Noe is a darling shepherd mix girl around 5 to 6 years old. She grew up on the streets, and has since been in a wonderful foster home and she is doing so well! She can be shy at first, but warms up quickly when she gets to know you. Having been around her, we can say without hesitation that she's the sweetest, most gentle girl around. Sweet Noe gets along with everyone! She has been waiting for her forever home and would love to meet you.



## SOYRIZO

Meet Soyrizo! This boy is quite a character, and a wonderful little dog. He's about 5 pounds and a bundle of joy. Soyrizo is fostered with other dogs big and small, and he does great. He is very in love with his people, and would adore spending a rainy afternoon hanging around the house with you, cuddling or just being near you while you read a good book by the fire. He's an easygoing boy and will make a great companion!



## CHUGGLES

Meet Chuggles the Chug! This 7-month-old Pug/Chihuahua is the perfect combination of spunky and loving. He adores dog toys and will entertain himself for hours, or play with his doggy friends. Dog bones will also keep him occupied. He shares his food nicely with his human and dog friends. He is crate trained, quiet, and great with all people and children. Just the perfect little guy to fill your heart!



## HATCHI

Meet Hatchi! He is a darling 2-year-old Jindo mix who weighs 47 pounds. We rescued him from a shelter after he was taken away from his abusive owner. Poor Hatchi has spent his entire life locked in a tiny cement yard that was no bigger than a closet. He lived with a female Jindo mix, too. Since coming to us, Hatchi is doing great, and despite what people did to him, he is a total people lover. He does great with his people, and bonds strongly. This is a wonderful, independent breed. Hatchi would benefit from an active, and loving new home where he could tag along for your morning jog on the Marina Green!



## PAXIS

Meet Paxis! This adorable 1 to 2 year old little crested/terrier mix girl is a lovely, outgoing and very sweet gal. She has been fostered with kids and other dogs and is amazing with both. She's around 10 pounds, so she's perfect for single apartment life in the Marina, but she'd be just as happy in a big house with a family. She's a spunky gal who loves to play, and she adores her people and bonds closely. You can't get much cuter than Paxis! She is going to make someone very happy.

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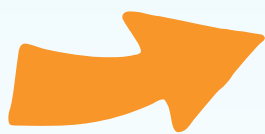


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## Teacher's pet

by susan dyer reynolds

*Teacher's pet*  
*I wanna be teacher's pet*  
*I wanna be huddled and cuddled*  
*as close to you as I can get*

— Title track from the 1958 film starring Doris Day and Clark Gable, written by Joe Lubin

AS WE ENTERED THE CLASSROOM at SF Puppy Prep on the first day of kindergarten, Skylar Grey was excited to see other puppies but terrified to leave my side. I was trying to juggle her leash with one hand and hold a dog bed under my arm with the other.

At orientation, trainer Aishe Berger had asked us to bring a bed for our puppies to rest on between lessons as well as something for them to chew. Corgi Cole's mom looked concerned. "I can't bring Cole's bed," she said, "because he ate it." Fortunately, Skylar's bed was intact, so I spread it on the floor next to my chair and offered her a bully stick, which she was too nervous to eat.

We worked on basic commands, and then the puppies were given free play time, something that is essential for socialization. Despite the fact Sky outweighed some of her classmates by 10 pounds, she loved playing with the little ones; she was gentle, even submissive, and she won over the other puppy parents quickly.

On week two, Aishe had us do an exercise where we worked on a command until she said, "Switch!" at which point we handed the leash to our neighbor in a game of "pass the puppy." This was good for human socialization, Aishe said, and all the puppies took to the switcheroo with ease, motivated by "puppy crack" — licks from a jar of chicken baby food. All of the puppies, that is, except Sky, who was having none of it. She flailed and bucked like a wild mustang until she wriggled free of her collar and ran back to me, pressing her body tightly against my legs. "She's just shy," Aishe said. "She'll come around."

With every Saturday that passed, Skylar and I grew a little closer, and she grew a little more confident. Our final exercise was a recall test in three heats: Another person held your puppy's leash while you stood across the room. When Aishe gave the signal, the person let go of the leash, and you did whatever you had to do to get your puppy to come. The winner of each heat faced off against the last winner until there was one puppy left. The other parents opened their jars of puppy crack and made kissy noises to get their puppies' attention. "Do you want a jar of baby food?" Aishe asked. "Nope," I said, watching Skylar across

the room in silence. Aishe gave the signal and the other parents began squealing words of encouragement and wildly waving the

**In the final winner-takes-all heat it was Skylar Grey versus Cairn terrier extraordinaire Zoe.**

crack jars. Some of the puppies got sidetracked, going to the wrong parents in search of better crack, but not Sky — she made a beeline for me and won the heat. "Good girl," I said as she sat down on my foot. In the final winner-takes-all heat it was Skylar Grey versus Cairn terrier extraordinaire Zoe. Once again Zoe's parents made kissy noises and prepared their jar of crack, and once again I stood stoic and crackless. This battle was a little unfair anyway, considering Skylar's legs were four times the length of Zoe's. As Aishe gave the signal, Sky bolted across the room and plopped down on my foot before Zoe even knew what happened. "And the winner is Skylar!" Aishe said, handing me the prize — a smiling sun plush toy covered in yellow and orange fleece. "Who knew your fear of abandonment would play to my favor?" I asked, sitting on the floor beside my little recall champ. Skylar immediately crawled into my lap, sniffing the smiling sun momentarily before standing on her hind legs, wrapping her front paws around my neck, and joyously licking my face. Aishe smiled proudly as any teacher would at a star pupil. "That's the real prize, right Sky?"

E-mail: [susan@marinatimes.com](mailto:susan@marinatimes.com)

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# GRATEFUL DOGS RESCUE

**ANNOUNCEMENT: We need foster homes!** Grateful Dogs Rescue partners with the San Francisco city shelter to save dogs from euthanasia. Make your home a short term or long term safe haven and help save a dog's life. Vet bills for foster dogs are paid by GDR. Volunteers and donations are always welcome! Our website features more dogs, events, training resources, etc. *Apply today to foster, adopt, or foster-to-adopt!* GDR is an all volunteer, 501(c)(3) non-profit. **Make your year-end tax-deductible donation today!**



## ALICE

Alice is a beautiful 9-month-old blue pit bull mix, just like the *Marina Times'* own Skylar Grey! Her ears are more hound-like: extra big, super soft, and oh so cute and floppy when she runs! She's growing up fast in her foster home with others

dogs AND she lives with a cat. She happily shares her bed and toys with her friends! Alice is currently taking a basic training class, and is crate-trained. She goes on big off-leash romps to all kinds of parks with an assortment of dogs, big and small! Alice will be a great dog for an active home that walks, hikes etc. Are you the active, loving home this pretty gal is looking for?



## ELSIE

Elsie is a sweet, beautiful, black and white, 15-pound, 3-year-old, rat terrier mix. This playful girl does well with people and other dogs. She is housebroken and has good command of basic training. Currently she

goes on long walks every day and needs ample exercise, so she would be great in a home with another dog her age and energy level to play with or some very active people who love to do things outdoors. Perhaps Elsie is the jogging buddy you've longed for!



## HONEY

Honey is her name but sassy is her game! Honey and her brother Teddy are about 15 weeks old and came in with their loving mom. Honey loves to play hard and snuggle hard too. She is very sweet and enjoys her crate

as much as chewing on her toys. The ideal home for Honey will be one that has experience, understanding, love, and respect for bully breeds. Training will be a requirement for this puppy. Are you the person to raise sweet Honey into her full potential?



## OPIE

Little Opie, a Chihuahua mix, is looking for a forever home. Opie's idea of a perfect home would be one that will smother him with love, hugs and kisses. Opie would love someone that

will take him to play at the beach or park, let him roll in the grass and give him old-fashioned belly rubs. He likes being an only dog so he doesn't have to share attention. He is very people and dog friendly and fun to be around. Opie is looking for some new digs, can you help him out?



## TEDDY

ALERT: puppy cuteness ahead... This little heart-throb is our Teddy boy and is about 12 weeks old. He's a sweet little guy and a typical feisty puppy learning the ways of the world, but one who also can appreciate naptime by

himself. Teddy's home should be one with puppy experience, bully breed experience, and a solid plan for training and socialization as that will be required since he's such a baby. He will do great with another dog in the home, but it is not required. Hurry, so you can catch some puppy breath!

## WILLIE WONKA



Willie Wonka is as sweet as his name implies. Wonka is a tri-colored Chihuahua mix with long lashes that curl around his eyes. He is a friendly guy about 5 yrs. and loves people. Wonka is about 9 1/2 pounds, is easy to pick up, and loves to be held. Willie Wonka has special

needs. His hind legs are a bit "wonky" and not as strong as his front legs. He has difficulty with steps. But his MRI revealed no significant problems – he just needs someone who understands his needs. Wonka loves to walk and can cover surprising distances. Big dogs and children overwhelm him as they challenge his maneuverability. Wonka is a gentle boy, looking for a gentle home.

**UPCOMING GDR FUNDRAISERS AND EVENTS:** **November 3** from 11 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Pawtrero Pet Party, Lower Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA 94107 | **December 7** from 4 to 8 p.m., Doc's Clock Fundraiser, 2575 Mission Street (Between 21st and 22nd Street), San Francisco, CA 94110, 415-824-3627



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE AND OTHER DOGS:

415-587-1121 • [www.gratefuldogsrescue.org](http://www.gratefuldogsrescue.org)

[info@gratefuldogsrescue.org](mailto:info@gratefuldogsrescue.org)



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